

FA/PS

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SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND

696

9 July 1997.

The Rt Hon George Robertson MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

Deew George,
UK STAND-BY BATTALION

The Chief Constable, following discussions with the GOC, has requested the deployment to Northern Ireland of the UK Stand-by Battalion to provide additional levels of military support to the RUC over the Twelfth period. This reflects the continuing high levels of public disorder in nationalist areas, the prospect of a series of difficult marches, particularly that on the Lower Ormeau Road this weekend and, in particular, the significant increase in terrorist activity across the Province.

I support this request, which I hope you can accede to.

As always, both the Chief Constable and I are deeply grateful for the continuing high levels of support which the Armed Forces provide to the RUC, and the professionalism and courage of our servicemen and women. This has been amply demonstrated once again in recent days.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, and to Sir Robin Butler.

MARJORIE MOWLAM