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FROM: TOM CLARKE
Security Policy and Operations Division
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PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (B&L)

ASST SEC 16 JUL 1998
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SITUATION REPORT 1730 HOURS: 15 JULY 1998

Mr Brown

Summary

Mr Graham
456

Northern Ireland generally remains quiet. A hoax device has been cleared on the Falls Road and two replica pistols and four acid bombs were recovered at [REDACTED] Waterside, Co Londonderry.

Drumcree

The RUC, for the first time, moved around onto the "protesters side" of the barricades and obstacles at Drumcree and have, during the day conducted a thorough and vigorous search of the site. This is primarily in response to the scenes of violence witnessed over the past two nights at this location. The scale of last night's disturbances can be gauged by the fact that the RUC discharged 85 plastic baton rounds in an attempt to quell the disturbances.

As a result of these searches, the police have (since 0100 hours) arrested 18 persons, including 3 under Section 14 of the PTA [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. A significant number of items have been found including:

- a pipe bomb;
- a knife and scabbard;
- rockets;
- clothing and a balaclava;

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100 nails;
14 or more rounds of .303 ammunition;
2 spent cartridges
a quantity of petrol;
crossbows; and 21 "improvised exploding arrows"
a catapult; and
boltcutters.

The RUC intend to remain on the "other" side of the barricade for the time being, though have indicated they will facilitate a peaceful protest at Drumcree. In addition, we have been advised that checkpoints will again be inserted around Portadown in an effort to prevent the "hooligan" element gathering again at Drumcree tonight. Officers will conduct vigorous searching of suspected vehicles and suspicious articles will be confiscated as appropriate.

pp Jonathan Margetts

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