



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

Reference Code:	2017/10/59
Creation Dates:	9 April 1987
Extent and medium:	3 pages
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Accession Conditions:	Open
Copyright:	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

S22537

1. Marley funeral

Extensive coverage was given in all the leading Northern newspapers to the funeral in Belfast of IRA member, Lawrence Marley and the story dominates the 9 April edition of "An Phoblacht". Headlined "powerful resistance", the latter carried a front-page editorial on the funeral, highlighting the fact that "for two days and nights, the eyes of Belfast, the rest of Ireland and beyond turned towards Ardoyne and to the bravery of the Marley family in the midst of their grief. That bravery inspired others". On the RUC presence, the editorial stated that "ignoring the vast array of plastic-bullet guns, helmets, armoured cars and rifles which are part and parcel of the machinery of repression seen at every Republican funeral in recent years, the people came out in a spontaneous and moving gesture of solidarity and defiance". It went on to echo Martin McGuinness' recent comparison (after the funeral in Derry of Gerard Logue) of IRA funerals to those of the black population in South Africa, claiming that "nobody who had seen the television images of funerals in Soweto or other black South African townships could fail to make the comparison with events in Belfast this week". The final sentence of the editorial also echoed McGuinness's recent criticism of the Catholic hierarchy: "The only difference is that in South Africa the Catholic hierarchy usually stands firmly on the side of the oppressed and not on the side of the oppressors".

In the inside pages of "An Phoblacht" there was further in-depth coverage (8 pages in all) of the funeral, the associated protests and IRA activity throughout the North in the past week. There was also a piece on international reaction to the funeral and the RUC handling of it.

The principal Sinn Féin spokesman on the funeral during the week was Martin McGuinness, with Danny Morrison also involved (Gerry Adams was absent at a Conference in Oslo). McGuinness divided his criticism between the RUC and the Catholic hierarchy. "An Phoblacht" quoted him as calling "on the Catholic hierarchy to ask themselves what sort of Church they want. Do they want one which is made up only of Alliance and SDLP members, because the majority of people in West Belfast support Sinn Féin? That's reality and that's something which they have to face." In his graveside oration, he continued the attack on what he described as the "gross hypocrisy" of the Hierarchy: "Only yesterday, a member of the British Army who was killed in Divis Flats was buried in England. He was a Catholic. His Union Jack-draped coffin was carried out of the Catholic church by six uniformed members of the British Army, taken to an adjoining graveyard and a volley of shots fired by his colleagues. It's not the guns they object to but who holds the guns. It seems that the words "sacrilege" and "desecration" are only applicable to Republicans, whilst "heavy-handed" and "insensitive" are the adjectives used for the British forces' massive and intimidating presence at Republican funerals." ("An Phoblacht" 9 April).

2. The IRA and the Public Order Order

As part of their strategy on the new Public Order legislation, the IRA will have no paramilitary trappings at their parades this Easter, a spokesman told the "Sunday World" of 5 April. The spokesman said that the decision had been taken "to avoid giving the police a chance to attack Easter parades in Catholic districts as an excuse for later action against Loyalist demonstrations" under the new legislation.

3. Gerry Adams and funding for the SDLP

The on-going row between John Hume and Gerry Adams about U.S. Government funding for the SDLP continued this week with the publication in the "Irish News" of 5 April of a letter from Adams on the matter. He said that "John Hume's admission that the SDLP's Social Democratic Group is in fact being funded by the (U.S.) National Democratic Institute is revealing, given that the declared aim of the NDI is to influence the direction of international politics and supplement the activities of the CIA". Adams called on Hume to respond to this allegation.

T. O'Connor

T. O'Connor,
Anglo-Irish Division,
9 April, 1987.

c.c.

PSS
A-I Section
A-I Secretariat
Mr. R. O'Brien
Mr. Mathews
Mr. Magner
Embassy London
Embassy Washington
Box.