



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

Reference Code:	2018/28/2799
Creation Dates:	20 April 1988
Extent and medium:	2 pages
Creator(s):	Department of Foreign Affairs
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Meeting with P.J. McGrory, Belfast, 20 April 1988

McGrory has been appointed to represent the families at the forthcoming inquest on the Gibraltar 3. His understanding is that this is likely to be held during the week beginning 20 June and that, to this end, the coroner has cleared his diary for that week. He is currently in the process of being called to the Gibraltar Bar. (Gibraltar has fused solicitors and barristers into a unified Bar). He is experiencing no difficulties in arranging this though, in any event, he has a fall back position arranged whereby his legal associate (one of the leading criminal lawyers in Gibraltar) will allow him to operate from his chambers - should McGrory fail in his efforts at being called to the Gibraltar Bar.

There is considerable media interest in the forthcoming inquest. He understands that the Guardian will be doing a major investigative piece as also will Channel 4. He also understands that Channel 4 intend to televise a recreation of the inquest hearing - something along the lines of the programmes which they had on the Appeal Court hearing for the Birmingham Six.

There are strong indications that journalist investigations in Gibraltar are turning up, from the British point of view, very disturbing evidence. Earlier in the week, he had a phone call from his legal associate in Gibraltar asking McGrory to meet him in London this coming weekend in order to brief him on evidence which the lawyer had unearthed and which he described to McGrory as being "dynamite". He was unwilling to discuss it by telephone and therefore suggested the London meeting for next weekend.

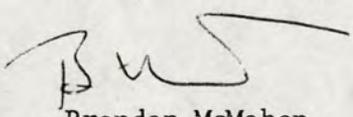
McGrory still feels that it could prove to be a major blunder for the families not to have agreed to a second post-mortem examination either in Dublin or Belfast.

He is very concerned at the likely "Loyalist" make-up of any inquest jury in Gibraltar. In order to minimise the problems which he may encounter in this regard, he has already suggested to Sinn Fein that they suggest to the IRA that they provide clarifications as to what precisely was the target in Gibraltar. He himself is convinced that, in the aftermath of the Enniskillen

bombing, it is highly unlikely that the Gibraltar operation would have been aimed at civilians. He feels that a clarification on this - i.e., that there was no threat to the people of Gibraltar, could help in alleviating (to whatever limited degree) the likely hostility of a Gibraltar jury.

McGrory is still researching the precise nature of the legal framework of Gibraltar within which the inquest will have to be conducted. The basic legal system would appear to be the 1969 Constitution Order coupled with English Common Law as varied by local ordinance. While he spoke at length of a number of possibilities (e.g., that the inquest may be held under the old English inquest rules which, inter alia, allow for the jury to actually indict for murder, manslaughter, etc), overall, he felt that the possibilities inherent in the Gibraltar legal system will need to be teased out in detail with his Gibraltar colleague at the weekend.

On the Hume/Adams talks, he had heard some dark mutterings from an IRA source regarding Adams leadership. He did not place much credence on this as, in his experience, the IRA was traditionally full of differing cliques and it is not unusual for one or other of these cliques to mutter darkly about the various leaderships from time to time. He thought Adams remains secure in the leadership and, while it might appear that he has differences with McGuinness, he thought it important to note that Adams and McGuinness are very close personal friends and that, in his view, Adams is very much committed to the republican movement and to McGrory's mind, would be the last person to be involved in initiating any type of friction or break up within the movement. Gerry Adams would always operate within the republican movement and would be very careful to bring it along with him on any particular issue. He could not see very much, in concrete terms, emerging from the talks. He felt Adams had gained "respectability" when they most needed it after Enniskillen but in the longer term, Hume could gain more credibility among nationalist voters showing that he tried, at this time, to take the republican movement in from the cold.


Brendan McMahon,

22 April 1988.

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