

E. R.

1/9 CONFIDENTIAL

HEAD OF DIVISION
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FOB-NIO BELFAST

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PAB/2831/DP

- 1. Mr Cornick *ABC 15/5*
- 2. PS/Secretary of State (B) cc PS/Secretary of State (L) - M
PS/Mr Scott (L&B) - M
Mr Innes
Mr Wood
Mr Blackwell
Mr Shannon

2 May 18

Mr Tertt 18/5

MEETING WITH BISHOP CAHAL DALY - 18 MAY

In her minute of 8 May Mrs Hamilton asked for briefing for the Secretary of State's meeting with Bishop Cahal Daly at 1100 hours on Monday 18 May.

It is likely that the main focus of the discussions will centre on the recent upsurge of violence and the controversy surrounding paramilitary funerals. In regard to these issues Dr Daly's public comments have been very helpful at a time when emotions and tensions were high within the community and the Secretary of State may wish to take the opportunity to thank the Bishop for his responsible leadership.

Dr Daly recently forwarded to the Secretary of State a copy of his St Patrick's Eve address and his statement in the Laurence Marley funeral. The address of 16 March referred to "the undoubted commitment of the RUC to continuing progress towards impartial policing", and asked for people to acknowledge such progress. The Marley funeral statement was a carefully balanced criticism of the heavy policing of the funeral and a condemnation of the paramilitary exploitation of such occasions. In saying that the police should rethink their policy in respect of paramilitary funerals Dr Daly also recognised the difficulties facing the RUC in a divided society. A copy of the Secretary of State's reply of 7 May to Dr Daly is attached, together with a note from LOB on the issue of paramilitary funerals.

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In his comments at the funeral of Garry McCartan on 11 May Dr Daly said the IRA's campaign was inflicting untold stress and desolation on the nationalist community and went on to say that the IRA feeds on social injustices and that there must be no relaxation in efforts to reduce alienation and to remove injustices and inequalities in society.

One particular point the Secretary of State may wish to ask the Bishop about is his view of the election in West Belfast, where the constitutional nationalism of the SDLP is in competition with the "ballot-box and armalite" approach of Sinn Fein, for the votes of the Catholic Community.

Mr McConnell will be available for the pre-brief at 10.45 hours on 18 May.



C D KYLE
Political Affairs Division
15 May 1987

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POLICING AT PARAMILITARY FUNERALS

Line to Take

As I said in my letter of 7 May I was extremely grateful for your helpful statements concerning paramilitary funerals. As you know the Chief Constable also responded positively to your comments and recently issued a statement on the RUC's policy in regard to funerals. This was a sincere attempt to restore dignity to these sad events and it is hoped that everyone with any influence will commend and support this gesture.

Background

Following criticism of the RUC's handling of the funerals of members of terrorist groups, culminating in the funerals of Lawrence Marley last month and Finbarr McKenna earlier this month, added to the clear determination of the Provisional IRA cynically to manipulate funerals without any regard for the feelings of the deceased's family, the Chief Constable issued a statement on 11 May (which had been prepared before the Loughgall incident) offering all concerned "a chance to resolve a distressing and distasteful problem". This statement was along the lines suggested by Bishop Daly but unfortunately, judging by the events at some of the funerals of the Loughgall terrorists, seems to have so far fallen on deaf ears. The Chief Constables statement still stands. A copy of this statement and the Secretary of State's letter to Bishop Daly is attached.



PARAMILITARY FUNERALS

STATEMENT BY THE CHIEF CONSTABLE, SIR JOHN HERMON, KB OBE O St. J.

The Chief Constable, Sir John Hermon, recently announced that he would be making a public statement on the subject of paramilitary funerals. The following statement by Sir John was prepared for issue before the occurrence at Loughgall on Friday evening last. The statement now assumes greater importance as a result of what has occurred.

Statement:

Circumstances surrounding the burial of members of paramilitary organisations or persons with paramilitary connections have over the years been the subject of contention and controversy, either because terrorist organisations were seen to defy the law and flaunt themselves on the streets in fascist-style formation or because the security forces intervened to prevent such flagrant paramilitary displays. Either way, the solemnity and dignity ordinarily attaching to death and bereavement were demeaned and disgraced. Either way, terrorist organisations exploited the saddest and deepest of human emotions to create a sickening propaganda event. A funeral should be a sorrowful and respectful occasion, not an arrogant display of strength.

Such occasions present the RUC with an unenviable dilemma. The RUC has a profound understanding of and respect for the grief of those who are bereaved. The RUC does not wish to intrude upon that grief. Indeed, in its service to the community, the RUC is frequently called upon to offer comfort and aid to families in both communities who have suffered the tragedy of death. But it is also the function of the police to uphold the law generally and in particular,

to prevent organisations from openly defying the law by firing volleys of shots or dressing or behaving in paramilitary fashion.

The RUC notes that the Roman Catholic Church has recently reiterated its regulations governing the funerals of members of paramilitary organisations. Under these regulations, the Church will deal only with next-of-kin, never with paramilitary organisations, and that before agreeing to a funeral the Church will insist on an undertaking that there will be no flags, emblems, political banners or paramilitary displays etc., in the Church or its precincts.

The RUC is the law enforcement agency. It cannot and will not deal with paramilitary organisations or their apologists. It has done and will continue to deal with relatives in a helpful and sympathetic manner. Regrettably, however, some families have themselves actively or passively associated themselves with the unlawful intentions of paramilitary organisations on funeral occasions, on other occasions paramilitary organisations have imposed their will on the families or exploited the occasion regardless of the feelings of the families.

The RUC places on record its appreciation of the co-operation it has in the past received from clergy — clergy of all denominations — and in the context of such funerals the RUC will seek and value discussion with clergy of the next-of-kin.

The only desire of the RUC is that funerals should take place in a dignified, peaceful and lawful manner. What has occurred on occasions over the

years and in recent weeks is a travesty of true mourning for the dead.

In an attempt to establish the dignity and solemnity of funerals, and as a genuine gesture of its goodwill, the RUC now states that if and when such an occasion arises in the future it will:

1. Liaise with the family and clergy with the objective of avoiding any police involvement or intrusion in what should be a private occasion of grief for the family and respect for the dead, and avoiding also any unlawful and unseemly involvement or exploitation by terrorist organisations.
 2. The RUC and the Security Forces will deliberately let it be seen that they are not going to physically intrude or impose themselves on the funeral or burial.
- The RUC with military support, has shown in the past that there is the will and the capacity to enforce the law and prevent terrorist organisations from dominating or hi-jacking funerals. An opportunity is now being provided to avoid the necessity for intervention by police and the army. The RUC sincerely hopes that this opportunity will be grasped and that from this day on funerals will be what funerals ought to be.

Here is a chance to resolve a distressing and distasteful problem. Let it not be lost or abused.

Issued by the Royal Ulster Constabulary



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The Most Reverend Cahal B Daly
Bishop of Down and Connor
Lisbreen
Somerton Road
BELFAST
BT15 4DE

7 May 1987

My dear Bishop

Thank you for sending me copies of your address of 16 March at the St Patrick's Eve Service in St Anne's Cathedral and of your statement of 10 April regarding the funeral of Lawrence Marley.

They are - as all in Northern Ireland who know you would expect - exemplary evidence of your wise and courageous leadership of the Catholic community in Belfast and an example to the wider community of the responsible guidance that is so necessary for all in Northern Ireland if those who seek to solve problems by the use or threat of violence are to be rejected.

I know that the Chief Constable has already publicly responded warmly and positively to your suggestions for the way in which funerals can be conducted without attempts at paramilitary displays which in their turn require heavy policing. The key seems to be to ensure that no firearms or paramilitary uniforms are displayed at funerals of paramilitaries no matter what illegal organisation the dead person belonged to.

I am well aware that the Provisional IRA's and Sinn Fein's recent actions were as much an attack upon the Catholic Church in general, and you in particular, as upon the security forces. Your courage



in unflinchingly giving moral guidance to your flock in the face of the undisguised hostility of the paramilitaries is encouragement to all of us who believe that it will be the total rejection by the community whose interests they so falsely claim to represent that will ultimately defeat the terrorists and the bullies.

very much hope we can

meet again soon,

Love us

back,

HIDDEN COPIES

PS/SOS (B&L)
PS/MR SCOTT (B&L)
MR WOOD
MR INNES
MR BLACKWELL
MR McCONNELL
MR SHANNON
MR S HEWITT
MC 14-4-1