

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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International Media Coverage of the Darkley Murders

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USA

1. Washington D.C. Area

The main newspapers in the Washington area carried reports of the Darkley murders on Monday. However, the reports in the Washington Post, The Washington Times and USA Today were one-paragraph inclusions in their world news sections. All appeared to be based on initial AP and other wire service reports. The Philadelphia Inquirer carried a slightly longer - seven-paragraph - report from AP. The main coverage of Monday was found in the Baltimore Sun which led with the story on the front page with the heading "Gunmen open fire on 60 in Ulster church: 3 slain". The story continued on an inside page with the heading "3 slain, 7 hurt as gunmen burst into Ulster church". The coverage, which was taken entirely from the AP service, contained a graphic description of the aftermath with reports from policemen on the scene as well as from SGT Cyril Davidson, a police spokesman in Belfast, and extracts from the text of the "Catholic Reaction Force" statement.

The Washington Post Tuesday has a brief three-paragraph account of the condemnations of the Darkley murders and reports on police suspicions that Dominic McGlinchey described as "Northern Ireland's most wanted Terrorist" had masterminded the attack on the congregation. Both The Washington Times and the Philadelphia Inquirer carry lengthy reports on inside pages from the AP with the Philadelphia Inquirer heading "Both sides in Northern Ireland assail church massacre of 3". The Washington Times quotes from the Taoiseach's statement in the course of its coverage.

Several local TV stations carried brief reports of the incident on Sunday night and on Monday morning as did all local radio stations that carry a news service. National Public Radio also carried a detailed report from Cathal MacCoille and, separately, an interview with an Anglican nun who is teaching at Lagan College. The two NPR pieces were broadcast twice in the Washington area on Monday evening and were also carried across the country by NPR subscribing stations - of which there are now some 300.

2. New York Area

New York Times of 21/11 gives page one prominence to AP report on weekend killings in Darkley, about which an RUC spokesman said the incident had all the hallmarks of an INLA attack. The report refers to local belief that the attack was a retaliation for the Aug. 8 killing of Adrian Carroll. IRA statement of denial is also reported. Long Island newspaper Newsday has the same AP report and the NY edition of USA Today had a brief reference to the killing. NY Times (22/11) gives page 4 prominence to London correspondent Jon Nordheimer reporting from Belfast. His article, entitled "Search pressed for gunmen who raided church in Ulster" quotes NI Secretary of State Prior and also Taoiseach's words "There can be no ambivalence in the face of evil and evil has rarely shown itself so nakedly". Nordheimer also refers to the withdrawal of the OUP from the NI Assembly and Paisley's statement that he would help organise private groups to protect churches. Police officials are reported as claiming that the Catholic Reaction Force was "a flag of convenience" for the INLA which police say may have fewer than a dozen active members "hiding out across the border in Ireland". Daily News (22/11) has a brief AP report in which reference is made to Dominick McClinchey as being the chief police suspect in the killings. 22/11 edition of Christian Science Monitor also reports condemnation by leaders on both sides of the border and refers to statement by IRA denying any involvement.

3. San Francisco Area

There has been comparatively little coverage to date in local newspapers. Articles to appear are as follows:-

- (1) The LA Times of 21/11 carried A.P. report on page 7 entitled "Gunmen invade church in N. Ireland, kill 3, wound 7".
- (2) The San Francisco Chronicle of 22/11 carried United Press report on page 13 entitled "Church killers vow renewed Bloodshed".

(3) The SF Examiner of 22/11 carried a very brief report on P13 entitled "Terrorist hunt in Ulster", again from news services.

Radio and T.V.

The Darkley murders were featured in the TV and Radio news broadcast and summaries although without extensive coverage.

4. Chicago Area

Prominent wire report (AP and Colin Brady, Daily Telegraph) coverage in all papers. All local TV and Radio stations also carried story with tape recording of shootings in church.

5. Boston Area

Darkley murders received prominent coverage in the Boston area. All newspaper reports to date are from agency sources. Television and Radio have given widespread if brief coverage taking reports and pictures from T.V. in Britain. No editorials to date.

Canada

Extensive news coverage given with wire service reports in all papers mentioning "Darkley near the Border ----". Extensive coverage also given on prime-time CBC and CTV News with pictures of church on coast-to-coast networks on 21/11 and report on Canada AM television on 22/11 stressing the Catholic Reaction Force, a splinter group of the INLA and "D. McGlinchey, the most wanted man in Ireland".

Australia

Murders were prominently reported in Australian press on 22nd and 23rd Nov. Sydney Morning Herald of 22nd carried long report from Peter Smark datelined London 21st in which he quoted Taoiseach's reaction of "horror, revulsion and shame". He mentioned searchers on both sides of Border, the fears of reprisal and fact that nothing is known of Catholic Reaction Force. Melbourne "Age" (23rd) also has a report from Smark datelined Belfast, 22nd, stating that police suspect

Dominic McGlinchey was culprit and quoting statement by so-called Catholic Reaction Force that events in Darkley were only "token retaliation" for recent attacks. Report concludes with reference to withdrawal of OUP from Assembly. "Australian" (23rd) has prominent report from Richard Ford of the Times in Belfast stating inter alia that: N.I. Assembly is in jeopardy; that OUP wants SAS deployed; that Prior has appealed for calm; and that Paisley said his party would organise armed protection in border areas. The report also quotes Taoiseach's condemnation. Canberra Times also carried prominent reports from AP, Reuter and PA sources in N.I. as well as a piece by one of its regular reporters, Frank Cranston, to the effect that the shooting in the church breaks an unwritten rule in N.I. These agency reports in Canberra Times (23rd) quote from the Taoiseach's and Minister Barry's condemnations and speculate that the attack was a reprisal for recent shooting of Carroll.

Radio and T.V. stations have also given prominence in their news bulletins to killings.

France

Press reaction to outrage initially slow to develop. All national dailies, save Le Monde, reported attack on 21/11 in brief inside page items apparently derived from agency sources (which were not however identified). Le Monde carried lengthier piece, also on an inside page, but somewhat more prominently headlined, prepared by desk editor on basis of agency sources (including Press Association which is specifically acknowledged in text) and following consultation with Dublin correspondent Joe Mulholland. Part of article attributed to Mulholland sets attack in context of recent leadership change in SF and that organisation's participation in Dublin Central By-election. Le Figaro, the main conservative daily, and Le Monde (22/11) feature articles by their respective London correspondents on political repercussions of attack. Le Figaro article appears on second page of foreign news under prominent headline: "Irlande: Tempête Politique". Le Monde article is also on inside page. Focus in each case is primarily on Unionist reaction. Le Monde sees OUP as having simply seized on this pretext to withdraw from an assembly to which it has always been opposed and seek thereby to seal its fate. Both papers

emphasise defensive posture which Secretary of State Prior was obliged to adopt in the House of Commons on 21/11 and note his appeals to Unionist representatives for calm. Le Figaro quotes from Taoiseach's statement and Le Monde refers to clear commitment of Irish authorities to assist in any way possible in the search for the perpetrators.

Le Monde article of 22/11 was contributed by new London correspondent Francis Cornu and datelined London.

Germany

Darkley murders prominently reported in German press and nationwide T.V. news (with film material of the church afterwards). (T.V. news report said McGlinchey and INLA prime suspect. McGlinchey described as "most evil person ever to appear in N.I. since the beginning of the Troubles"). Papers of 22/11 carry:-

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, p.3 DPA/AFP report
Sueddeutsche Zeitung, front page, DDP Agency report
General Anzeiger, short report, AP, p.2
Frankfurter Rundschau, p.4 report from Peter Nonnenmacher
Die Welt, lengthy report from Fritz Wirth, p.3

AP report "Protestants leave N.I. Parliament" emphasises OUP withdrawal from Assembly as protest against inadequate security for Protestants from British army.

DPA/AFP "all sides condemn the murder in the church". Outrage met with unanimous condemnation. Reports OUP withdrawal from Assembly until security powers devolved to N.I. elected reps; Paisley's call for Prior's resignation; IRA's disclaimer of responsibility for act "which could only serve British propaganda and Protestant extremists"; Paisley's announcement of armed protection for his congregation, because of failure of police; Cardinal's direct condemnation of 'gang of evil-doers' and that it was "an attack on God". Responsibility claimed by Catholic Reaction Force, previously unheard of. DDP reports State and Church in both parts of Ireland react with disgust and outrage. Taoiseach quoted as saying it was a blasphemous and horrific act of a few sectarian people. Cardinal's comments quoted and PA report quoting local sources

suggesting it was an act of retaliation for Adrian Carroll's murder by Protestant Action Force.

Fritz Wirth (London Corr.) has a lengthy reflective piece on the consequences of violence in N.I. (based on New Ireland Forum report of 3 weeks ago, quoting extensively from it) entitled "N.I. - the backyard of Europe is being forgotten". Wirth takes the church murders as a point of departure to try and analyse the costs of 14 years of violence, quotes Cardinal O'Fiaich prominently.

Peter Nonnenmacher (London Corr.) "Attack causes outrage" - sees the political consequences as the OUP withdrawal, and the Unionists (who feel left in the lurch by London) calling for Prior's dismissal and a separate N.I. self-administration under Unionist dominance; reports Paisley's forecast of an "extremely bloody time ahead" and Molyneaux's description of attack as "a declaration of war on the Protestant population"; police suspicion that INLA is behind the attack; I.R.A. denial of responsibility; Cardinal O'Fiach's comments that it was an "attack on God" and Taoiseach's expression of his disgust at "the blasphemous massacre".

Belgium

Murders reported prominently in 22 November issues of La Libre Belgique (page 4) and Le Soir (page 3). The main Flemish newspaper, De Standaard, has in 22/11 issue a brief unattributed factual article on an inside page.

La Libre Belgique's article by Xavier Goossens, is headed "Irlande du Nord: un attentat atroce risque de remettre le feu aux poudres". The article describes the incident as "shocking even to a population which has endured 14 years of civil war". "The vehicle in which the terrorists escaped headed for the border with Southern Ireland, a few kilometres away".

The article recalls other recent incidents, says reactions in South and North were "horrified" and that it could bring about the definitive end of the Assembly.

Le Soir's article (not attributed) says the incident will have serious consequences in the province . It reports the withdrawal of O.U.P. from Assembly and the threat which this poses.

[Normally De Standaard shows more interest in Ireland than the French language papers. Article of 22/11 is brief and factual].

Spain

The main national newspapers carried only agency reports on Darkley murders. No comment has been voiced and murders seen in context of sectarianism.

El Pais of 22/11 (main national daily) had no coverage of the event. On 21/11 it published a factual report adding that the attack resembled an incident in Tullyvallen in 1975 and brought the number of victims to 14 in the last three weeks.

Vanguardia (second national daily) of Barcelona carries a factual report, quoting police spokesman Cyril Davidson and stating that RUC were attempting to intercept "the terrorists' flight into Eire".

ABC (3rd ranking) carried its first story on above today 22/11 concentrating on the Protestant reaction to the murder and quote Ian Paisley calling for an armed defence force. It adds that the Assembly may fail as a result of the Unionist walk-out.

Austria

Media coverage has not been very extensive, confining itself in the main to setting out the facts. The quality daily

Die Presse on page 2 (foreign news page) reported under the heading "Three dead in massacre in Northern Irish church", citing AFP, Reuter, UPI and AP. It described Darkley as being close to the border with the Republic . The last paragraph of the short article (three paragraphs) reads "the massacre in the church is one of the most serious events of its kind. In the past 3 weeks 14 people have died in incidents in Ulster".

The semi official Weiner Zeitung carried the news in its column of news items in English and French on page 3. The popular daily Kurier reported also on page 3 under the heading "Terror during Mass(sic)". It quoted Cardinal O'Fiaich as condemning the act as "an attack on God".

Radio and TV also confined themselves to reporting the facts (with pictures on TV).

Denmark

The newspapers carry on inside pages short factual reports. Actuelt (Soc. Dem.) has 12 lines while Politiken (Liberal) has two one quarter columns.

Politiken from London-based reporter has heading :-

"Fear of new Irish violence following murder in church - Protestants want revenge".

Sweden

On 21st November, the two national Swedish morning newspapers - Svenska Dagbladet and Dagens Nyheter-carried brief Reuter reports on the inside pages.

Svenska Dagbladet (22/11) carries half column on p.4 by London correspondent Ingmar Lindmanher. Heading is "Murders unanimously condemned". Report covers OUP withdrawal from Assembly and Mr. Paisley's threat to raise Protestant self defence forces.

Dagens Nyheter (22/11) carries brief AP report on p.17.

Press Section
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