



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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Telephone
BELFAST 650222



BROOKLYN
KNOCK ROAD
BELFAST
NORTHERN IRELAND BT6 6LZ

STATEMENT FROM RUC HEADQUARTERS

Just after 2am this morning a 15 year old boy, Seamus Duffy, of Ballycarry Street, Belfast, was admitted to the Mater Hospital apparently suffering from a chest injury from which he died.

It has not yet been positively established how or where the youth was injured but it is believed that he may have been struck by a plastic baton round fired by the RUC. A post mortem is being held to establish the cause of death. A senior officer, a Detective Chief Superintendent, has been appointed to conduct an investigation and the Police are appealing to anyone who has any information concerning the circumstances of the youth's death to get in touch with them immediately.

Last evening, being the anniversary of the eve of internment, police were deployed in the Antrim Road/New Lodge area to prevent the hi-jacking of vehicles, the destruction of property and sectarian confrontation. For several hours the Police came under heavy attack and several officers were injured. Stones, bricks and iron bars were used by a rioting mob of several hundred people many of whom, it is known, had been and were drinking. Shots were also fired. In order to defend themselves, to curb the rioting and prevent the wanton destruction of property, the Police fired plastic baton rounds in the Dawson Street, Churchill Street and Hartwell Place areas. At one stage the Army had to be deployed to remove a barricade. Empty crates and crates with milk bottles and petrol were seized by the police.



Whilst it must be emphasised that the circumstances of Seamus Duffy's death have yet to be established, the RUC nevertheless very much regrets this loss of young life.

The RUC earnestly appeals to parents and to all people of influence, clergyman, politicians, community leaders, to assist in maintaining peace and calm in the community.

The RUC emphasises once again that they have no desire whatsoever to use plastic baton rounds. If there is no rioting, there will be no plastic baton rounds. Rioting inevitably leads to community suffering and tragedy and this the RUC is doing all in its power to prevent. In such situations, there are no winners, only losers.