



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

An insight into what the Good Friday Agreement has really brought to Northern Ireland

These articles are taken from The Belfast Telegraph of May 31st and the Irish News of 1st June, two pro-Good Friday Agreement newspapers. They will give an insight into the truth about the consequences of The Good Friday Agreement and what it has meant for many.

These two articles, taken from newspapers which are strongly in favour of The Good Friday Agreement, serve to illustrate that terror and lawlessness still abound, despite the attempt to buy off the IRA by the surrendering of democracy and justice that is the core of the whole David Trimble-led so-called peace movement.

Let those who live far from the grim reality of life in Northern Ireland under the Trimble/Adams/Hume coalition study these two reports, remembering that they come from agencies favourable to the GFA.

The Editor.

THE BELFAST TELEGRAPH, WEDNESDAY, 30 MAY 2001

The grim list of sins with must cleanse

By Eric Waugh

WHEN the men who had done terrible things to their fellow-citizens were streaming through the rusty turnstiles outside the Maze Prison last summer, the Secretary of State, Peter Mandelson, said it was a bitter pill for people to swallow.

This newspaper warned that the gain had better be worth the pain. Among those who emerged to cheering, ill-considered confetti and the popping of champagne corks were those who had raked drinkers in a bar with automatic fire; placed bombs which blew young housewives and the toddlers at their feet to pieces; who coolly looked through the telescopic sights of a Barrett rifle and squeezed the trigger, ending the short life of an Army lad of 23; who laughed out loud as they were given life sentences, shouting that they would be out in months.

They were right. The Agreement said it. But, left behind are those with life sentences no Agreement can abbreviate; like Zaoui, the Asian in his 40s working in his newsagent's at Canary Wharf when that car bomb went off at the kerb outside five years ago. He is now incapable, dribbling, one eye left, not much of his brain. His devoted wife does her best. But she knows one of the gang who did it walked from the Maze last summer.

In the background, busy but saying nothing, are the widows of the well-known: like Diana Neave and Jane Gow; and the families, youngsters then, now long grown. like those of Rory Conaghan, the murdered Catholic judge from Derry whose fairness was beyond re-



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proach. For some who were left, the weight of the agony was too much and, like Jane Ewart-Biggs, they went themselves to the grave.

Daily on the news the Bloody Sunday inquiry drags on, adding little materially to our knowledge, proving nothing we did not already know, labouring over niggles, piling up a bill of many tens of millions and giving a new meaning to what lawyers in chambers call a dripping roast.

To the victims of the other killings, two thirds of them unsolved, it seems there were no other victims; and to the ailing elsewhere, dying for want of a heart by-pass or cancer surgery because there are no beds, it seems an inordinately callous order of spending priorities.

I recite the grim litany because these are the sins we must expiate. This is how good the Agreement has got to be. It is not easy. The gangs who did all this tell us their guns are silent. But they still have them. They ignore the law and enforce their own: one shooting now every other day, twice as many "loyalist" as republican and mounting by the week. The police are weakened. The terrorist gangs say this is their justification. By midsummer the RUC is expected to have lost fully half of its 170 senior officers. The detective branch could also be cut in half. The Reserve of 4,500 is being disbanded. These men and women have had enough. Their close colleagues have died beside them: but the Government's commission on the future of the force could not find it in its heart to say a single word in acknowledgement.

Chris Patten, no doubt, had his reasons. But he should know that his omission has helped to imperil the entire edifice of which his exertions were intended to be part. The experts say the transformation of the force will take ten years. But we have not got that much time. Even as it is, the parties cannot agree on the shape of the new force. As they bicker, RUC morale sinks lower. But peace and public order and justice are vital if an Agreement like that of 1998 is to stick. So some say this is no time to be uprooting the police. Their critics reply that, without uprooting the police, there can be no Agreement. Perhaps not this one: but perhaps another?

IRISH NEWS 1ST JUNE 2001

Residents protest at 'mob law'

By Andrea McKernon

SAVAGE republican punishment squads terrorising a Newry housing estate must be brought to justice, residents urged last night.

The call comes after the paramilitary style attack on two men in the Parkhead estate on Wednesday night.

The punishment attacks are the latest in a line of similar assaults in the border town.

Two weeks ago 16-year-old Eamonn O'Boyle was shot in both ankles in what his father claimed was a case of mistaken identity. Eamonn also sustained head injuries after he was



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struck by a hatchet.

The attack was carried out in Parkhead crescent – scene of Wednesday’s incident.

Residents believe the same gang mounted both attacks.

Assembly member Danny Kennedy said no paramilitary group had the right to act as judge, jury and executioner.

“I hope people in the area will cooperate fully with the RUC. We do not want mob law here. It is no solution to get paramilitaries involved in these situations. I am sure the RUC will pursue those responsible,” he said.

Newry and Mourne district council vice-chairman Jack Patterson also condemned the attack and added that such punishment squads were holding parts of Newry to ransom.

“I condemn all paramilitary attacks such as this as they have a negative impact on the area and on the lives of those affected,” he said.