



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Arlene Foster criticises Clare Short for defending IRA



Mrs. Arlene Foster

Arlene Foster, DUP MLA in Fermanagh/South Tyrone, has expressed her outrage at comments made by former Labour Cabinet Minister Clare Short about the IRA. In an interview to the Dubai newspaper, *Gulf News*, about insurgency in Iraq, Clare Short said, "I understand their anger completely. My father came from Northern Ireland And I understand why people think 'I can't get justice in any other way' I think it's always wrong to target civilians because, even when you understood the IRA, they never targeted civilians."

Mrs. Foster said: "It is no secret where Clare Short's sympathies lie in the Northern Ireland situation. However, these comments are an outrage as they are insensitive to all the victims of the Troubles and an insult to the memory of those killed. When Ms Short says that the IRA never targeted civilians I would ask her to consider the Enniskillen bombing in my constituency and all the other atrocities in which many innocent victims were killed. Yet even if there were any validity in that comment, it is despicable that Ms Short limits her comments to saying that 'the killing of civilians is always wrong'. She is making a distinction to say that some targeting and murder by terrorists is justified. That will be totally refuted by all right thinking people. civilians targeted The IRA conducted a terrorist campaign against civilians and legitimate security forces, not in self defence but in cold deliberate action. She went on to say that Clare Short's comments "give succour to all terrorists, no matter what their cause, by saying that that sort of campaign can in any way be justified or understood. No matter what cause or complaint anyone had, I do not believe that the IRA had any right to put Northern Ireland through thirty years of carnage. We can only be thankful that Ms Short is no longer in government and has developed such a reputation for loose and inaccurate comment that these remarks will have little credibility and be dismissed by most."