



## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

### “Sacrificed to placate the IRA!”



**An RIR pipe band**

The disbandment of the home battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment could affect the DUP's approach to reviving devolution, the party has said. The DUP's Peter Robinson said his party has almost finished its consultation with members of the regiment over the disbandment of the NI-based battalions. The party's deputy leader was speaking at a meeting of Castlereagh Borough Council recently.

The government has said the battalions will disband on 1 August 2007. “We are at an advanced stage in engaging in a process of

consultation across the province and we have already talked to many of those who are serving in the ranks of the RIR,” Mr. Robinson said.

“We want to ensure that our representations to the government are able to deliver an outcome that recognises the service provided to the community over many years and the value of the service they can yet make. In the aftermath of the announcement to disband the home battalions, we have been working closely with those across all ranks in the Royal Irish to develop a number of options for the future of those affected.” “Unlike police officers and prison officers who relied on the Police Federation or the Prison Officers' Association to advance the cause of their members, soldiers have no such representation. Many members of the regiment have asked us, as their elected representatives, to take up that mantle.”

The announcement of the disbandment came hours after the IRA announcement and it is widely seen as a pay-off to Sinn Fein. It was accompanied by the release of mass-murderer, Sean Kelly and it too is seen as part of the bargain made by Blair with Sinn Fein.