



## The Burning Bush - Online article archive

### The protests and warnings surrounding the Enniskillen massacre

An introduction to the four sermons - "The Enniskillen bombing of 25 years ago"

At 10.45 am on Lord's Day 8th November, 1987, an IRA bomb, planted in an empty building belonging to the Roman Catholic church, exploded without warning and killed 11 Protestants gathered to watch the Remembrance Day wreath-laying ceremony at the war memorial beside the East Bridge. One victim of the bombing, Mr Ronnie Hill, lay in a coma for 13 years before he died, the twelfth victim of a most wicked crime.

Rev Ivan Foster was preaching in Ballynahinch Free Presbyterian Church that day and was therefore absent from his own pulpit in Kilskeery.

He had just begun to preach when police came to the church and the service was interrupted as he was informed of the bombing and the fact that two people who attended his church, Mr and Mrs Alan Stephenson, were amongst those who were the victims. The police could not say whether they were still alive or how seriously injured they may be. Mr Foster had to leave the church and rush the 70 miles back to Enniskillen hospital there to thankfully discover that both were alive though seriously injured, especially Mrs Stephenson.

#### COVER-UP

A 'rescue operation' was mounted by Rome and the ecumenical churches, for the incident had aroused great anger among Protestants, and the proponents of ecumenical unity feared that all their careful schemings of the previous decades would be undone in the wake of Protestant resentment at such an abominable crime.

The police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, as it was then known, joined in the cover-up and deception for it was primarily its fault that the IRA was permitted to carry out the massacre, because a decision had been taken by local commanders to forgo searching the building in which the bomb had been planted, even though it was derelict and within yards of the war memorial. Such a dangerous decision was made because the Roman Catholic church in Enniskillen had objected to its property being searched in previous years.

So a step to placate Rome's anti-police hatred cost the lives of 12 Protestants and the injuries, some very serious indeed, of another 66 Protestants.

This was the wickedness that the mainline churches in Enniskillen, along with the local press and the Stormont political administration sought to conceal and bury.

#### PROTESTS

In an attempt to warn against what was going on, Rev Ivan Foster wrote a letter to the local Newspaper, "The Impartial Reporter", but the letter was refused. Its columns were closed against the truth.

However, Kilskeery Free Presbyterian pulpit was open and from it sounded out the Word of God, warning against the conspiracy at work.

These sermons are highlighted on the front page here of "The Burning Bush". They contain an insight into that horrific event for which no one was ever tried or, indeed, arrested and interrogated.

It must stand out as one of the worst atrocities perpetrated by the Sinn Fein/IRA and one of the blackest stains against the name of those police officers who acquiesced in the cover-up.

- **"My prayer for the bombers"**, the first sermon, was preached on the Sabbath after the bombing and is a response to the sickening ecumenical call for the forgiveness of the bombers.
- **"Turning the scene of a massacre into a shrine of hypocrisy"**, the second message, was a protest against the ongoing ecumenical attempts to further blind Protestants to the true nature of the bombing



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and the just and proper response to it.

- **“The cry of the souls under the altar”**, the third message, was a setting forth of the biblical view of such an atrocity.
- **“The Enniskillen massacre - six months on”**, the final message, was preached some six months later when no arrests whatsoever had been made, but the ecumenical campaign to beguile the Protestant people continued.

To this day no one has ever been interviewed about the murders even though the perpetrators are known to the police.