



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Sham Peace! Sham Prize!



The Roman Catholic community have been ecstatic about John Hume's award. He has been hailed as the "blessed peacemaker." The Protestant community, on the other hand, conscious of the still-armed terrorists that are alive and active in Northern Ireland and the anti-unionist character of the biased "Peace Agreement", have said very little. Indeed, one of Mr. Trimble's henchmen, Ken Maginnis MP, was reported as saying that the award should not have been given until after true peace was established.

The prize was given in order to push the Protestant people further into an acceptance of the process toward a united Ireland that lies behind the present political arrangements. The cross-border structures, the setting up of the Assembly "cabinet", these things are being held up by the reluctance of the Protestant people to give credence to the political initiatives of the British and Irish governments.

Doubtless, it was felt that this formerly prestigious award would exert massive pressure on the Protestant people to join in the euphoria and fully embrace the whole peace package, irrespective of their reservations. The fact that it was awarded to a duo rather than a trio is significant. Gerry Adams' name was absent because it was deemed that its inclusion would have proved counter-productive, as far as the feelings of Protestants were concerned. In truth, whatever merit there was in the political wheeling and dealing of the past few years, Gerry Adams played as vital a role as did either of the two men rewarded. But, as already observed, the inclusion of his name would have done much to negate the true purpose of the award, the pressurising of the Protestant people into an acceptance of the "peace" process. Despite the vote of approval given by a majority earlier this year, the majority of unionists have undoubtedly changed their minds about the Agreement, especially so since the Omagh bombing when 30 people were murdered. The recent release from hospital of some of the maimed and badly scarred victims has brought the matter of republican terrorism back to the top of the agenda of unionist debate.

David Trimble, as first minister of the new cabinet, is refusing to go ahead with the establishing of an executive containing Sinn Fein members, until their paramilitary wing starts to hand over weapons and explosives. His reluctance, it must be said, is due only to the changing tide within his own party and of unionism generally. Had the Omagh bombing not taken place, it is hard to imagine him not finding a basis to compromise further and break his word yet again and appoint Sinn Fein cabinet members without the IRA first disarming. Even now, few within his own party fully trust him. A number of prominent members of his party, including the former party leader, Lord Molyneaux, have formed a group, Union First, with the purpose of stopping any further fudging on a terrorist weapons hand-over. When questioned by Bob McCartney MP, Mr. Trimble refused to state that he would not compromise on the arms issue. In the light of these things, the awarding of the Nobel Peace prize may yet be one of those occasions warned against by Israel's King Ahab in one of his wiser moments. Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off, 1 Kings 20:11. The peace is not yet won and never will be under the terms of the Belfast "Peace Agreement."