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Mála Poist

Andersonstown News

14/12/2006

Collusion policy is now unravelling

On November 6 an independent panel of international lawyers finally published its findings after a two-and-a-half-year Inquiry into the murders of Irish citizens.

The evidence they found implicates the British security forces in direct collusion in 74 out of 76 murders.

If we were to consider the scale of these atrocities, the refusal of the British government to instigate public inquiries and the lengths that they go to obstruct the course of justice we would have to ask what role they could play and how much they could be trusted to deliver in the Irish peace process itself.

And their plans to increase the role of M15 rather than confine these spooks to history would be their decisive and defining answer.

We might wonder also how a member country of the European Union which boasts so loudly about its democratic traditions can engage to such an extent in the selective murder of people who they claim as their own citizens on such a scale.

And this report is only the latest of many others which implicate the British government and its agents in the murder of our people.

If we were to consider all of this and the public statements and admissions of their informants and spies then we are looking at criminality of iceberg proportions. And it won't be shifted by the evasions of their chief of police, the arrogance of their Secretary of State or the deafening silence of the entire British political constituency.

That these are the type of human rights abuses which this same government uses to justify its illegal war in Iraq illustrates also the scale of their murderous hypocrisy.

In the face of increasing pressure for an independent truth process they have even created another diversion. We now have the PSNI-sponsored Historical Enquiries Team. This team is not independent but a unit of the PSNI which must itself be investigated.

And they inform us that they can only track down 1,577 RUC files from 3,268 deaths. There was no RUC or PSNI central registry until recently. Police files were stored in police stations. Police officers could take them home and some were destroyed.

And as for collusion itself, we are reliably informed also that the Historical Enquiries Team cannot deal with any murders where there is alleged collusion. In such cases they must be dealt with by another team in London called the 'White Team'.

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It goes without saying that none of this amounts to a genuine attempt at creating justice and closure for grieving relatives but rather a disgusting contempt for their rights. There is widespread agreement that neither the political process nor the peace process itself can succeed until the policing issue is resolved.

The policing issue cannot be resolved until the police themselves and all the other armed groups that Britain have sent over to this country in the guise of peacekeepers are brought to admit the crimes they have committed, and until adequate legislation is introduced to guarantee their accountability in the future.

Jack Duffin,
Belfast

Show respect to ambulances on the road

In last Monday's text messages, there was an article listed as 'Sick of sitting in traffic' and I would like to reply to the text writer.

There is a very simple answer to the question that he asked about the use of sirens and blue lights. All ambulance staff, in their training, are instructed not to use sirens in hospital grounds.

As this could happen many times a day, this action is to assure that the patients, many of whom are very unwell in the hospital, are not disturbed. They are also instructed not to use sirens but to use blue lights only, when the patient has an acute heart condition.

Using sirens would increase the fear in the patient, increase their blood pressure and with the extra strain on their heart their condition would get worse.

Lastly, he/she refers to what they call 'ambulance drivers'. There is no such thing. No health service employs ambulance drivers, the same as no fire authority employs fire drivers.

The correct title of the ambulance staff is either paramedic or ambulance technician. Driving is only part of their job and, like the Fire Service, their main job is saving lives which requires very extensive and dedicated training.

The average driver needs to be aware of what is going on when they see the blue lights and hear the sirens. Make way for the ambulance when it is on an emergency, pull in to the left, if it is safe to do so, and let the ambulance staff get on with their work.

By doing so you may be helping to save a life.

Retired Ambulance Staff Member,
Belfast

Agree with Lagmore letter

I would like to agree with JD, Lagmore (Mála Poist, December 4) in relation to the sterling work done by Sinn Féin in the Lagmore area.

Unlike JD, I have been a lifelong Shinner, but I'm glad to see he/she is now a convert.

JD spoke about Sinn Féin appearing "one night out of the blue to ask if there were any problems they could help with like street lighting or bin collections".

This must be some type of survey they are carrying out right across the Lagmore area as I spoke to my sister in Mount Eagles and she said they called to her house asking the same type of questions about three months ago.

This is a real example of a political party working on the ground for its constituents. Instead of waiting for complaints, Sinn Féin are finding out what is affecting the community and trying to put it right. I call that proactive politics.

When they call they leave newssheets or information about things like local crime and how to best combat it. In my case they also returned with responses to questions posed.

They have delivered literature which has been informative and interesting and have kept the people up to date. Every area in West Belfast should have this type of information and representation as we deserve it.

So credit where credit is due. Well done to Sinn Féin in Lagmore, people up

Cross-border

achievement awards --

Gradaim Gaisce Tras

Teorainn



Developing Belfast's Top
50 Business People



here can't say "The only time we see you is when there's an election." I predict you'll be getting plenty of votes up here. You'll certainly be getting mine.

Jim, Lagmore

Wheelie bin

Anyone got a blue wheelie bin which belongs to 7 Glencolin Drive?
via email

Well done, Jackie

Great to see Jackie Maxwell of St Oliver Plunkett fame get recognition as a BBC sports unsung hero nominee.

About time he was recognised for all the great work.

Soccer Fan, Lenadoon

Anxious about the way things are going on the political front in the North of Ireland

I am writing to express my anxiety as to whether we are in fact moving towards a long-held republican goal of a united and free Ireland or are we gradually being drawn more tightly into a more belligerent, authoritarian and Big Brother Britain, dominated and driven by big business. Unfortunately, my view is that it is the latter and the St Andrew's Agreement is nothing more than a Wooden Horse of Troy. There is not a day goes by without some form of legislation being enacted by the British state and imposed upon Irish citizens who reside in the six counties. The latest example of injustice is the water tax, which is the correct title for this latest attempt at extortion. I thought David Hanson was joking when he gormlessly looked into the lens of the TV camera and announced that the water tax was being imposed "if only to bring Northern Ireland into line with the rest of the United Kingdom". An incredible statement directed at a community which has endured 30 years of war in order to resist further British misgovernment and injustice. On a social level the water tax will only serve to increase poverty and hardship throughout this community, which still suffers from unemployment problems, child poverty and lowering of school standards in education in order to deliver the curriculum as cheaply as possible. The rocketing rates of suicide among our young people who appear to have lost heart are particularly worrying.

We have young families who are barely managing the weekly budget, as houses and mortgages are so very expensive, trying to live on wages which are simply not commensurate with the extremely high cost of living here. We have a health service which is poor, to say the least, if we take the case of baby Abigail Rooney whose mother was told that nothing could be done for her until she was nine years old.

This is how successfully the British state works here. Now we have the added burden of water tax.

On a political level we have no clear view from Sinn Féin as to their views on water tax or to the information which has leaked (sorry) out that the Water Service is to be sold to a private company after a few years. This possibility should bring howls of derision from our political leaders, who now sit compliantly in the Assembly exchanging cringeworthy stories about republican Presbyterians.

The situation whereby Irish people will be paying enormous water charges to a fat-cat English water company for Irish water is politically and socially unacceptable to the vast majority of Irish people and will be strongly resisted. Someone should explain to the British minister that we have been paying for water through the rates since the old Water Board was dissolved many years ago and we are not going to pay twice.

Hain, Hanson and co would have us believe that we have been the recipients of free water through the loving benevolence of the British state. Some hope, as the British state has been run by a succession of governments totally obsessed with control, eradication of personal liberty

for the law-abiding citizen and raising revenue.

The present Labour government has created such a quagmire of misery and disillusionment for its own citizens in Britain that they are leaving at the rate of one thousand per day in order to live in mainland Europe where, as it was quoted to me by one such exile, "I can feel that I am much more than just a taxable unit."

Unfortunately I don't have the proverbial 'house in Donegal' where I can go off to when the injustices of the British state become too exacting.

I am, however, not only going to refuse to pay water tax but as from April 2007 I am going to invoke my right as an Irish citizen and refuse to pay the recently hiked-up rates as well. In the 26 Counties rates are, quite rightly, only levied on commercial properties.

Veritas

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