

[Most Popular](#)[Most Emailed](#)

[Breaking](#)[Sport](#)[Business](#)[World](#)[Gossip](#)



Issue Changer:



[NEWS >](#)

IRA volunteers 'killed in action' Troubles victims too says Kelly

By William Graham Political Correspondent

21/02/2009

Junior minister Gerry Kelly said last night that dead IRA members were "victims of the conflict too" and their families suffered the same grief as those of British soldiers and police.

Addressing the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis in Dublin, Mr Kelly said for too long some people had tried to promote a hierarchy of victims.

He said that the republican dead

were also victims, with most being "IRA volunteers who were killed in action".

The North Belfast assembly member said there were also many British soldiers and members of the RUC whose death had caused great trauma and grief for their families and friends.

"No matter what their role in the conflict, the loss at a personal level is massive and regrettable," Mr Kelly said

"If we are to have a real healing process then anti-republican sentiment will have to recognise that families of IRA volunteers or Sinn Fein members go through exactly the same pain and grief."

Sinn Fein has called for an international truth commission, possibly with the involvement of the United Nations, to deal with the legacy of the Troubles.

Mr Kelly, pictured, said that the appointment by the British government of a legacy commission as proposed by the Eames/Bradley

report would fall very short of fundamental criteria.

"The British government was the major protagonist in the conflict in Ireland," Mr Kelly said.

"They therefore cannot be the objective facilitator of any truth

recovery process."

Meanwhile, Sinn Fein policing spokesman Alex Maskey accused PSNI Chief Constable Sir Hugh Orde of too often making "political

comment" and claimed the effect of this had been one of undermining confidence in him.

"If you are a victim of crime you want to hear the chief constable

talking about strategies to prevent crime and catch criminals. Too often we get excuses."

Mr Maskey said that the conflict was over and policing needed to reflect this reality.

"In recent months senior PSNI officers have been regularly talking up the so-called dissident republican

threat," Mr Maskey said.

"Clearly there is some level of threat from these small groups and the remnants of the loyalist gangs. I do not seek to minimise that.

"But it cannot be allowed to be used by those with one eye on the old ways to slip back into the sort of political policing which blighted our situation for so long or to use it as an excuse not to deliver a quality frontline civic policing service."

Elsewhere, Sinn Fein chairwoman Mary Lou McDonald used her speech last night to concentrate on the economic situation.

"In the blink of an eye we have gone from boom to bust. The years of budget surpluses have been squandered," she said.

The MEP added that "the golden circle has had its day" and said the number one priority were targets for job creation to be set and met.

 Print  back to top

Bookmark:  Delicious  Digg  reddit  Facebook  StumbleUpon

 Email this story