

An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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GUSTY SPENCE, SEVEN DAYS, 20/08/00

INTERVIEWER

I gather you have been talking to reporters within the last hour and discussing what happened last night and the mood on the Shankill Road. What have you been saying?

GUSTY SPENCE

Well I've just left my home. It's no part of my purpose to exacerbate an already volatile situation. I feel so sad because I'm appealing, appealing to every decent UDA man and to every person out there, because people power will stop this. There is a caucus or a pocket within the UDA, are held bent in some form of incomprehensible tactic that I can't understand. I was born an reared in the hungry 30's in the Shankill Road, a hundred yards from where my wife's home is now and despite everything that has happened, including Adolf Hitler, including the campaign by the IRA and everything else, this happens now, at a time when ever it's supposed to be peace. I really believe that we are on the threshold of a new beginning. But there those in our society who cannot countenance change. Now change is coming and they better get used to it.

INTERVIEWER

Well is this then, an internal conflict between two sides who are hell bent on some kind of very violent turf war. Or is it about going right back to the Agreement and those who support the kind of future that you've talked about and those who cannot contemplate a full acceptance of the Belfast Agreement?

GUSTY SPENCE

Mark, I'm not one for condescending, but any fool, any fool with half an eye can see that there is some form of power struggle within the UDA by a small pocket, a small caucus and the UDA will waken up to that fact and do something about it. Now I'm not talking about anything of a violent nature. I want to see all solutions or all the problems peacefully resolved and this is one that can be peacefully resolved

INTERVIEWER

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Can it be peacefully resolved by a reorganisation or fresh attempts on the part of the CLMC? I don't know quite what status it has at the moment.

GUSTY SPENCE

Well I don't know. I was brought into that thing, whenever I read out that ceasefire statement and I was briefed to the affect and what I read out at that time I really believed and do believe, and it will happen, that we will be at peace with ourselves. But not whilst this small caucus or pocket of people are trying to upset, this is NI, civilised society or supposed to be, and we have all these things happen. Not because it happened to Gusty Spence, but because there is a whole prolonged campaign of sectarianism that has to be knocked on the head now. So therefore, it's up to the people and up to those decent people within the organisations to get it knocked on the head.

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