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Hayes right but for the wrong reasons



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At a lecture in Magee this week, the former leading civil servant, Maurice Hayes, said that the allocation of at least £200 million spent on the Saville Inquiry into Bloody Sunday could have been put to better use.

However, SDLP leader Mark Durkan defended the inquiry. "Would you ever have got Sir Mike Jackson making the admission that he made last week (that the victims were innocent) - albeit belatedly and

begrudgingly - had it not been for the fact of the second inquiry after the scandal that was the Widgery Report'.

While on the one hand Mark Durkan is right to say that, it does beggar a simple question. When will the atmosphere ever be right for the British establishment to tell the truth about what happen on that day? Will it ever be right for them to utter the words 'sheer unadulterated murder'? They know it was.

You know it was and I know it was, because I was there. I don't need any British judge telling me anything different but, you know what, I expect to be told different.

The Saville Inquiry was established in 1998 by British Prime Minister Tony Blair after a long and arduous campaign by the families of those killed and injured.

Now we are told that the long awaited report will be another year in the waiting so that is a full decade after the inquiry commenced with such a furore.

Ten years in the making and, if I were you, don't hold your breathe waiting for the truth to come out. Saville was heralded as an essential building block in the process of peace, reconciliation and healing.

It was established to help us heal the wounds of that awful day in January 1972 and we all hope that it does.

Yet, I have a sickly feeling that this may never actual happen. Remember that the only person, so far, to have served prison time for Bloody Sunday was a Derryman while many others, including the murderers, have got off scot-free and will continue to evade justice.

Is Maurice Hayes right to slag off Saville? Yes but for the wrong reasonsâ€¦..

Last Updated: 08 June 2007

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