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Disgusting justification for sectarian murders

(Susan McKay, [Irish News](#))

Willie Frazer was outside Sunday's Sinn Féin ard fheis in Dublin with a placard accusing republicans of having blood on their hands.

He expressed outrage at the idea that the "law-abiding population" would negotiate with terrorists to get them to support democracy, law and order.

Three years ago, Frazer was refused a personal protection weapon because the police said they had "reliable intelligence" that he "associated with loyalist terrorist organisations". He denied it.

He is the spokesman for the Families Acting for Innocent Relatives (Fair) victims group.

The DUP's pious Jeffrey Donaldson was sent out by the party yesterday to rubbish Sinn Féin's decision to support the PSNI. The "significant conditionality" of the republican decision would have to be removed, he said.

Last year, Frazer and Donaldson marked the 30th anniversary of the IRA's Kingsmills massacre by claiming they had a dossier containing the names of the murderers.

DUP leader Ian Paisley used parliamentary privilege in 1999 to accuse, among others, Eugene Reavey of carrying out the atrocity in which 10 innocent Protestant workmen died. Paisley claimed he had reliable police intelligence.

It was an outrageous and unfounded allegation.

It was also irresponsible and dangerous. The then chief constable, Ronnie Flanagan, said there was no police intelligence to suggest Eugene Reavey was involved in the massacre, or in any way connected with terrorism. The night before Kingsmills, a loyalist paramilitary gang had slaughtered three of Eugene's brothers at their home in south Armagh.

These murders are before the European Court of Human Rights because of strong indications that Ulster Defence Regiment colluded with the UVF.

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The gang had gone on that night to murder three members of another Catholic family, the O'Dowd's.

Two of the Reaveys died at the scene.

The youngest brother, Anthony, died later. While in hospital he became friends with Alan Black, who survived Kingsmills, and who has said that he knows Eugene Reavey to be completely innocent.

The UDR stopped Mrs Reavey, the mother of the dead men, on the road on her way home from the morgue and mocked and harassed her.

The family became the victims of a whispering campaign which said they had been targeted because they were in the IRA. A couple of weeks ago, Eugene Reavey decided to publicise the fact that the Historical Enquiries Team (HET) which is investigating the murders of his brothers had told the family that they had been the "innocent victims of senseless sectarian violence". The chief officer of the HET, Dave Cox, also apologised for the behaviour of the security forces back in 1976.

Fair responded by claiming the HET had angered and hurt victims.

It has for years carried a reference to Paisley's allegation on its website despite PSNI demands that it be removed.

Now it has added a disgraceful article called 'Just never proven guilty'.

This claims the HET's "words are meaningless and hollow for they can never assure innocence, all they can do is point to a lack of legal convictions". (sic)

It goes on to say "after all we are all innocent until proven guilty" and, because the men are dead and can't be tried, "the whole issue is a moot point".

Having thus made nonsense of the central tenet of our justice system, Fair addresses collusion. Why would "those with access to security force intelligence" choose an innocent family to kill, it demands.

On the other hand, it goes on, if the Reaveys were named in such intelligence, why would the police deny it?

A conspiracy, perhaps, involving the IRA, the HET and the PSNI, Fair suggests.

The HET is soon to investigate Kingsmills and Fair says it should have waited to see the "evidence" it will present before "exonerating" the Reaveys.

This disgusting justification for sectarian murder and for slander is reproduced on the website of a loyalist radio station in Scotland. Fair thanks Calton Radio for inviting it to address an anti-republican rally and praises the quality of its loyalism.

The station has been the subject of complaints about sectarianism.

Fair's slogan is 'help us to tell the truth'. The DUP says it won't sit down with terrorists.

Frazer and the DUP dismissed Nuala O'Loan's report on collusion last week.

This indicates a 'significant conditionality' because the police ombudsman is a pillar of the policing establishment.

They also want to take it or leave it when it comes to police intelligence.

They should not get away with slurring the victims of sectarianism, nor with accusing an innocent, law-abiding man of mass murder. The Reavey family has suffered enough.

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