


[HOME](#)
[History](#)
[NewsoftheIrish](#)
[Book Reviews
& Book Forum](#)
[Search / Archive](#)
[Back to 10/96](#)
[Papers](#)
[Reference](#)
[About](#)
[Contact](#)

Bloody Sunday family dismisses Jackson admission

(Seamus McKinney, [Irish News](#))

A brother of a teenager killed on Bloody Sunday has dismissed an admission by the former head of the British army that innocent people were killed on the day.

In a BBC *Spotlight* programme screened last night (Tuesday), General Sir Mike Jackson said that over time he came to the conclusion that innocent people were shot dead by soldiers on Bloody Sunday.

At the time, the general was a captain in the first battalion the Parachute Regiment as well as being regimental adjutant.

While present in Derry on Bloody Sunday he did not take part in the shootings. But in the hours after the deaths of 13 anti-internment protesters, he gathered up statements from his fellow-soldiers.

The statements were subsequently used by the British government to claim that soldiers had shot at IRA members. They were also used in the 1972 Widgery Inquiry which exonerated the soldiers and sought to lay the blame for Bloody Sunday with the organisers of the march.

In his evidence to the Saville Inquiry into Bloody Sunday, Sir Mike said: "Far from being an attempt to rewrite history, the direction (soldiers' statements) I received was clearly an attempt to record what had happened.

"Further I had been present and had a grasp of events overall. I am sure it would have been clear to me if anyone was not telling me the truth."

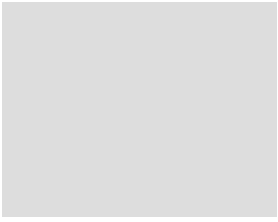
John Kelly whose brother, Michael (17) was one of those killed, said the former British army leader merely stated what all the Bloody Sunday relatives knew.

He said it was unfortunate that he had not come to his conclusion at the time as it would have avoided years of pain.

"I have always said the fifteenth victim of Bloody Sunday was the truth," Mr Kelly said.

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