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2nd Edition

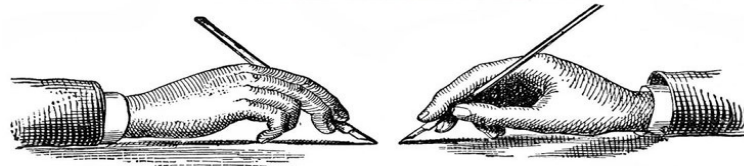
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Editorial



Welcome to our second edition of Unionist Voice. It has been an eventful month and once again the magazine is full of news, views and analysis of important events within the unionist community.

This month saw Unionist Voice Policy Studies host a legacy consultation evening and panel discussion. This event brought together a wide range of people to engage in a robust, but respectful debate. The event was chaired by Irish News journalist Allison Morris and alongside myself also included Doug Beattie MLA, Jeffrey Dudgeon and Mervyn Gibson. There was a fantastic turnout and excellent audience participation. This provided an often isolated and demonised section of the PUL community the chance to have their voice heard, and I believe it was one of the highlights of UVPS's work so far that we were able to provide that platform for such a range of people. Credit must go to all those who played a role in making the night a success, no job was insignificant and progress is impossible without everyone pulling together and doing their bit.

This month we have also published an article by Sean Murray. We have been extremely critical of Mr Murray and elements of his film making and legacy activism, and he chose to respond to those criticisms. It would be easy to have a platform that simply shuts down dissenting views and refusing to engage with them, but if we are big enough to express our views and use our platform in Unionist Voice

to challenge others, then surly there is an obligation upon us to be brave enough to offer the same platform to those that wish to come back at us and challenge our arguments?

If we cannot publically debate and stand over the arguments we articulate, then what is the point in engaging at all? We can only advance our own cause if we are prepared to have our arguments stress-tested in the fires of public scrutiny. How can we change minds if we don't step outwards from within our own community and put forward our arguments and our concerns? No one is going to go into civic society, into the media or into the public domain and make our arguments for us, we must do it ourselves and be prepared for the debate and challenges that flow from that.

This month we also place a heavy focus on the actions of the PSNI. It is imperative that we, as unionists and loyalists, demand equality under the law. If criminals are masquerading as loyalists, then who can object if the PSNI pursue such persons? But it is quite a different matter when the law is applied different because someone is a loyalist. The law must be applied equally and fairly, regardless of community background. It cannot be one standard of the law applied to loyalists, and quite a different standard for others. That is unfair and offends the very basic principles of our legal system.

We also have an exclusive and extensive interview with Rangers legend Andy Goram.

Andy opens up about his own mental health battles, and tells Unionist Voice about his hopes for the future.

William Ennis is another contributor this month. As a left wing Unionist, William articulates a different– but equally legitimate– form of unionism. Again we feel it is important to offer a platform to all reasonable viewpoints, and I certainly believe that the contribution by William is a positive one.

As the magazine continues to grow it is only natural that we will attract different contributors that the initial readership would not agree with. However, as I outlined at the start of this piece, if we are to build Unionist Voice into a credible and strong platform for the grassroots PUL community, then there has to be a space in that for all viewpoints. There is never anything to fear from debate and dialogue.

There is undoubtedly a change sweeping the grassroots unionist community, with more and more young people and those previously disengaged coming together in various forms of political, community and media activism. That is a positive trend, and one which we must continue to encourage and play our role in helping to grow.

Where there is injustice, we must challenge it. Where there is disrespect shown to our community and identity, we must challenge it. Where there is a false narrative or malicious story designed to demonise our community, we must challenge. We must challenge everything, we must fight for every column inch. We must stand up for ourselves. No one else will.

Huge Turnout for east Belfast legacy evening

There was a full house in the east Belfast Con Club as a wide range of people packed into the main room to participate in the legacy consultation and panel discussion.

Despite many hoping that the event would prove to be a failure, it turned out to be a fantastic evening providing a platform for the unionist and loyalist community. The very best of our community was showcased as people from all sections of unionism, and those who would not identify as unionists, came together for a respectful, courteous and articulate debate.

The evening began with a short video highlighting some of the atrocities perpetrated against the unionist community by the IRA, and this was an emotional start to the evening. This was followed up by a presentation by Alan Lewis of Families Research Policy Unit (FRPU), Pastor Barry Halliday and William Frazer.

The evening was then handed over to Irish News journalist Allison Morris to chair the main panel discussion. Allison later tweeted her thanks to all those who took the time to speak to her and welcome her to the Con Club.

The room then heard opening contributions from the panel which included Rev Mervyn Gibson, Cllr Jeff Dudgeon, Unionist Voice editor Jamie Bryson and Doug Beattie MLA. All panelists spoke out strongly against the proposed legacy structures for various different reasons.

Cllr Dudgeon had prepared a written speech which he has kindly provided, it can be read online on Unionist Voice.

Following this Allison posed a series of questions to the panelists, some of which were difficult and challenging.

In the coming days clips from the event and the full debate will be uploaded to our You Tube page for everyone to have the opportunity to watch the debate.

Questions from the floor were then taken with some emotional contributions from victims, survivors, former members of the security forces and loyalists.

Victims, panelists and the entire audience reacted with shock and revulsion at the revelation that under the

legacy proposals Shankill bomber Sean Kelly was viewed as every bit as much a victim as the families of those he murdered. Everyone agreed this was morally reprehensible and untenable.

Shankill loyalist Stephen Andrews made a passionate contribution from a loyalist perspective. After outlining his experience of being shot at in the 1970's, he went on



to address the definition of a victim. Stephen said that he felt loyalists should not be equated with their victims and that it was his opinion that loyalist paramilitaries did not seek the victim mantle.

This view was supported by Rev Mervyn Gibson and George from the Shankill who both said they had yet to come across a loyalist paramilitary that described themselves as a victim on a par with innocent civilians that lost their lives.

Jamie Bryson concurred with this, but highlighted that many of those he termed 'conflict generation' loyalists had not had the same type of support that republicans had and as a result continued to suffer greatly from mental health difficulties and a lack of provision to assist them to play a meaningful role within the new political dispensation.

Doug Beattie, as a former soldier, spoke out strongly against a statute of limitations and upon Allison Morris asking the floor whether anyone present supported a statute of limitations, no one in the audience raised their hands.

Among other contributions Billy Drummond from Shankill Alternatives spoke out about the poor representation by the elected unionist parties and questioned why they had never organised such an event. This view was echoed by community worker

Ian McLaughlin.

There was a long discussion on the proposed oral history archive. Jamie Bryson raised the case of Winston Rea who it has been alleged participated in the Boston Tapes (this has yet to be established by a court of law). Jamie said that whilst he could not speak to Winston's mind-set and had no knowledge of his motivations, he surmised that he may have taken the view in the context of the pro-peace process environment at the time of the Boston tapes that telling his story, warts and all, was an important historical record. However, Jamie also said that some others may take the view, in a general sense, that it would never be wise to talk about matters for which you have never been convicted but regardless of this there was an important point in that why would any loyalist want to engage in story telling when it could later be used against them in a court of law if the political context changed.

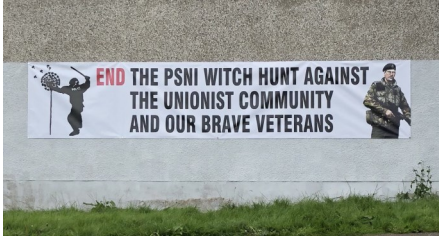
There was broad agreement with this point and all panelists agreed that unionism and loyalism needed to tell their story, but there had to be a safe and secure mechanism to do so. Rev Gibson said he supported community archives.

In a debate that lasted well over 2 hours the aforementioned details are just some points that came out of the evening which included in-depth debates on the proposed bill and the definition of a victim. We hope many people will take the time to watch the full video once it is uploaded.

Unionist Voice Policy Studies would like to thank all of those who attended this night and made the evening so successful. There is a clear energy within the grassroots unionist community with a broad coalition of people coming together, bound by the common thread that we will not allow ourselves to be treated as an underclass or demonised.

Special thanks were extended to journalists Rebecca Black and Yvette Shapiro for attending the event, and to Allison Morris for chairing the evening.

PSNI HARASSMENT OF THE UNIONIST COMMUNITY MUST END



There is growing anger within the unionist community at the increasing politicisation of the PSNI, including from many former officers who served proudly in the RUC.

Unionist disenchantment with the PSNI has been building for many years, ever since the disgraceful Patton reforms that demolished the RUC, tarnished its legacy and replaced it with a 'police service' whose primary purpose was not to solve crime or to



keep people safe, but rather to win the support of the IRA and by extension the wider nationalist community.

The IRA- through their surrogates in Sinn Fein- eventually endorsed the PSNI. Let that sink in; the political wing of a terrorist group that murdered and maimed RUC officers, our armed forces and civilians within our community for over 30 years now support the PSNI. What does it tell you about our 'police service' when it can win the support and endorsement of those who murdered and maimed its forerunner?

And of course the PSNI corporately endorse the division between the 'bad' RUC and the republican endorsed PSNI by virtue of the fact that they have two remembrance gardens- one for the RUC and one for the PSNI. ACC Stephen Martin boasted on social media last week about the separate gardens. Why must there be separate gardens, unless of course it is to try and create clear blue water between the brave RUC and the republican endorsed PSNI?

The PSNI have not only led the witch

hunt against former RUC officers and members of our armed forces, but are also increasingly engaged in targeted political harassment against the unionist community and specifically our marching bands, political activists, loyalists and peaceful protestors. Let us never forget the war waged on peaceful unionist bandmen, the brutalisation and criminalisation of our community during the flag protests and more recently the invasion of east Belfast to tear down bonfires whilst officers celebrated with 'bye bye bonfire'- all the while masked republicans ran amok.

Let us also look to the so called 'Paramilitary Crime Task Force', a political invention at the heart of the fresh start agreement. Their first big success was seiz-



ing entirely legal WW1 UVF memorabilia, which they then broadcast to the media. They followed this up with a relentless stream of dubious house searches and targeting of anyone deemed by former ACC Peter Sheridan's 'consortium' to be politically inconvenient. How many raids have been carried out against the PIRA? I will help you with the answer to that; none.

Rather than pursuing republican criminality, the Chief Constable is a regular panel guest at SF fronted events. It is an almost bi-monthly occurrence that the Chief Constable sits down with Sean 'Spike' Murray. What ever happened to their investigation into Mr Murray's role in the IRA's peacetime gunrunning? I will help you with the answer to that as well; nothing.

Of course we also have the PSNI's participation in recent years in the annual St Patricks day New York parade- a parade that carries pro-IRA banners. Are you surprised?

Let us then turn to the persecution of our armed forces. Over 98% of troubles related incidents were carried out by non-state groups, the majority by the Provisional IRA. Despite this the PSNI refuse to investi-

gate all non-fatal incidents- such as IRA bombs that maimed civilians or members of the armed forces- instead only focusing on fatalities. Even at this, 90% of fatalities were caused by non-state groups, again the majority by the Provisional IRA, yet 30% of the PSNI's case-load focuses on the actions of the state. This is very simple maths- the PSNI's legacy investigations are imbalanced, partisan and disproportionately targeting the brave men and women that served in defence of our community in the face of a relentless PIRA terrorist onslaught.

Many former RUC officers, and members of the wider unionist and loyalist community, are disgusted and appalled by the partisan political agenda of the PSNI. They are equally disgusted and appalled at the betrayal of all those that served in the RUC, the UDR and British Army

in defence of Ulster. One former RUC officer remarked recently, in relation to the PSNI's own 'Elliott Ness'- namely 'task force' head Bobby Singleton- that when he was in the force they were too busy fighting against a relentless terrorist campaign and checking under their cars or looking over their shoulders for the next IRA gunman, that they had no time to be modelling for the camera with a 'how you doin?' slogan.

The RUC fought the IRA and had to endure awful events such as lifting children's bodies out of the wreckage of the latest terrorist bombing; officers like Mr Singleton brief the media 'off the record' and pose for cute pictures as 'eye candy'. The contrast could not be greater.

We all want a police service that can be supported by the entire community, but such a police service must be bi-partisan, non-political and act within the law. The PSNI do not, at this stage, tick any of those boxes in the minds of many unionists, and indeed many former RUC officers.

PSNI SEEK TO CONCEAL THE IDENTITY OF THE KINGSMILL MURDERER KNOWN AS S54 – UNIONIST VOICE REVEALS IT

Despite the PSNI arguing strongly in an attempt to prevent the identity of the republican terrorist referred to as S54 being revealed, Unionist Voice believes it is strongly in the public interest to reveal the IRA man's identity.

We can reveal that he is Michael 'Micksey' Martin, pictured below.

During the inquest into the Kingsmill massacre on Wednesday (5 September), the PSNI desperately sought to avoid naming 'Micksey' Martin as one of the key participants in the brutal and sectarian IRA murder. The PSNI argued that to name the prominent IRA terrorist would place his life in danger.

Also deeply involved in the Kingsmill massacre was notorious IRA killer and suspected British agent, Colm Murphy. (Pictured right)

He was personally present on the night of the attack and one of the main gunmen. He has never been convicted for his part in the attack, and the PSNI have previously gone to the High Court in order to prevent a Northern Ireland newspaper from naming the Co Louth republican in connection with the massacre.

Whilst the PSNI relentlessly battle to protect the identity of republican murderers, they have yet to properly investigate or charge anyone in relation to stolen HET documents which it is understood are currently in the possession of a republican leaning law firm. These

stolen documents have been used as the basis for republican legacy activists to name former members of the security forces and loyalists within numerous books and documentaries. Selective parts of the documents have also been leaked to sections of the media.

The PSNI have taken no steps to pro-

connection with mass murder.

All of this continues in the context of a live Police Ombudsman investigation into the fact that senior PSNI officers have been leaking information to the media urging them to name loyalists and identifying persons arrested and released without charge, in breach of protocol.

The PSNI's approach to legacy must be fair, balanced and consistent. In the context of their continued attempts to blacken loyalists, their failure to properly investigate stolen documents in the hands of republican lawyers and their witch hunt against our brave veterans, Unionist Voice believes it is overwhelmingly in the public interest to ensure that republicans are also named in the public domain and exposed.

It cannot be one rule for former members of the security forces and loyalists, and another for republicans. If republican legacy activists, aided and abetted by the PSNI, wish to continue to publically name and target loyalists and former members of the security forces, then Unionist Voice will similarly continue to name, shame and expose republicans- whether they have been convicted or not.

**Unionist Voice is currently looking into the theft of HET documents which it is understood was handed to a Belfast based law firm who then leaked the confidential material to journalists, writers and film makers- thus passing on material they knew to be stolen. We hope to provide more detail next month.*



test former members of the security forces or loyalists from being named in the public domain on the basis of what are effectively little more than intelligence documents, whilst simultaneously going to extreme lengths to protect the identities of republican terrorists they have actually arrested in

Sean Murray responds to criticism of his 'Glenanne Gang' film—Unquiet Graves

** In last month's edition we ran an article challenging and criticising the 'Glenanne Gang' film produced by Mr Sean Murray. Mr Murray has submitted a response to Unionist Voice and in the interests of fairness we have published it in full along with a bio submitted.*

By Sean Murray



IN RESPONSE to your recent article 'Glenanne Gang film is another piece of politically motivated republican propaganda', I feel compelled to challenge a number of contentions that have been made within.

This, along with other ad hominem attacks in recent weeks, has unnecessarily clouded the challenging debate around the role of filmmakers in bearing witness to the stories of victims of state violence. There is now general acknowledgment that adequate government support was seldom put in place to tackle issues of conflict-related trauma across a broad spectrum of victims and survivors. In the absence of such support, the work of filmmakers has increasingly sought to address this phenomenon by highlighting issues concerning transitional justice; a task complicated by contested interpretations of what defines justice.

For Unionism, emphasis on the application of law, order and security tends to take precedence in these debates, while nationalists invariably stress the requirement of parity and social justice. Such agreements are further complicated by the role of the media, which for over thirty years has been far from an impartial arbitrator between the political ideologies of both traditions, habitually presenting a legacy of dominant narratives shaped by state censorship and control, both north and south.

The recent assertions that documen-

taries, such as mine, are an attempt to re-write the past are effortlessly debunked when presented with evidence to the contrary. When one makes the allegation that emerging stories that contest the hegemonic view of the conflict are 're-writing' the past, one must only conclude that this position stems from a point of privilege that there is only one interpretation of our recent history. As an observer, I feel this runs to the core of recent Unionist anger around the current legacy debate.

Let's take, for example, the recent statements at the Con Club debate (5th of September 2018) that there have been no films made about La Mon, Enniskillen and the Shankill Bombing. If we are to research the Cain Website for conflict-related documentaries (<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk>), there can be scores of representations around such atrocities at the click of a button, and rightly so. When researching further, the 'Peter Heathwood Collection of Television Programmes' (<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/othelem/media/heathwood/index3.html#2004>) we again see vast disproportional consideration given to maintaining the Unionist narrative.

From 1981 to 2005, where records have yet to be updated, documentaries and current affairs programmes upholding Unionist discourse around the conflict numbered at 674, while representations that could be considered to challenge these narratives (plastic bullets, shoot-to-kill, Bloody Sunday etc.) numbered at around 22.

Another allegation at the Con club was to state that a major theme within Unquiet Graves was to create the impression that the film promoted the activities of the IRA, while vilifying the actions of both the UDR and RUC. However, the activities of the IRA are highlighted only once within the film in indicting their members as being responsible for the Kingsmills Massacre. Misleading accusations, such as these, are clear efforts to spread disinformation about the film, and only lead to further undermine the Unionist case against my work.

Further to this, a Tweet by Mr Bryson (7th of September) that the 'Glenanne film is based on stolen documents from the HET' only serves to reinforce a serious disregard for the genuine capacity to engage with established criticisms around the documentary. If these allegations hold weight,

they must be brought to the attention of the PSNI immediately. However, I won't hold my breath.

The film does, however, offer an international audience context to the activities of the UDR and RUC. In doing so, it induces a sense of political and historical consciousness that disrupts established discourse around the conflict. Both organisations, whilst held in high esteem within sections of Unionism, are synonymous with repression and state murder within the broad nationalist community. These competing interpretations are a microcosm for the wider conflict. While we disagree on these fundamental distinctions, we must respect each other's right to those versions and beliefs, however uncomfortable this may be. The issue of victims must not be sectarianized and any discussions must be victim-centred.

For me, the ultimate arbiter of truth flows from personal testimony and the stories from victims must not be constrained or decried as invalid by the selfish interests of demagogues.

While we reflect on the killings at La Mon, Ballymurphy, Enniskillen or McGurks Bar, we must recognise the hurt our communities have inflicted on each other. My job as an activist filmmaker is to disturb, challenge, provoke, inspire and disrupt the status quo; but with that comes responsibility to progress the process of conflict transformation.

Future generations will assess history as they see fit; while none of us will hold the privilege of hindsight. The art of storytelling will stand above the political maelstrom and we all have our part to play in creating that mosaic of narratives together.

Sean Murray is an award winning filmmaker from Belfast. His recent film 'Fractured City' won a Royal Television Society Award at the BFI in London's South Bank. He has edited a number of testimony based documentaries dealing with legacy issues pertaining to the recent conflict and his work has been screened at international film festivals. He is PHD candidate at QUB.

ANALYSIS– ‘Glenanne Gang’ article stands up to scrutiny, but right and fair that Sean Murray was given a platform to respond

By Jamie Bryson

We, as unionists, must not be afraid of debate or to engage with our political opponents. If we are to use our increasingly broad platform to criticise and challenge then we must be brave enough to accept the challenge when our opponents want to come back and criticise us, otherwise we end up with an echo chamber whereby our arguments are never stress-tested or presented to a broader audience. Freedom of speech, and the freedom to challenge, criticise and offend that comes with it, is at the core of democracy. It is an ideal for which our brave forefathers fought and died in foreign lands through two world wars and various other conflicts both foreign and domestic.

Ideas, political arguments and strategies grow through robust debate, through challenge and by engaging with our critics. If our arguments are so weak that we refuse to open them up to criticism or to challenge, then is there any benefit to them at all?

There are, in my view, significant concessions within Mr Murray’s response. The clear narrative running through his piece is that he, as a filmmaker, is giving a voice to what he believes is a historically underrepresented legacy view. That is a perfectly legitimate pursuit, no one should be denied the opportunity to tell their stories or advance their viewpoint. However, the logical conclusion is therefore that Mr Murray’s filmmaking is activism, in the form of telling a particular political story from only one side of the community. He himself concedes that he is an ‘activist’ in his filmmaking.

During the Con Club legacy debate I said the following “I have no issue with republicans making films and telling their stories, my issue is that often the mainstream media present such films as independent, when they clearly aren’t.” I think Mr Murray makes my point for me by virtue of the core theme running throughout his article. The Unquiet Graves film, and other republican storytelling, is exactly that; republican storytelling and activism. Should we as unionists criticise or blame the republi-

can community for engaging in such activism to try and promote their legacy narrative? No, we shouldn’t. Instead we should be focusing more effort on trying to present our view of the past, and become more engaged in fighting back against what I continue to believe are attempts to re-write the past.

Is it legitimate to challenge republican narratives that from a unionist point of view attempt to rewrite the past? Yes, it is. Is it equally legitimate for republicans to challenge our legacy narrative? Yes, it is. Therein lies the crux of the legacy debate- two opposing sides, two opposing narratives and for either side a legacy concession is to provide justification to the actions of the other. No unionist is ever going to passively accede to the rewriting of the past to justify the IRA, and whether we like it or not, it’s extremely unlikely that any republican is going to wake up and pronounce that they were wrong in their actions.

Whilst Mr Murray will argue that his work is not an attempt to rewrite the past, I argue that it is. That being said there are two reasons for this, one is that until recently unionism has been ineffective at countering republican propaganda and therefore republican storytelling often goes unchallenged, but secondly, by Mr Murray’s own admission he is focusing solely on one particular legacy narrative. How then is this not de-facto rewriting the past by airbrushing out the unionist viewpoint and placing little or no scrutiny on the actions of the IRA?

That brings me back to my core point, namely that the issue isn’t with republicans seeking to promote their own legacy narrative, but rather with the presentation of such work as independent journalism or filmmaking. The mainstream media have provided platforms to films like ‘No Stone Unturned’, ‘Unquiet Graves’ and books such as Lethal Allies without any critical analysis or appropriately making clear that they are one sided narratives that should be viewed and analysed in that context.

In his piece I think Sean Murray also fails to address some of the key tenets of the argument I put forward in last month’s Glenanne Gang piece. To be fair to Mr Murray this may simply be due to the fact that he wanted to focus his piece on a more

general legacy debate, but nevertheless I believe valid questions have gone unanswered, especially around the weight given to testimony provided by convicted murderer John Weir, and the participation of some persons who are themselves in receipt of OTR letters in connection with IRA activity. Those issues go to the heart of the film’s credibility in my mind.

I should also deal with the reference to my recent tweet in connection to stolen HET documents. It is reasonably common knowledge that confidential files were illegally stolen from the HET by a former employee and handed to a Belfast law firm. These documents were then selectively handed out around republican legacy activists and used as the basis for books, films and newspaper articles. This raises a key point; why when security force documents end up in the hands of loyalists is it collusion, but when such stolen documents are handed to republicans it is fair and in the public interest?

It would be remiss of me not to draw attention to the fact that Mr Murray does within his piece make reference to atrocities perpetrated against the unionist community such as La Mon and Enniskillen, and criticises the actions of the IRA in carrying out the Kingsmill massacre. I believe that quite proper criticism, and the fact Mr Murray has felt compelled to enter the debate, is significant. It paves the way for a genuine debate on an issue Unionist Voice has been raising for quite some time, namely what many within the unionist community believe is the one-sided nature of recent legacy documentaries and attempts to rewrite the past in books, film and media.

Credit to Mr Murray for submitting a piece, and opening himself up to challenge via a platform that would undoubtedly be seen as hostile to republicans. That is not an easy thing to do.

In the same vein I think Unionist Voice has demonstrated our desire to use the platform to engage with not only those with whom we agree, but also those with whom we disagree.

Unprecedented Confidence: The role of Unionism's Progressive flank

By William Ennis

IT WAS something that first occurred to me as I read Sinnerton's David Ervine: Uncharted Waters and was then confirmed when I read The Principles of Loyalism, by William Mitchell. Something which made me the unionist I am. A realisation that not only did my socio-economic politics lie to the left-of-centre, but that my unionism was all the stronger for it. My advocacy of our United Kingdom, and my faith in Northern Ireland's role within it rests upon several over-riding principles. The idea that our country is an historic mix of multiple peoples, countless cultures, and the freedom to be the person you are. A political Union which has the potential to be at least as bright as that of any other in the democratic world. In the context of the Unionist family, I became a progressive.

Citizenship for the British subject is not about national identity or cultural exclusiveness. It is about sharing a political identity that transcends religion, culture, language and ethnicity. In short, it is about living in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic pluralist society... (From The Principles of Loyalism, by William Mitchell, 2002)

The Progressive flank of Unionism, the adherents of which are to be found across many political parties, institutions, and movements, is vital to the health of Unionism and so must be respected, and never dismissed.

There must be balance within the debates of unionism. This means a fair hearing from both conservative and progressive voices. We must be willing to listen to the unionist who wishes to challenge our point of view. And the reason is quite

straight-forward, because it will make Unionism robust. swell its political activism. Identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and indeed threats. How can a room full of conservative unionists really be that confident in any decision taken, or conclusion arrived at if there were no progressive unionists present to test their arguments? And likewise, any decision taken by a group comprised entirely of progressives would itself be dangerously unchecked, and therefore lacking in quality. Guaranteed freedom for a unionist to speak plainly even when venturing beyond traditional (or perhaps perceived) unionist discourse will provide above all else many more active unionists.

As a Loyalist who believes firmly that Northern Ireland's legislative assembly should have passed equal marriage rights for same-sex couples a long time ago I argue that we Unionists must take our place within the pro-equality movement. A role unionism's progressives must fully assume. One of the reasons for this is that we must improve this collection of debates by highlighting the hypocrisy of others and scuppering their misrepresentation of the PUL community. To make Northern Ireland a place where equality prevails we must progressively combat the planted perception that to be a unionist is to be opposed to progress, or opposed to public services, or opposed to the health service, or opposed to combating homelessness, or opposed to fairness. To make clear and optical the true breadth of unionism is to broaden the appeal of the union itself. A fuller unionism will challenge the falsehoods levelled against it on all fronts.

It is unionism's progressive flank

that will persuade those who have exited the unionist family to return, and bring others with them.

For the first time, many people outside, and some inside, the 'unionist family' are surprised to find themselves listening willingly and giving careful consideration to unionist arguments. (From David Ervine: Uncharted Waters, by Henry Sinnerton, 2002)

A fuller unionist political family incorporating, respecting and embracing a large and undeniable progressive flank will regenerate for tomorrow's electorate. Will produce political avenues and manifestos which will by no means pull punches on why the union is a great thing, but will, through its new, much broader harvesting of ideas politicise with unprecedented confidence.

When unionists have different ideas it's not division, it's diversity. It is not a weakness but potentially unionism's greatest strength. It's one thing to dwell on what the union is, but let's dare to dream of what it can be.

In the spirit of this very subject matter. I'd like to thank the Unionist Voice for the opportunity to contribute.

William Ennis is a 38-year old electrical wholesale worker, and a member of the Progressive Unionist Party. He lives in East Belfast with his wife, Charlotte.

Paul Peterson writes on substance abuse with our prisons

IN A RECENT BBC UK News article an 'Observer' report stated, "Hundreds of prison staff have been caught smuggling drugs, weapons and mobile phones in jails.

341 staff in England and Wales had been dismissed, excluded, convicted or cautioned by police." (2/9/2018)

The widespread use of psychoactive drugs have become commonplace in prisons and cost the NHS millions of pounds per year as paramedics are called to intervene.

A 999 call goes out from prisons in the UK every 40 minutes.

Prisons in Northern Ireland are not exempt from high level of drug misuse and abuse as both illicit and medically prescribed drugs are being sold or exchanged on the internal black market at rates up to 10 times the normal street value.

Recent deaths and medical interventions inside our prisons highlight only a small percentage of the problem.

The drug problem in Northern Ireland prisons is endemic and prison authorities are allegedly seeking to tackle it, by among other things, providing 'drug-free' landings with various incentives offered to inmates to encourage them to stay drug-free.

Sniffer dogs are used to detect possible concealment

of drugs by visitors which prison 'Governors' glibly suggest have proved to be very effective, "unless visitors are using other masking techniques."

So, who is really benefitting from this trade?

Apart from the obvious individual prisoners or groups of prisoners, there may be others reaping benefits from such a lucrative trade.

Prison officers may indeed be responsible for a large amount of smuggling into our prisons and boost their salaries by receiving 'outside payments' into their accounts once the illicit goods have been received.

Could this be possible?

It would seem the Prison Authorities think so, as I'm led to believe they've decided to introduce new random stop and search policies and drug testing for staff.

Professional visitors, including solicitors and those using 'ecclesiastical privilege' are also subject to greater scrutiny as the system seemingly seeks to address the deluge of drugs.

But could there be an even greater benefit?

I heard a story about a French farmer in the 1940's who fed his pigs swill and noticed the animals seemed to behave strangely.

Having called the vet, he advised the pigs were in a state of semi-sedation.

Tests were carried out on the

swill by a large pharmaceutical company which eventually produced a well-known anti-psychotic drug, very much in use today under a new brand name.

This drug was tested on patients in 'lunatic asylums' (psychiatric hospitals) and proved extremely effective in sedating patients in a manner that kept them manageable and controlled.

The endemic of drugs in our prisons may not necessarily be as a result of individuals seeking to make their sentence pass in a drug induced blur; neither may it be put down solely to others seeking to make a profit from people's misery.

In fact, the endemic drug problem in our prisons may perhaps be put down to some in authority who deem it prudent to turn a blind eye to the drugs trade because it keeps the prisoners manageable and controlled.

The prison authorities have to be seen to be tackling the problem with 'drug-free' landings, sniffer dogs and also 'stop and search policies', but are they really attempting to stem the flow of drugs or could they be opting for or operating a 'for an easier life policy?'

THE MAN KNOWN SIMPLY AS 'THE GOALIE' SPEAKS EXCLUSIVELY TO UNIONIST VOICE

ANDY GORAM lived the dream as a mainstay of the Glasgow Rangers 9-in-row team. He is an Ibrox legend who fulfilled his boyhood dream ending his career playing for Sir Alex Ferguson at Manchester United. The man, known affectionately as 'The Goalie', has also had his fair share of troubles over the years, but his enthusiasm for life remains undimmed. He is a man who still has much to offer the sport he loves so dearly. I started by asking him what he is doing with himself now; *"I speak at functions and do question and answer nights. I am not currently involved in coaching, I haven't been asked. I have so much to give back, I belong on a football pitch and I suppose I am just waiting for the right opportunity to arise"*.

I asked Goram whether he missed the buzz of his playing days and how he coped now that part of his life was over. The Bury born man was typically positive saying *"I nearly died 15 years ago with Pericarditis. That puts it all into perspective. I live day to day and try to enjoy them all. When I look at the likes of Fernando (Ricksen), and more recently a young player who was at Ibrox with me who has just been diagnosed with MND, I really have no right to complain."*

Andy has been open about his battle with alcoholism, and I wondered whether he felt there was enough support and mental health provision to help professional footballers deal with the 'come down' at the end of their career and to re-integrate them into a normal, low intensity lifestyle. He urged young players suffering mental health



problems or addiction not to hide it, but to seek help *"There's a lot of help nowadays for players with mental health problems or addiction, more so than when I was playing. I've been there as an alcoholic, if anyone- ex player or not- has a problem then speak to someone. Don't be in denial."*

Many books have been written and documentaries made about the special bond amongst the 9-in-a row team.

Goram says their bond wasn't manufactured, but that they genuinely loved and respected each other; *"That bond was real, genuine. It wasn't manufactured and a lot of it was actually down to the gaffer (Walter Smith). He brought in great players, but great players that would fit in our dressing room"* He continued *"We loved and respected each other, that was the secret and we would shed blood and tears for each other, in fact we often did."*

Judging the best player he played with was a difficult one for Goram. The Rangers legend says he never had the privilege of playing with Davie Cooper and Jim Baxter, and singles out two 9-in-a-row legends as the best players he did play with.

He said *"I was lucky enough to play with Brian (Laudrup) and Gazza. They were special with little to pick between them. I have to go for Laudrup be-*

cause he had a great wine cellar, but that's another story."

When asked whether he would have swapped his time at Rangers to instead have been No 1 for Manchester United during their reign of supremacy under Sir Alex Ferguson, Goram has a one word answer, *"no"*. He then went on to say *"Walter Smith gave me the best 7 years of my life; I wouldn't swap that for anything. Sir Alex put the icing on the cake signing me for Manchester United."*

Turning to the current situation at Rangers, Goram is cautiously optimistic *"We have definitely improved and European football is back at Ibrox which is fantastic. But, we fell way short in the first Old Firm game of the season. It is a work in progress but we are definitely going in the right direction."*

The goalie isn't a man to harbor regrets; he lives life to the full and makes no apologies for it. He does however have one regret, when he let down the man he still calls gaffer,

"I disrespected the gaffer once by not returning from Tenerife. That was a big regret and disappointment. He put me on the transfer list, and rightly so, but he got the right reaction from me and I was rewarded with a new contract" he then added with a smile *"he is a great man"*.

It is evident that Goram is a man that lived the dream, made some mistakes along the way but continues to enjoy life. His love for Rangers is as strong as ever. I finished by asking how he would like to be remembered, he said simply...

"as a Rangers man".

Short Strand thugs launch sectarian attack on young Protestant

A young male and his girlfriend have been brutally assaulted in the Short Strand, Middlepath Street, for no reason other than they were Protestants. After leaving a concert in Customs House Square both Glen and Faye, along with some friends, were chased and attacked by a group of around twelve adolescent male's intent on injuring them for their own sport and pleasure.

The sectarian thugs began hurling "sexual and sectarian abuse," shouting, "you dirty huns," at Glen and Faye as they were walking past the Short Strand. Moments later, without provocation or retaliation, the thugs set upon them and attacked Glen violently.

Faye heard something that "was so loud it sounded like a slap," in fact, it was Glen being punched by the attackers which accumulated in him lying unconscious on the path. The attackers then repeatedly kicked Glen in the head while he lay unable to defend himself until he was "lifeless." A friend knelt down to help Glen and also was attacked. The attackers then fled the scene jesting and celebrating their violent sectarian actions while Faye attended to her boyfriend – fearing for his life.

In an exclusive interview with Unionist Voice Faye said, "I was slapping him, shaking him, shouting his name – I couldn't get him up, I thought he was dead." The attackers then returned "throwing rocks and stones and bottles," one of which "just skimmed passed my head." Faye phoned her mum screaming and crying, telling her that they had been attacked and she didn't know if Glen was going to be okay.

After "about a minute," Glen regained consciousness but remained unsteady and delirious, still suffering the aftermath of his brutal assault. The Police arrived at the scene and began to ask Glen questions about what had happened.

Faye and her mum explained how the PSNI were unhelpful and failed to understand the seriousness of the situation. At one point, the officer at the scene was making light remarks and more surprised that Glen and Faye would walk

near the Short Strand rather than diligently pursuing the attackers. "You shouldn't have walked up this way," the officer told the victims – as if the blame lies with those who had been mercilessly attacked. In gathering statements, the officer also failed to question Faye, a witness to the crime, and directed all of his questioning toward Glen, who was still very unstable after being attacked.

Afterward Glen went straight to hospital where he discovered he had suffered a fractured jaw, damage in his neck and a suspected concussion. Faye, although not physically harmed, is suffering psychological harm and has been left traumatised by the event - still "reliving it every day since."

Their suffering was further compounded by the fact that their attackers took to social media to celebrate the assault. The perpetrators revelled in their baselessness posting comments like "out for the count," "kill all huns," "he's probably still lying down there," "some snout got smacked down at the Strand," and "I wish I was there."

When Unionist Voice asked Faye had she any message for the attackers she said, "you may think it's fun knocking someone out, but it's stupid, and you don't know the way this has affected me and my boyfriend, all because I am a Protestant – it's not right."

Karen, Faye's mum, is still in disbelief about the situation and shocked that this happened to her daughter. "How can somebody do that to a person? To be honest, I didn't think this stuff still happened. My daughter is reliving the attack every day and I have to give her medication to get to sleep. How the hell can we expect to move on when this sort of thing is still happening?"

Questions must be asked of the PSNI's handling of this case and what precedent they are setting toward sectarian assault. When they came to do conduct a home interview, which only took place due to the victim's parents persistence, the victims said they felt like the officers were "almost trying to persuade us from going to court." And repeatedly asked if they were sure they wanted to take legal action.

The PSNI have told the victims that

whilst there is camera footage of the suspects, there is no footage of the assault and have appealed for information on social media.

Sectarianism is still rife at various interfaces in Northern Ireland and this incident demonstrates the risks Protestants face simply walking past various Republican/Nationalist areas. While what happened by no means represents the majority of the Short Strand community, it still highlights the potential dangers innocent people can suffer when vicious unprovoked attacks still take place because of someone's religion. It calls into question the cross-community and integration image often portrayed throughout society when on the ground vile occurrences like these still take place. How, and why would any Protestant feel safe going into or past the Short Strand after a vile attack like this, especially when a PSNI officer's advice is to stay away?

The PSNI must investigate this incident thoroughly and apprehend the perpetrators for the sharp injustice that has took place. Failure to do so only proves that in events such as these, the PSNI are not in control and those desiring to get their "sectarian fix" can conduct brutal assaults with no repercussions. Glen and Faye must have justice for this sectarian hate crime directed against them.

The full interview with Faye and Karen will be posted on **Unionist Voice.com**

How the PCTF are applying the law unequally– by Jamle Bryson

Let me begin this piece by very clearly summarising the core point, lest anyone- either mistakenly or deliberately- misinterprets the argument being advanced.

If there is criminal activity taking place, regardless of whom it is carried out by or from which community it emanates, then the perpetrators should be rooted out and placed before the courts. I am unequivocal on that point.

However, the law must be applied equally and fairly. Everyone must be equal under the law, and equally subject to the law. That goes for loyalists, republicans, businessmen, politicians, police officers and everyone else living within our society.

That leads us to the so-called Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF), a political creation flowing from the Fresh Start agreement. For those who may have forgotten, the Fresh start agreement came about following the IRA murder of Kevin McGuigan in 2015. It was that paramilitary murder that ultimately spawned the PCTF.

You would then be surprised to find that the PCTF has not carried out one single search, arrest or seizure against the Provisional IRA. Only yesterday the head of the PCTF, Superintendent Bobby Singleton, shared a panel with a man under investigation for allegedly running guns from Florida for the IRA. A man widely regarded as being the IRA's Northern Commander and a member of the Army Council- which the Chief Constable says remains in existence with access to weapons.

Take the PCTF's kid-gloves treatment of the Provisional IRA, and contrast it with their relentless pursuit of loyalists. And I say again, if loyalists are engaged in crime then pursue that crime, but why is the law being applied robustly- and many would argue dubiously- against loyalists, and not being applied to the same degree against republicans?

Let us take the PCTF's 'big success' yesterday with the conviction, after a plea bargain, of David 'Dee' Coleman. I do not know Mr Coleman, and have never met him. I have no idea why he decided to take a plea bargain, and I have no idea what crime he was, or was not,

involved in.

I can however look beyond the spin of Mr Singleton, and what I see are some very serious questions. If Mr Coleman is involved in crime, then the PCTF have singularly failed to convict him of any such activity in of itself- beyond a dubious overarching membership charge under the terrorism act. It is the view of almost every lawyer, and anyone that would take even a cursory glance at the 'case' that the membership charge was never sticking. Mr Coleman's own lawyer told the court that the "majority of the case was based upon circumstantial and hearsay evidence." So why then take a plea?

Well, a look at time already spent on remand would indicate that Mr Coleman will walk free in a matter of weeks. It is no secret he has a substantial criminal record and if one takes the view that another conviction, to add to a lengthy list, isn't going to adversely impact your future career path, then it is logical that Mr Coleman may have concluded that he might as well take a plea bargain rather than roll a dice- even one loaded in his favour- and risk even the smallest chance of a conviction after trial and a substantially greater sentence.

If we then look at the evidence the PCTF presented to the media – none of the items, in of themselves, are illegal. Even taken cumulatively, they do not amount to enough evidence to secure a conviction. Mr Singleton himself sought to address this point, when he made reference to previous commentary and criticism around why the PCTF were seizing such items which were not illegal. He argues they can be corroborating evidence. Mr Singleton did not of course have the courage to direct his comments at the source of such commentary, namely a range of articles I have written on this site, instead making a rather vague reference. If Mr Singleton wishes to debate the merits of the PCTF's seizing of such material, then I am happy to publicly do so with him, he doesn't need to throw sneaky lines into his press briefings.

On a rather irrelevant- but amusing- point, I notice Belfast Live attributed Mr Singleton's aforementioned comments – which were recorded and published by the Belfast Telegraph- as coming from a "police source". Contrary to his assertions, it wouldn't be the first time Bobby Singleton has been an off the record police source.

The circumstantial material seized is used for tactical purposes, namely to build a prima-facie case that will allow for a holding charge, which will place the suspect on stringent bail conditions and/or a lengthy period of remand. Then, like the Coleman case, the PCTF bet on the suspect- who may often be a person with a substantial criminal record- deciding it's easier to take a plea for effectively time served rather than taking the risk of running a trial. And so the PCTF end up with a conviction based upon a dubious and circumstantial case which is unlikely to have survived a trial.

If Mr Singleton is placing so much stock in material such as that presented to the media yesterday as crucial corroborating evidence, then when will the PCTF be raiding Sinn Fein's Headquarters, or their Falls Road museum? If the PCTF are going to build cases upon what they say is 'material indicative of membership', then why aren't they building the same cases against republicans as they are against loyalists?

There was also reference by the PCTF to 'photographs beside murals'. This is interesting, when will they be building cases against tourists, or more importantly Sinn Fein members that regularly give press conferences in front of IRA murals or memorials?

You see, herein lies the disparity. The PCTF will take one approach for loyalists and an entirely different approach to republicans. If memorabilia is indicative of membership, then that must apply to membership of the Provisional IRA every bit as much as it applies to membership of the UVF or UDA. If not, why not? Perhaps if some mischievous soul was to make a criminal complaint against the IRA museum on the Falls Road then such disparity could be flushed out.

We also then look at the PCTF 'communications' strategy. One would think they learnt nothing from the Cliff Richard judgement. They continue to consider bringing the media for a ride along to arrest operations, often leading to a person's home being filmed and broadcast, and issue press

statements that jig-saw ID suspects and make irrelevant and fanciful allegations to spice it up a bit for the press. Regardless of who or what the suspect is, or is not, is everyone not entitled to fair and due process and the presumption of innocence?

All of this leads us to establishing our own prima-facie case that the PCTF are applying the law unequally, and often unfairly. They bank on being able to get away with it because the majority of people couldn't care less if the police bend the rules a little bit to lock up criminals. I understand that, but is that the society we want to live in? Whereby the law is applied differently depending on who you are, or your past crimes or public profile?

If someone is a criminal then build a case against them beyond all reasonable doubt, and then the PCTF will have good grounds to broadcast their success, which all sensible people would welcome in such circumstances.

Confidence in policing is being rapidly eroded within working class unionist and loyalist communities. The PCTF yesterday attended an event organised by the Falls Community council, and as previously mentioned sat on a panel with a man widely regarded as a member of the IRA Army Council, and faced questions from the audience. As you can imagine there were little or no difficult questions for Mr Singleton.

If it is good enough to go to events run by the Falls Community council and engage with a predominately republican audience to explain the actions of the PCTF, then why are the same opportunities to raise concerns not afforded to the loyalist community?

There is, this Monday night (24th September) a public consultation on policing organised by the Policing Board being held in the Signal centre in Bangor. Will Mr Singleton, or a PCTF representative, come to this public event and engage in respectful debate and discussion with the unionist community?

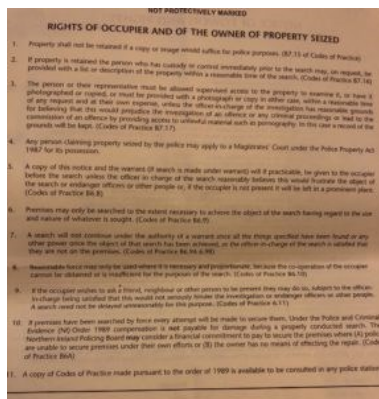
There may be very valid answers to many of the general points I have raised about the work of the PCTF, but how can such concerns be addressed if the PCTF refuse to openly and publically engage with the unionist community in the same manner they publically engage with the republican community?

The pursuit of crime is a good thing. The law is the social code that governs our society. Let us ensure however that the upholding of the law is done fairly, and with due process.

Everyone equal under the law, and equally subject to the law.

EXCLUSIVE: PSNI providing citizens with invalid 'Notice of rights'

In another huge embarrassment for the PSNI, it appears that the written notice provided to a person whose home has been searched and/or had property seized contains reference to a piece of non-existent legislation.



Under the PACE Notice of Powers and Rights (above), legally required to be provided to the subject of a search or seizure, the PSNI- at point 4- make reference to the Police Property Act 1987. No such legislation exists.

The actual legislation they presumably are seeking to refer is the Police Property Act 1987, as amended by the

Police Property Regulations (NI) 1997.

The relevant power however effectively resides within Section 31 of the Police (NI) Order 1998 by virtue of the fact Sch 6 makes clear that particular piece of legislation repealed the 1897 Act in Northern Ireland.

This epic error- uncovered by Unionist Voice- has went unchecked for a countless number of years, and indeed the false and legally illiterate notice of rights will have been handed to literally thousands upon thousands of citizens.

The relevant portion of the notice advises that 'any person claiming property seized by the police may apply to a Magistrates' Court under the Police Property Act 1987 for its possession'. Except you can not make any such application, because there is no such legislation.

The error is even more humiliating as FOIs the PSNI have themselves published, and which can be easily found via a google search, show that the PSNI have

search of premises that the officer shall provide a notice which explains the rights of the occupier, and the owner of the property seized. In the case of the PSNI the notices provided are legally inaccurate and reference a non-existent piece of legislation.

Accordingly there could arguably be a case made that every single PSNI

(C) Notice of Powers and Rights

6.7 If an officer conducts a search to which this Code applies the officer shall, unless it is impracticable to do so, provide the occupier with a copy of a Notice in a standard format:

- (i) specifying if the search is made under warrant, with consent, or in the exercise of the powers described in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3.
- Note: the notice format shall provide for authority or consent to be indicated; see paragraphs 4.3 and 5.1;
- (ii) summarising the extent of the powers of search and seizure conferred by the PACE (NI) Order 1998;
- (iii) explaining the rights of the occupier, and the owner of the property seized;
- (iv) explaining compensation may be payable in appropriate cases for damages caused entering and searching premises, and who may be responsible for this, see Note 6A;
- (v) stating this Code is available at any police station.

6.8 If the occupier is:

- present, copies of the Notice and warrant where relevant shall, if practicable, be given to them before the search begins, unless the officer in charge of the search reasonably believes this would frustrate the object of the search or endanger officers or other people;
- not present, copies of the Notice and warrant where relevant, shall be left in a prominent place on the premises or appropriate part of the premises and endorsed, subject to paragraph 2.5 with the name of the officer in charge of the search, the date and time of the search. The warrant shall be endorsed to show this has been done.

search under PACE has been in breach of Code B of the code of practice.

This issue will again raise serious questions in relation to the competence of the PSNI, and indeed those who have signed these legally inaccurate warrants.

It is suspected the PSNI will argue this was simply a typographical error. That, however, does not change the fact that this false notice has been circulated for many years and not once has anyone spotted the glaring error contained within it.

The fact that this 'error' has went unnoticed for many years, and indeed over tens of thousands of searches, brings our legal system into disrepute. It proves, again, that just because the system and the forces of law and order should know what they are doing, it doesn't mean that they actually do.

It is important to challenge every line, every comment, every stop and search and every attempt by the PSNI to infringe upon the lives of ordinary law-abiding citizens. Just because they wear a uniform does not gave them any special status, nor any mythical status. They are infallible and the more you challenge them, the more you realise how incompetent they often actually are.

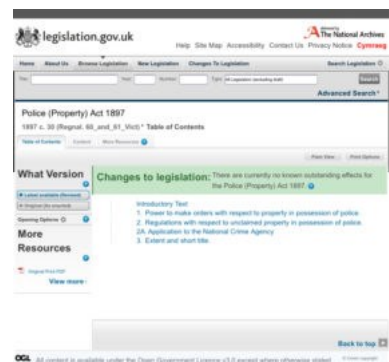


been referring to the 'Police Property Act 1987' and advised that the Police Property Fund is set up under Section 2 of the aforementioned non-existent legislation.

The PSNI's own internal service procedures on the 'seizure, retention and disposal of evidence related property'- which you can read HERE- at page 4 sets out the legal basis for the relevant procedures. Here the PSNI refer to Police (Property) Regulations (NI) 1997, within which the interpretation notes make clear that references to the Act is a reference to the Police Property Act 1897.

However, they appear to have then missed the fact that the Police (NI) Order 1998 repealed the 1897 Act, making their entire guidance a dogs dinner.

PACE Codes of Practice Code B (C) 6.7 (iii) also makes clear in relation to the



Leaked bonfire report vindicates East Belfast loyalists

A leaked report compiled by independent mediators has vindicated east Belfast loyalists in relation to the events of July 2017, and raised serious issues for Belfast City Council officials and the PSNI.

The contents of the report substantiates the continued assertions put forward by east Belfast loyalists, namely that they had worked tirelessly for peaceful solutions and this had been undermined by the PSNI and officials in Belfast City Council.

The explosive report contains the following key details:

- **Belfast City Council officials and the PSNI were the driving force behind the invasion of east Belfast to tear down unionist bonfires.**

- **NIFRS and DFI both felt the bonfire was manageable, but the court action was driven by a Belfast City Council official. Although unnamed in the report, this official is Nigel Grimshaw, a former senior PSNI officer. (Pictured Right)**

- **Community representatives had worked positively towards solutions, but this was undermined by PSNI and Belfast City Council, especially in relation to Cluan Place.**

The report raises a number of very serious questions for Mr Grimshaw and the PSNI, whose covert agenda to target the bonfires has been subtly exposed within the report, compiled by independent mediators.

It is also clear that there was an agenda from the very start of the process- by statutory agencies and the PSNI - to target what is believed to be described in the report as 'Inner East' bonfires.

The key political driving force working alongside Mr Grimshaw in Belfast City Council was the Alliance Party. They, even more so than Sinn Fein, manoeuvred in the background to force the aggressive court action.

This included selective leaking, mischievous making and urging Council to take DFI to court in order that the blame for the invasion of the bonfire sites would be laid at the door of DFI, and Alliance could conceal their role in the targeting of the unionist community.

East Belfast Community Initiative

has responded to the story with a statement which urges the grassroots unionist community to 'pause' any engagement with the PSNI.

A spokesperson on behalf of EBCI has said;

"The contents of the report that has leaked demonstrates the futile nature of any community based relationships with the PSNI. It reveals their duplicity and how they tricked the unionist community, and respected mediators.

"They made a phone call, which was placed on speakerphone with the PSNI's knowledge by an elected representative in the presence of loyalists, and they told



outright lies and gave their word there was no planned action against the bonfire sites.

"The report also fully vindicates everything that EBCI said, including our last ditch attempts to find a solution. It is very clear that DFI, the NIFRS and the mediators did not want the aggressive invasion of the bonfire sites.

"The report also states very clearly that the apocalyptic invasion of east Belfast was driven by the PSNI and Belfast City a Council officials, not DFI. This is at variance with the public narrative PSNI and the council tried to present.

"You will also find buried deep in the report an incident whereby Belfast City Council officials, believed to again be Mr Grimshaw, tried to encourage the mediators to engage in secret maneuvers, and to their credit the mediators refused saying they wanted a transparent process.

"It is our view that this report raises very serious issues around the agenda being pursued by the PSNI and specific council officials, and it would certainly be our view that a pause should be put on any community engagement with the PSNI, until such times as they can explain their duplicity and indeed their growing harassment of the unionist community."

TUV Leader Jim Allister QC had written to the PSNI in relation to the disproportionate policing deployed against east Belfast loyalists. Upon receipt of correspondence from ACC Todd, Mr Allister issued the following statement;

"In my letter I advised how I was in receipt of reports that over 40 Land Rovers and 200 officers were deployed in East Belfast to deal with a situation relating to a bonfire. I went on to contrast this with events in Londonderry where Protestants had come under attack from petrol bombers. I cited the example of the night of the 8th July and pointed out that there is evidence of thugs approaching the Fountain area in broad daylight in a repeat performance of what had happened on previous nights and being able to stone the area without a police officer in sight.

"I went on to observe that there appeared to a clearly unequal response by the PSNI and this was undermining confidence in the police among many in the Unionist community.

"To be advised more than two months later that the PSNI deployed resources in Londonderry in line with "policing with the community ethos" while no such comment is made about what happened in East Belfast is extremely telling.

"The PSNI – it would appear – did what Sinn Fein and their front groups told them to do when it came to policing attacks on the minority community in Londonderry. What a contrast with East Belfast!"

An extensive legacy submission by Dr Edward Cooke

Dr Edward Cooke has submitted a comprehensive legacy document to the Northern Ireland Office's legacy consultation. We have reproduced Dr Cooke's submission in full.

1-Introduction

The legacy consultation meeting held at the Constitutional Club (Newtownards Road, Belfast) on the 5 September 2018 proved to be extremely illuminating. The depth of feeling that the current legacy arrangements contained within the Bill are designed to facilitate Sinn Féin and are an attempt to re-write historical events was mirrored by every panel speaker and all attendees. Seen in a wider political framework, the current legacy proposals appear to be yet another process of Unionist / Loyalist marginalisation. The danger with this marginalisation process is that the depth of feeling of a growing number of Unionists / Loyalists to the inadequacies of their political representatives, and to the one sided polemics of the institutions of the state, is that, Northern Ireland is edging itself slowly, but inevitably towards another period of public disorder.

Within this submission I would like specifically to address the *raison-d'être*, structures and staffing of the secondary institutions / mechanisms being suggested under the current legacy Bill. The Independent Commission on Information Retrieval (ICIR), the Oral History Archive (OHA), the Implementation and Reconciliation Group (IRCC) and the Historical Investigations Unit (HIU) all require careful scrutiny, however, generally within primary legislation, the specifics of these bodies would not be carefully considered and the minutiae will be left to a secondary legislative process that will skirt around the issues elaborated on below

2-Determinants

Importantly, I speak not as a 'victim' of historical political / criminal violence, but rather as member of the Unionist community. I understand that individual 'victims' of political violence will have a different perspective on legacy issues than those of non-victims. My simplistic

'definition' of a victim' is contained with part 4(2) below. However, I would like to stress that numerically, today many individuals within NI have grown up in a period post-1998 and importantly, the legacy matters of the past also impact on this younger population; a generation who grew up outside the spectrum of 'troubles'. The following submission is determined by the following factors: (1) historically, criminal justice actions have never been undertaken in the majority of legacy cases; (2) the NI inquest system previously in place was inadequate; (3) the evidential burden of securing convictions is such that any new criminal convictions are increasingly unlikely, and (4) minimal penalties will arise from any convictions. The current legacy Bill has at its foundation a desire to bring about peace, reconciliation and political stability to NI. Twenty years after NI took its first tentative steps towards peace, the paradox is that today the two main communities within NI are even more polarised and increasingly distrustful of each other. The danger is that the Unionist / Loyalist community, feeling increasingly marginalised by the formation of other secondary governance bodies arising in the wake of the Belfast Agreement, view any new institutions emerging from the Legacy Bill as further attempts to marginalise their community. Furthermore, the Legacy Bill is considered by many as an attempt to rewrite historical narratives to suit Nationalist / Republican agendas. The NIO / Government should not underestimate the growing sense of alienation within the Unionist / Loyalist community as legacy issues are considered. Increasingly the danger is that disaffected Unionists will reject the political process, will reject their political parties and will abstain from forthcoming elections presenting even greater problems to both devolved and national governments. At the legacy consultation and panel discussion held at the Constitutional Club, one speaker mentioned (obiter) the imbalances that already exist within the media in the making of films and the writing of historical and political narratives about Northern Ireland. Another speaker also noted that oral histories when conducted under institutionalised frameworks can become skewed depending upon the design and staffing of the information retrieval and collating agency. Whilst these speakers did not go on to develop their

logical arguments to their conclusion, my view is that the changing legal, academic and political structures within NI have moved increasingly to marginalise Unionists. If that is the case, Unionists will have no confidence in the ICIR, OHA, IRC and HIU if they mirror other similar institutions / commissions set up under the Belfast Agreement.

3-Demographics, Legacy Structures and Unionist Marginalisation

Since 1972, Direct Rule followed by devolution has witnessed the establishment of numerous governance bodies created to rebalance power and economic wealth within Northern Ireland. The NIHE when created, was tasked with ensuring that any under-provision of social housing within Catholic / Nationalist neighbourhoods was addressed. Over a 45 year period, the rebalancing has been so successful, that private property prices within Nationalist working class neighbourhoods outstrip those within (increasingly deprived) Unionist neighbourhoods. Whereas housing associations such as Tennant Street and District HA, Connswater HA, Larne and District HA, Donacloney HA, Willowfield HA, etc., gave Unionist communities some small degree of control over local housing matters, housing budgets were established elsewhere. In rural NI, smaller 'state' primary schools have increasingly been subject to closure despite various NI government departments being aware that under-representation of Protestants / Unionists within the NI university sector has been increasing annually. Traditional industries such as shipbuilding and engineering have closed and as these trade-related industries have passed unemployment rates within the Protestant / Unionist workforce has increased. New technological industries have replaced traditional engineering industries, however, these new industries require employees to have achieved third level educational qualifications and yet again the Protestant / Unionist community becomes disenfranchised in the work sector.

Rightly, or wrongly, the perception from working class Unionists is that the Parades Commission, the Equality Commission, the Arts Council, the Police Ombudsman's Office, etc., are designed and staffed by individuals who have no empathy with Unionist culture and political objectives. The significant religious imbalance in staffing of the Arts Council and the Equality Commission coupled with the imbalance in arts funding awards and the legal support offered to claimants, has made Unionists wary of governance / oversight institutions legislated to bring about community cohesion. Community cohesion increasingly appears to be facilitated by a denigration of Unionist culture.

Whilst NI Equality and Employment legislation does not directly discriminate against the Unionist / Protestant community, structural changes that have occurred over the last five decades when reinforced by employment / equality law (which is based upon equal opportunities, fair competition and academic excellence) indirectly sees NI's Protestant / Unionist community being marginalised. This marginalisation is apparent within the secondary governance / oversight bodies that are (paradoxically) designed to ensure trust become both main communities. Furthermore, the marginalisation of Protestants / Unionists within various commissioning bodies has been reinforced by marginalisation of Protestant / Unionist school children, students, researchers and academics within NI's university sector. The ongoing threat of another new commission being created that will have extensive legal and financial powers to further support Nationalist culture (and indirectly discriminate against Unionists), in the form of an Irish Language Act / Commission is further evidence of Unionist alienation / marginalisation fears.

The Equality Commission (as well as the Secretary of State, the NIO and two Westminster Parliamentary Committees) were provided with detailed statistical information in 2017 asserting that systematic S.75 screening breaches and monitoring failures by QUB, UU, DEL, Equality Commission and DfE has led to the situation where Protestant / Unionists had been removed from key sectors of the NI economy. Simply put, the NI uni-

versity sector has failed to be proactive in attracting and retaining Protestant / Unionist students / researchers. Moreover, as yet the institutions of the state appear reluctant to address this failing. Unsurprisingly, these S.75 screening failings and the failure of the NI university sector to promote Unionist culture now influences Unionist views on the legacy Bill. If NI legislation is determined by policy advisers and if policy advisers are professionals, managers and academics coming increasingly from the Nationalist / Republican community, then Unionists have just cause for concern that the policy input to the Legacy Bill is not in their best interests. Irrespective of the facts, Unionist perceptions about systemic indirect discrimination within many different public sectors against Unionist / Protestant interests, is becoming a major problem that the NIO needs to address. As yet this subjugation of Unionist interests to those of Nationalist / Republicans has not been acknowledged by Government. Failure by Government to deal with the reality, or the widespread perception, of systemic marginalisation of Unionists will I suggest lead to increasing counter-conduct actions being taken. The Legacy Bill presents Government with an opportunity to assuage Unionist concerns.

Humanities and Social Sciences Schools at QUB / UU, schools that have previously prepared numerous government sponsored research projects over a wide range of subject issues (poverty, parades, bonfires, emblems, flags, symbols, housing etc.) are increasingly presenting skewed research because of the disproportionate imbalance between Unionist and Nationalist academic researchers. Law schools are increasingly providing much higher number of Catholic / Nationalist law graduates who then filter into legal practice, the judiciary and the governance commissions, once again marginalising the Protestant / Unionist community. The University of Ulster (at Magee) provides such an imbalance of Nationalist / Catholic law graduates into the NI economy that the impact of this imbalance on the legal sector (and this includes bodies such as the Public Sector Ombudsman's Office and the Equality Commission) requires examination. However, despite much lobbying, the Equality Commission has rejected all calls for an investigation into potential indirect discrimination of Unionists / Protestants within the NI university sector. I suggests that the proper

formation of any institutions arising from the Legacy Bill is dependent upon their being adequate capacity from the NI Unionist / Protestant community to participate within the legacy structures. Three or four decades of dwindling numbers of Protestants / Unionists moving into and through the NI university sector questions whether or not this capacity exists.

The changing imbalance of NI's research, academic and legal communities is such that any new organisations / institutions set up under the current Legacy Bill, will once more be understaffed by members of the Protestant / Unionist community and therefore they cannot be considered as acceptable institutions to address legacy matters or to reassess historical narratives.

4-Conclusion and Recommendations

Based upon my assertion that no matter what institutions arise out of the Legacy Bill, the design and structure of the institutions will be dominated by NI's academic and legal communities and that these communities have increasingly an antipathy towards Unionist / Protestant / Loyalist concerns, I suggest the following recommendations:

(1) At the meeting at the Constitutional Club, the Chair, Allison Morris put a very simplistic question to the audience – who, she asked, was in favour of a legacy amnesty? Not one member of the 150+ audience raised their hands. However, the question was of itself very badly worded and did not give the necessary caveats and perlocutionary information necessary to properly formulate a reply.

My view (and I stress that my view is that of a non-victim) is that the evidential burden of securing criminal convictions has increased over the years to the extent that no perpetrator (loyalist or republican paramilitary member) will be brought to justice for their criminal actions. As it stands, the only group realistically at risk from historical criminal prosecution or legal action are the members of the security forces. The OTR letters provided (without recourse to Parliament) to

to Republican paramilitary members and the substantive reduction of criminal sentences previously agreed to Loyalist and Republican paramilitary members, enables an amnesty to be considered for all legacy cases. It is my view that de-facto there is already an unofficial amnesty in place for paramilitary members. Equity dictates that this unofficial amnesty should be extended officially to embrace the members of the security forces (as well (unfortunately) to paramilitary combatants).

(2) Innocent 'victims' (i.e., those victims who were not engaged in acts of violence or who were not perpetrators of actions that would otherwise be deemed criminal, irrespective if those victims be members of the public, or members of the security forces) should be adequately recompensed for all physical and psychological damage / injury arising from paramilitary violence or from unlawful actions of the security forces. All previous compensation levels should be reviewed, bands of compensation should be fixed and anyone who has previously been paid a compensatory amount lower than the band rate should be provided (quickly) with the top-up level of compensation.

(3) Any governance / oversight institutions arising from the Legacy Bill should be staffed (at all managerial levels) on the basis of a 50% / 50% Protestant – Unionist / Catholic – Nationalist split. Moreover, all oversight institutions should include (a minimum of) 51% of governance board members who were 'victims' (or whose family were associated with acts of paramilitary / state violence). Governance boards should have equal number of board members from both sections of the community. Once again it is recognised that employment legislation, equality legislation and the academic / educational demographics of Northern Ireland may make these

objectives difficult to achieve. If demographics and legislation make it impossible for new legacy bodies to have equal numbers of Protestants / Catholics employed within them and taking up governance positions, then all institutions should be set up outside of NI and staffed by non-NI institutions to provide comfort to the Unionist community that the bodies will not be perceived as biased in the same way as the current Parades Commission / Equality Commission / Arts Council.

In addition, considering that in Northern Ireland, higher education is increasingly populated by Nationalists and that research output is skewed to favour Nationalist / Republican researchers within disciplines such as Humanities, Law, Social Sciences, Media Studies, Politics, History, etc., the UU and QUB should be excluded for undertak-

ture the NIO wish to combine some of the individual archive findings this should only be done with the express consent of the two archival resources.

Importantly, the institutions that arise from the Legacy Bill should be contained, they should have minimal legal powers, their funding should be tightly monitored and they should have a legal lifespan that cannot be increased. All those who voluntarily agree to sit on the various Boards of these institutions should be recompensed to ensure that the Board Members are accessible to the general public and that they cannot hide behind the veil of the corporate body. The new bodies should not be seen as pension pots for retired civil servants and government officials.



The draft Legacy Bill should be carefully considered by Parliamentarians in relation to the marginalisation of the Unionist community that has been ongoing since the enactment of the Belfast Agreement. The legacy Bill presents law makers with an opportunity of preparing important legislation that will engage the Unionist community and will give them a renewed sense

ing any primary or secondary government research into legacy issues.

Should there be any need for a formalised, institutionalised, Oral History Archive (and I have great reservations as to the need for such an archive), then there should not be one, singular archive, rather there should be two archives within which both nationalist and unionist communities will take ownership and direction of the archives. Should at some stage in the fu-

of engagement. Should a Legacy Bill be enacted in a manner that establishes new institutions that once again indirectly discriminate against the Unionist / Loyalist population, then the consequences of Unionist alienation poses even more serious problems for re-establishing Devolved Government within Northern Ireland?

Kate Hoey MP visits East Belfast Football Club

Labour MP and former Sports Minister in the Blair Government, Kate Hoey MP, visited East Belfast Football Club on 25 September 2018 to show support for the club who have been consistently targeted by specific officials on Belfast City Council, Sinn Fein and the Alliance party.

In the summer months Sinn Fein sought to use the issue of the club's mental health and resource hub as leverage over the loyalist community in relation to bonfires. In conjunction with others, Sinn Fein sought to

do a deal which lead to the West Belfast festival getting an astronomical amount of money. Loyalists in east Belfast refused to do any deal with Sinn Fein and East Belfast Football Club strongly asserted that they were non-political and would not be dragged into issues which have no relevance to football.

Despite this, funding for a community festival and educational program was promised to east Belfast, along with support for the much needed community hub and as a result of this the DUP voted through the funding for the West Belfast festival, which in the end turned into a terrorfest of IRA flags and sectarian chanting. Sinn Fein had made all these promises to unionist councilors in an attempt to get unionist councilors to vote for their funding for the West Belfast festival.

However, after Sinn Fein had got their funding approved, it then came

around to supporting resources for the unionist community, and a small portacabin (self-funded) for East Belfast Football Club to develop mental health awareness and education. Sinn Fein reneged, and simply laughed as they joined with the Alliance party to deny all resources to the unionist community.

Cllr Ciaran Beattie made spurious, false

do not follow politics.

After the disgraceful behavior of Naomi Long, the Alliance party corporately and their allies in Sinn Fein, Kate Hoey MP agreed to visit the club. Kate is one of the best known Westminster MPs, who has previously been a Government sports minister during Tony Blair's time in Government. It is a mas-

sive event for Kate Hoey to take the time to visit the club, and this reflected extremely poorly on the Alliance party and others who have refused to even give the club a fair opportunity to provide an outline of their current work, and future plans. Kate was shown around the club by a management committee delegation and the Vauxhall MP took time to engage with all the children and many of the parents. It was remarkable to see the

time Kate took to speak with the young people and hear their story and about their love for football.

The young people responded by presenting Kate with a bunch of flowers and gift from the club. This was a fantastic moment and the young footballers really enjoyed chatting with Kate and telling her about their dreams of becoming professional footballers.

After this tour Kate was provided with a substantial power point presentation by consultancy firm Copius. This extensive overview outlined the clubs plans for the future and the Labour MP asked a number of detailed questions about the plans.

Following the event Kate Hoey described the actions of Belfast City Council as "ridiculous" and "lacking in common sense".



and malicious remarks about a local consultancy company simply because it was run by Jamie Bryson. Belfast City Council CEO Suzanne Wylie later had to provide a written undertaking to Mr Bryson to publicly clarify the record in relation to Cllr Beattie's false and malicious remarks, both about Jamie Bryson and East Belfast Football Club.

Given the Alliance party have relentlessly worked against the club, and the unionist community, the East Belfast FC management committee felt it would be appropriate to extend an invite to the Alliance Party leader, Naomi Long, to visit the club. This invite was not formally responded to, but instead Ms Long took to social media with a stream of demonising comments about the club and those involved. This outrageous behavior is nothing new from Naomi Long, whose nasty social media activity is well documented, but it came as a shock to many of the parents and young people who