

Friday January 29 1999

Paisley shrugs off Commons criticism

By Steven McCaffery

DUP leader Ian Paisley has dismissed claims his House of Commons comments may have put lives at risk.

Last night, while the BBC rejected claims it should not have broadcast the comments, Mr Paisley refused to answer criticism from the Committee on the Administration of Justice and the British government.

This came after Mr Paisley used parliamentary privilege – which protects MPs from being legally challenged for comments made in the Commons – to name more than 20 individuals he claimed were involved in republican paramilitary attacks.

Claiming to be quoting from an RUC dossier, he named individuals, along with details of where some of them came from, as being linked to the Kingsmill massacre

THE furious row over Ian Paisley's naming of individuals led Seamus Mallon to directly accuse the DUP leader of putting people's lives at risk.

The deputy first minister said it was for the Chief Constable Sir Ronnie Flanagan to carry out an immediate investigation into the status of the document which Mr Paisley used in his speech.

Mr Mallon said it was an act of the grossest irresponsibility for to hide behind parliamentary privilege and make the most serious accusations against 20 named individuals.

"I personally know many of the individuals named and it is inconceivable that they would have been involved in the Kingsmill massacre of 10 Protestant workmen in 1976 and the murders of five Protestant men in Tullyvallen Orange Hall in Co Armagh in 1975.

Initially Mr Paisley told the *Irish News* he had no comment to make, before dismissing the criticism.

A spokesman for the RUC said: "Police

or Tullyvallen massacres or any form of paramilitary activity.

"Apart from the terrible damage he has done to the reputation and standing of these individuals he has put their lives and the lives of their families at risk," Mr Mallon said.

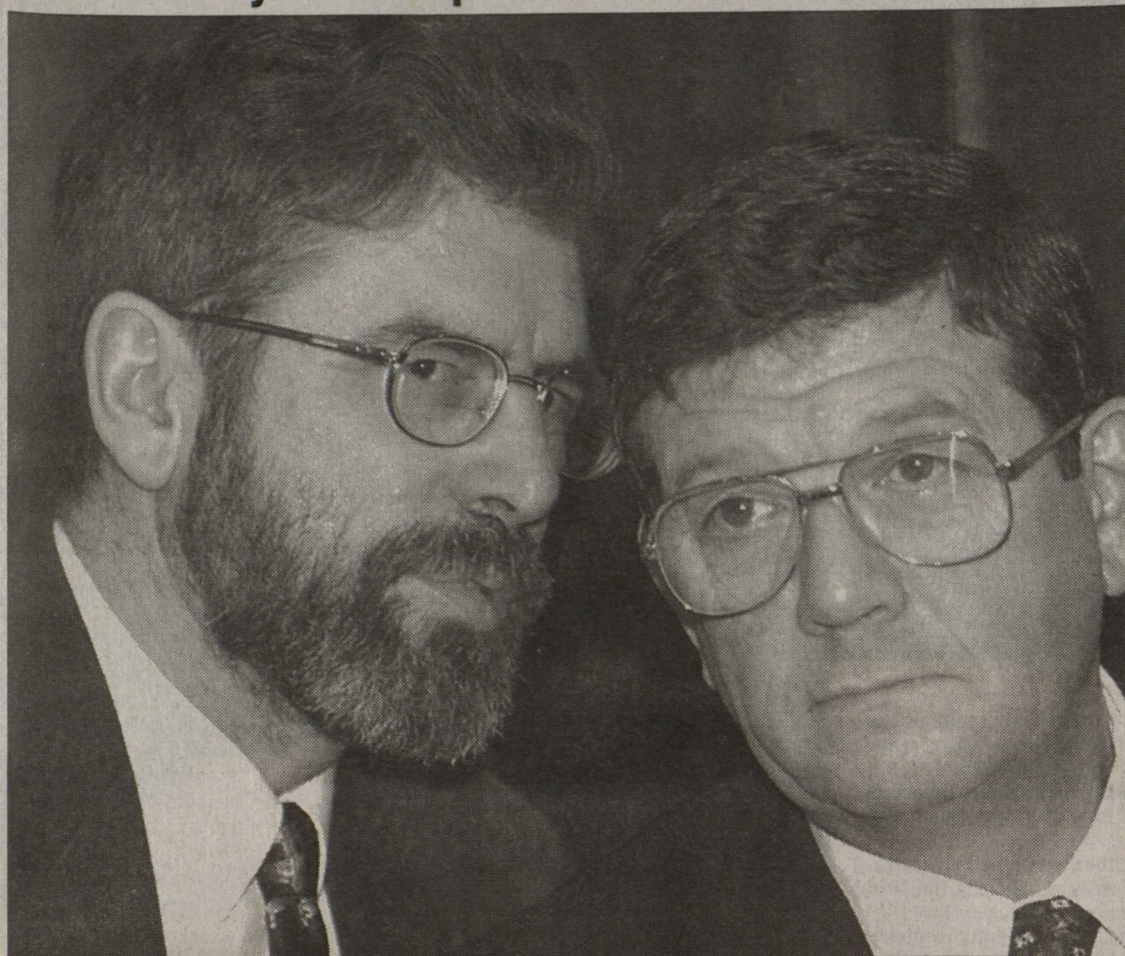
"Mr Paisley has a duty to try and undo the damage that he has done, if that can be done. And the chief constable has a responsibility to confirm publicly that that was a police dossier or it wasn't. If it was an official police dossier then there has got to be some explanation as to how it was in the possession of Mr Paisley to be used in the House of Commons. I await a speedy reply from the chief constable on this matter," Mr Mallon said.

who have not been brought before the courts."

Meanwhile a BBC spokesman said: "What was said in the House of Commons is a matter of public record and freely available – in fact the proceedings are reported on *Hansard* on the world wide Web.

Mallon rounds on DUP chief

A word in your ear please



● RIGHTS BATTLE... Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams with party vice-president Pat Doherty during a news conference in Dublin yesterday before going into Leinster House to demand a place in the Dail

Priest pays tribute to Collins

By Michael O'Toole
Dublin Correspondent

A CATHOLIC priest who worked with Eamon Collins for three years yesterday paid tribute to the murder victim – and said he had come to terms with his violent past.

Fr Peter McVerry, who works with the homeless in the Ballymun flats complex in Dublin where Mr Collins spent a time as a community worker, also said the Newry man knew his life was in danger.

The Jesuit priest said: "Eamon was an excellent community worker and all the young people he met loved him."

Mr Collins went to Ballymun at the end of the 1980s after he was ordered out of Newry by the Provisionals after he renounced links with the organisation.

He worked there until the end of 1993.

As soon as he arrived in Ballymun, he became a community worker in the area.

Fr McVerry said he often talked of his role as an IRA intelligence officer in the south Armagh area.

Fr McVerry said: "He was quite open about his past, that he had been active in the IRA and that he had been very senior, but he had taken a major change in the

direction of his life and he was opposed to violence."

The last time the priest saw Mr Collins was just before Christmas and said he knew he was living in fear for his life.

Fr McVerry said: "Eamon was always very aware of the dangers facing him, but he felt very confident about his own life, nothing was going to make him change."

"And I think he had made peace with his own conscience."

"He appreciated the hurt he had caused many people and he was trying to undo his past by being a community worker."

Dredging up the memories

By Alan Erwin

IAN Paisley's naming of Eugene Reavey as one of the men allegedly behind IRA attacks spanning 20 years brings back memories of one of Northern Ireland's blackest sequence of events.

The DUP leader claims Mr Reavey's paramilitary involvement included the Kingsmill massacre of January 5, 1976 – an allegation completely refuted by Mr Reavey.

On that day in south Armagh, 10 Protestant workmen were shot dead

at a bogus vehicle checkpoint as their minibus took them home from work.

A day earlier, on Sunday January 4, loyalist gunmen had killed six Catholics in two separate attacks.

The first of these took place nearby in Whitecross, south Armagh and ultimately claimed the lives of Brian, Anthony and John Martin Reavey – brothers of Eugene Reavey.

The killers had burst into the family cottage and began firing at the brothers from point-blank range as they watched television.

Brian and John Martin died instantly

while 17-year-old Anthony died later that month at Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital.

Like the Kingsmill killings, no-one has ever been charged with the three brothers' murders.

At the time the dead men's father, the late Jimmy Reavey, had called for no retaliation to the loyalist attacks, which also claimed the lives of three more Catholics in Ballydugan, Co Down.

It was an appeal which fell on deaf ears with the subsequent slaughter at Kingsmill.

Progress can still be made – Mallon

By William Graham
Political Correspondent

THE only alternative to savage barbaric acts of violence in Northern Ireland is a viable and dynamic political process Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon emphasised last night.

Asked what he believed were the implications for the peace process after Eamon Collins' murder and the continuing punishment beatings and shootings in the north, Mr Mallon said: "I think the implications for the peace process is that all of these acts of savagery – because that is what they are, barbaric acts – that the alternative to that type of violence is a peace process, is a viable dynamic political process."

"And I would take the opportunity of saying to everybody in the political process, that the more dynamic and the more viable that process is, the less the vacuum there is for this type of barbarism within our community."

Earlier First Minister David Trimble indicated he believed the murder of Mr Collins was the work of the IRA and he saw this as another breach of the ceasefire.

"I think it is fairly clear who murdered him – presumably the same people who burnt his house and were responsible for the hit-and-run attack on him a couple of

years ago – and that is I think the IRA, particularly the south Armagh IRA," Mr Trimble said.

When asked what did this mean for the process Mr Trimble said it was a matter for the secretary of state to reflect on.

Also yesterday it was put to Mr Mallon – who did he think was responsible for the murder? Mr Mallon said: "What I do know it is another murder. And to again have a situation in the north of Ireland and indeed again in my constituency (Newry and Armagh) where a body is found at the side of the road as a result of a murder is something that has got to be condemned."

"There are no such things as good murders or bad murders. Every murder has to be condemned and the entire society should be concerned that once again we have seen murder happening."

Asked was this a breach of the ceasefire, Mr Mallon replied: "That would depend absolutely in terms of what the intelligence on this issue is. I don't have that intelligence. I am not in possession of those facts. So I could not possibly make a judgement without knowing the full facts in this case."

Meanwhile, at Stormont yesterday Deputy First Minister Mr Mallon met members of the Concordia Project (the CBI, ICTU, NICVA, NIAPA, and the UFI) to discuss preparations for the next round of European Union structural funds for Northern Ireland.

Mr Mallon said he was encouraged by the very businesslike approach that Concordia is taking in relation to preparing for devolution.

"In Europe the partnership built between government and the social partners is a fundamental element of any growth strategy. It is something we must learn to do here," Mr Mallon said.

Mr Mallon and Mr Trimble will be travelling to Brussels and Bonn early next month for a series of discussions and will be trying to get the best possible deal for Northern Ireland.



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Competition SPOT

Travel on Down the Road with 2 Mountain Bikes From Royal Mail

Royal Mail's second set of millennium stamps are inspired by the theme of travel and are called the 'Traveller's Tales'. The stamps tell the pictorial story of how travel has progressed during the past 1000 years and go on sale at post offices throughout Northern Ireland on Tuesday 2nd February.

The first in the set shows an aircraft circling the globe. Priced at 20p, the aircraft featured in the stamp is none other than a DH 106 comet.

The 26p stamp marks the invention of the bicycle and features the first ever popular ladies safety cycle.

The 43p stamp is dedicated to railways and steamships. The stamp encapsulates many of

Brunel's great designs including the Clifton suspension bridge, tunnels, bridges on the great western railway and the great western steamship.

The fourth stamp priced at 63p, is based on Captain James Cook's 18th century pioneering explorations.

Presentation packs priced at £1.85 and First Day Covers will be available at all main post offices across N. Ireland from Tuesday 2nd February.

Royal Mail's Millennium Collection is made up of 48 stamps based on the theme of 'Time' with those issued in 1999 reflecting on the past 1000 years. They will be issued in sets of four, on the first Tuesday of every month

during 1999. Each one will be numbered from 48 in January to 1 in December and they will form a beautifully designed collector's item, marking the most significant anniversary of the century.

To mark the issue of the 2nd set of millennium stamps, Royal Mail have two top of the range mountain bikes to give away.

To be a lucky winner, simply answer the question below and send your entries to: The Royal Mail Competition, The Irish News, PO Box 473, Belfast, BT1 2GE. Closing date for entries is Friday 12th February 1999.

Q) When are Royal Mail's second set of Millennium stamps going on sale at post offices?

Rules: 1) Employees of the Irish News and Royal Mail are not eligible to enter. 2) There are no alternatives to the prize on offer. 3) The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.



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Steven McCaffery's guide to the millennium

Plans for car parks in ruins

IT is generally accepted that Rome was not built in a day.

But even the Romans did not anticipate the problems they would face constructing something slightly less complicated than the Colosseum – a car park.

Even this simple consideration is causing problems for the Italian capital as it prepares for a flood of visitors around next year's eve and into the year 2000.

Tourists and Christian pilgrims are expected to arrive in their tens of millions to celebrate what Pope John Paul II has declared a jubilee or holy year.

But one of the more basic concerns is the urgent need for car parks to cope with the inevitable upsurge in traffic and in particular tourist coaches.

It is believed officials have already called a halt to some early efforts to get the car parks off the ground.

Every time a sod is turned a relic of the city's famous past is uncovered.

The archaeologists are called in to see if the site is of any importance and, inevitably, it often is.

This may have implications for visitors to the Vatican.

St Peter's Basilica, which itself took 150 years to build, is already shrouded in scaffolding as its facade receives a facelift in advance of the millennium celebrations.

There are also plans for the construction of a new underground between the Colosseum and St Peter's and an escalator linking the basilica to the sprawling Vatican Museum.

The prospect of huge crowds also has implications for Rome's second principality – not quite as well known as the Vatican, but with a related history.

The Knights of the Order of Malta possess their own domain within Rome and the order will provide first aid to pilgrims next year.

Incredibly the order provided the same service to pilgrims at the last millennium when Jerusalem was chosen as the city where celebrations were to be centred.

Romans remain relaxed, however, about the pressures threatening to push their millennium preparations off-schedule and officials continue to make confident noises about being ready in time.

Perhaps one of the reasons is that they have already dispelled much of their Pre-Millennium Tension.

When Italy was rocked by a series of earthquakes in 1997 thousands were forced to leave their homes.

Some feared the tremors were an omen portending greater destruction due for the millennium.

Some even linked the quakes to what they believed were the predictions of doom contained in the secrets of Fatima – messages famously believed to have been passed by the Virgin Mary to three Portuguese children in 1917.

Concern grew to the degree that Loris Francesco Capovilla, former secretary to Pope John XXIII and one of the few to have read the secrets, issued a statement saying: "The secrets are not linked to the end of the millennium. You can exclude this."

He should have added: "Now get cracking with those car parks!"

Millennium events

A Cookstown man has appealed for help in compiling a detailed millennium project on the history of the Castledawson townland of Drumlough. It is understood George McIntyre has data on 1,000 people who lived in the area over the last 200 years, but has appealed for anyone with information to contact him on (01648) 64165.

The project will eventually be passed to the Public Records Office for the benefit of future generations.

In Vancouver, Canada, the city fathers (or mothers) have struck a millennium medal of merit, to be awarded to those who have given most to the city over the last 200 years.

A panel of academics will make its selection from names submitted by the public. The medal can be given posthumously – just as well.

London's Savoy Hotel, which has been receiving millennium inquiries since the seventies, is offering tickets for a millennium party starting from £7,000 per couple.

Millennium history

IN charting humanity's development we see the first civilisations emerge between 3500 and 500 BC.

As civilisations emerge – spawned by larger numbers of people gathering in bigger communities – difference between various cultures becomes important.

Their interaction appears most notably in the fertile crescent of the Near East, now home to countries such as Iran, seeing Caucasian, Semitic and other peoples meeting and learning from one another.

Info: Anyone keen to publicise a millennium event can send details to Steven McCaffery, c/o the Irish News, 113-117 Donegall Street, Belfast, BT1 2GE.

DAIL REPORT

MICHAEL O'REGAN AND MARIE O'HALLORAN



Sinn Féin TD Mr Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin escorts Mr Martin McGuinness and Mr Pat Doherty (left) and the other Sinn Féin members of the Northern Ireland Assembly into Leinster House yesterday. Photograph: Peter Thursfield

SF seeks links for MPs in Dail

Assembly members discuss move with party leaders

By Maol Muire Tynan,
Political Reporter

THE Sinn Féin leadership is seeking permission to have Westminster MPs for Northern Ireland attend and participate in Dáil business. The Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution is examining the possibility.

Under the Sinn Féin plan, outlined yesterday in Dublin, the existing 18 MPs would be automatically accorded membership of the Dáil — without voting rights. The party also claims the North's electorate should be allowed "send representatives to the Irish legislature".

Eighteen Sinn Féin members of the new Northern Ireland Assembly yesterday spent several hours in Leinster House in a series of meetings with Government officials, the Fine Gael leader, Mr John Bruton, and the Labour leadership.

Urging cross-party support for allowing MPs attend the Dáil, the Sinn Féin TD for Cavan-Monaghan, Mr Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, said that, ultimately,

his party would like to see the right to vote extended to MPs.

Sinn Féin president Mr Gerry Adams said allowing the Northern electorate to vote in presidential elections and referendums in the Republic would be "a progressive step, fully in accord with the Good Friday Agreement".

However, allowing such voting rights for citizens registered on election lists in Northern Ireland would require a constitutional

amendment.

The granting of consultative rights for MPs to attend the Dáil was an internal matter and, according to sources in Leinster House, could be arranged under existing rules. "The President is from Belfast. She is the head of State but she has no vote [in the Republic]", he said.

Meanwhile, the electorate that returned him (Mr Adams) and Mr Martin McGuinness to Westminster did not want them to take the oath of allegiance, he said. Irrespective of the oath, Sinn Féin MPs would not take their seats because they "would have no interest in deepening the connection" with Westminster.