

News from Belfast – May 2009

Hello

This is the first edition of news from Belfast for the AOH Division 1 Father Dempsey division monthly meeting.

Firstly below are a few photographs taken from recent Easter Commemorations in Belfast:

Photos



Illustration 1: Gerry Adams



*Illustration 2:
Proclamation Banner*



*Illustration 3: Joe Doherty
imprisoned in USA for being
illegal immigrant*

The photos below are An Fhírnne families of members murdered by collusion/state sponsored violence



If there are any other photos you would like me to send I can send them with the next edition. I will next time enclose photos of different murals as well at the peace wall which is a huge attraction in West Belfast.

In terms of news – with the celebrations of the 1916 Easter commemorations being overshadowed with recent attacks on the security forces as well as an upsurge in dissident activities throughout the North, the peace process is becoming increasingly fragmented especially amongst working class Catholic communities.

Republican splinter organizations such as the Real IRA (the group responsible for the Omagh bombing as well as the recent murders of 2 British Soldiers in Antrim and the Police Officer in Lurgan) have been attempting to disrupt efforts at Stormont as well as Dublin and abroad.

However Sinn Fein has launched its most blistering attack to date on the dissidents, claiming “No one can wreck the peace process and that they would not be allowed to turn the clock back”.

One of the most vocal condemnations of recent attacks has come from Sinn Fein assembly member Raymond McCartney said his party would not be intimidated by groups that he claimed besmirched the “ideals of our patriot dead”.

“Sinn Fein, for over 30 years, have witnessed assassination campaigns by British forces and their pseudo-murder gangs and survived,” the former hunger striker said.

“We will not allow groups with minuscule support to hijack the name of republicanism to hide behind while they make threats against true leaders of our community.”

The progress of comments from such personalities in the republican movement adds to a growing support for Sinn Fein and the Stormont administration.

However we believe the key telling point in the political agenda this year will be the upcoming European elections (for the 3 seats in June), where the North’s main parties such as Sinn Fein, DUP, UUP and the SDLP are all hoping to make great strides off the back of the demilitarization of the 6 counties.

All of the parties will be focusing on uniting the province especially as the economic downturn continues to take out major employers in the North such as Visteon/Ford. With a weakening pound in the money market some critics are wondering if the Celtic Tiger and Irish boom will continue to slump trade on both sides of the border.

Many voters will be hoping that money matters, the economy will be on the agenda with the old political mantra of ‘war is over’ shifting to every day needs as all communities are struggling in their day to day life with providing for families and gaining viable long term employment.

I hope this gives a quick glimpse into some recent developments. Feel free to ask any questions and I will try and find out for you all. Finally if you would like further information any of the following news agency’s will help you.

BBC Newsline
UTV
RTE
Belfast Telegraph
Irish News
Andersonstown News
The Newsletter
Irish Times
Irish Independent.

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Slan

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