



The North Belfast Loyalist Magazine

Issue 2 - April 2014 The True Voice of North Belfast Loyalists

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QUIS SEPARABIT



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in this edition!

Regenerating loyalist communities
Challenges facing Ex Prisoners
North Belfast UPRG goes Digital
Sammy Duddy Conflict Transformation Centre
Defending our families and members

North Belfast UPRG are still here! and indeed growing in membership, despite a futile yet dangerous attempt to destabilise loyalism and undermine / "overthrow" the current North Belfast Leadership.

Members and volunteers have been intimidated, threatened and challenged by a small number of expelled former members and individuals with absolutely no UDA background at all. As such, these individuals have very kindly exposed their desire to return to drug dealing, extortion, intimidation and community suppression as a means of showing leadership to our communities.

We therefore have an important message to all those individuals involved in this activity

**NORTH BELFAST WILL NOT BE ALLOWED
TO RETURN TO THE SHOUKRI STYLE OF LEADERSHIP.**



Editorial

Welcome to yet another edition of the North Belfast Loyalist Magazine. In this issue we expose how far criminal elements are prepared to go to secure pocket money and destabilise the UDA in North Belfast and beyond. We also examine a number of other issues relevant to securing and developing the future of protestant areas of North Belfast.

Exercising Restraint and Leadership in the face of EXTREME ANTI-LOYALIST PROVOCATION

Lies, rumours, anti-loyalist propaganda, assaults, fears and intimidation are just a few issues that our leadership have had to deal with over the last year, as part of an orchestrated campaign intended to destabilise the UDA in North Belfast and beyond. Criminal elements, under the guidance of a few expelled members

of the UDA, who had been previously shunned by the community, exploited the anger and fear felt by the loyalist people of north Belfast for their own end. These people - who have criminal records for offences such as drug dealing, burglary, assault and armed robbery - promoted unrest and used it to recruit other anti social elements and impressionable young people into their ranks. Since then there has been a marked upsurge in criminal activity and hate crime in protestant areas of north Belfast.

The homes of members, volunteers and people working in a cross community capacity have been targeted and attacked by this "mob". Individuals have been threatened, intimidated and assaulted. The same "mob" are now at the centre of co-ordinating racist attacks on the homes of migrant families living in the Tigers Bay/Shore Road area. Driving vulnerable ethnic minority families out of their homes is an example of the type of behaviour and justice that our own communities can expect if "mob rule" had of succeeded.

It should also come as no surprise or coincidence to anyone, that former allies and supporters of the "Shoukri" regime, are at the forefront of heading up this failed campaign. Conning and manipulating others into believing a whole web of deceit, lies and unsubstantiated propaganda in order to hide their own selfish greed and commitment to drug dealing and other criminality against our communities, is a very familiar trait leading straight back to the door of Andre Shoukri.

As an organisation North Belfast remain strong, loyal and protective of all our members particularly those who travelled and experienced the conflict. Memories and respect for our colleagues who paid the ultimate sacrifice during the conflict will not be darkened or disrespected. The personal and family sacrifices made by ex prisoners cannot simply be forgotten, erased, dismissed or disrespected by other groups, organisations or individuals either inside or outside of our membership.. At the same time, we expect our members to remain in good standing without committing crimes against and causing hardship to, our own protestant communities. Those that need help with transition will receive it and those who dismiss or refuse help are fully aware of the consequences associated with drug dealing and criminality against our own families and communities.

Thankfully, with the support of our colleagues from other areas, we have remained strong in not having succumbed to retaliation despite significant provocation. We are also confident that threats of physical violence, intimidation or other similar activity against our membership will end shortly with those responsible having to face up to accepting full responsibility for any further words, threats or actions.

REGENERATING AND REBUILDING LOYALIST COMMUNITIES

North Belfast UDA remains committed to supporting the health, safety and well being of our communities, residents and families. We will continue to support the community sector and politicians to create safer stable loyalist communities, free from the scourge of drug dealing and other criminal activity that has been directly responsible for driving hundreds of protestant families away from their homes and communities across North Belfast. We support the need to regenerate our communities into becoming areas free from blight, dereliction and sub standard housing. We acknowledge the importance that such work has in contributing to making our areas as welcoming as possible in order to attract members of the protestant faith back into our communities therefore securing and ensuring the long term future of protestant areas like Tigers Bay, Westland and upper Ardoyne. However, we will not stand idly by and allow criminality to dictate and facilitate the future demise of our communities. Politicians, community groups, residents and others, must now face up to their responsibilities and seek to secure a long term future for the existing protestant communities of North Belfast. This can only be done in an open, accountable and transparent manner, excluding nobody, except those, who, for whatever reason, choose to exclude themselves. Democracy, human rights and equality are the tools of the future. Politicians, other organisations and others must continue to challenge and ensure that our human rights, beliefs, identity and culture are enshrined and protected in all aspects of equality legislation.

ALL IN THE NAME OF ME!

Unfortunately, and from within the loyalist community of North Belfast there is an individual who is clearly unable to practice what he preaches and is acutely embarrassed at the pace of progress and positive leadership displayed by the North Belfast UDA.

Be it community development, community relations or community safety he has, through his own arrogance and egotistical views, been hiding behind the backs of others, to promote his own selfish little interests. Directing individuals into seeking confrontation and bullying others as a means of getting involved in community development activity are all actions he hopes will bring the UDA to its knees.

“Green with Envy” “Lost the Plot” “Green Eyed Monster” and “Agent Provocateur” comes to mind.

We do however understand that jealousy, hatred, and failure to deliver can be terribly overwhelming, and as such, on behalf of the wider North Belfast PUL community, we wish him every success for his lonely future! *(We are reliably informed that it will only be a matter of time before this hypocrite will be publicly exposed and humiliated)*

NORTH BELFAST GOES DIGITAL

The North Belfast UPRG have launched a new website, www.nbuprg.co.uk, with a dedicated contacts page on site, which facilitates members and residents views being posted and recorded. Up to date information and regular updates have been core and central to the success of the website.

On the site you can find: our submission to the Haass Talks, socio-political commentary articles, position papers and important historical documents such as Common Sense etc

A brief history of the UDA, a Remembrance page, roll of honour and up to date news and views have proven to be very popular with the site recording over 1500 hits, since being launched a couple of months ago.

We have been overwhelmed with the amount of interest, comments and views expressed by members, residents and numerous other visitors from within all classes and shades of Unionism and as such the officers and committee members of North Belfast UPRG would therefore like to thank members, residents and other interested parties for all their feedback, views, questions, information and valued support.

FACING UP TO THE CHALLENGES OF LIFE AS AN EX PRISONER

Ex prisoners continue to experience discrimination at a number of layers in our society. The reality is, although prisoners have been released physically many still remain psychologically imprisoned and unable to escape that 'ex-prisoner' tag or its consequences.

- In terms of health; ex-prisoners still endure high rates of alcohol and prescription addiction running at approximately 4 times the proportions experienced in the 'normal population', with self-harm, depression and suicide rates significantly increased;
- Unemployment rates amongst ex-prisoners remain unduly high, and once an ex-prisoner has to sign that bit on the job application that says 'have you any criminal convictions', the prospects of employability are severely diminished, as the employment of ex-prisoners remains a voluntary commitment and has no legislative framing in terms of socio-economic rights.
- Ex-prisoners also face taxi & security sector licensing restrictions in both jurisdictions that limit what has always been viewed as traditional route into employment.
- Due to not having paid national insurance contributions for long periods, this will result in a significantly reduced pension when they reach pensionable age, and leave a significant underclass across society that has yet to begin to fully express itself.
- More worryingly, there are many valid experiences within the ex-prisoners constituency of intergenerational-discrimination occurring, where the conviction of a parent has resulted in the barring of children from accessing certain career paths, such as the army for example.
- Fifteen years after the Good Friday Agreement we are now entering a period that is becoming compounded by the emergence of post-traumatic-stress-disorders. Research clearly shows that ex-prisoners score highly in terms of post-traumatic stress indicators; with isolation, trauma and an inability to form and maintain relations key features of this.

It has been estimated that there has been approximately 40,000 ex-prisoners, both Republican & Loyalist, who have went through our prisons. If each of these ex-prisoners have 5 family members as dependents, (be it a wife, partner or children), and given that may itself be a severe underestimate, we can increase this figure of 40,000 by a multiple of 5 in terms of the wider impact that may occur across our communities, thus giving us a figure of 200,000 people that are impacted by ex-prisoner issues indirectly. In this context, lower rates of pension,, and reduced employability etc, doesn't simply rest with the ex-prisoner, rather it expresses itself across a far greater range people than what is first assumed. Entire families and communities are indirectly impacted, upon in communities where the ex-prisoner remains a prominent feature.

In summary ex-prisoners remain unable to escape that ex-prisoner tag or its implications, and our families and communities still endure the secondary impacts of our continuing discrimination. For those within our constituency who need help advice or guidance, don't hesitate to contact us through the relevant channels.

CULTURE, HISTORY, FLAGS, EMBLEMS, EQUALITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

Within the community sector opportunities exist for our members and their families to get involved in a wide range of both non accredited and accredited training. Many of our members have already participated and self developed a more thorough knowledge around cultural identity, Northern Ireland history, equality and human rights. Interestingly understanding flags and emblems has been particularly popular due to the apparent likeness and commonness of certain symbols/emblems to both communities. If you are an ex prisoner, or member, please don't hesitate to contact us through the usual channels.

FACTS OF LIFE LIVING IN PROTESTANT WORKING CLASS COMMUNITIES

Loyalist communities continue to face significant issues around poverty and the quality of life for residents. Here are but a few examples which our politicians must face up to.

Health

Our communities remain susceptible to high mortality, suicide, drug-dependency and mental health rates, combined to a lower than average life-expectancy. These stark facts are compounded by the emergence of post-traumatic-stress-disorders as a legacy inherited from the conflict.

Education

The underachievement of our young people continues to ensure a failure that will dictate and determine the life chances of future generations.

Employment

High levels of unemployment are a phenomenon that continues to rage unabated. Many have been left unable to effectively compete in the job market, where there exists a distinct poverty of opportunity in terms of both job creation and in making our communities employment and investment ready.

Environment

Dereliction and deprivation remain rife, and more pronounced, particularly on interfaces and within isolated communities.

Welfare Reform

Is now at an advanced stage, with our wee country about to face up to the problems and hardship caused by this cruel reform. Our people on the mainland are now experiencing the real impact of these reforms, with those most vulnerable and susceptible to poverty being thrust headfirst into even deeper layers of vulnerability and poverty.

These aren't simply issues for our politicians to resolve. Communities must also express positive support and actions that will assist politicians to achieve greater success for our communities. Clearly political partnership within unionism at all levels and classes of society is required. We will not be found to be wanting should this opportunity arise!

TWADDELL PROTEST - NORTH BELFAST UPRG POSITION

North Belfast UPRG are taking this opportunity to inform members as to our position in relation to the Twaddell Protest. North Belfast UDA fully support the ongoing protest at Twaddell. At no time were any UDA members or supporters instructed by the leadership not to support or attend the Twaddell protest.

Unfortunately a small number of expelled UDA members from North Belfast managed to con and manipulate others, through an orchestrated web of deceit and lies, into believing that North Belfast UDA was no longer an organisation, didn't support Twaddell or the flag protesters, and had no more than just a few members and supporters. In the midst of such deceit there were some individuals who sadly fell for this con, and believed these people were telling the truth.

On learning of their intentions to mislead and destabilise loyalism, members immediately instructed our leadership that our Brigadier could not stand side by side with these anti-UDA criminals, who have publicly used the cover of the flags and Twaddell protest to deceive their way into being viewed as Ulster's saviours! rather than being seen as nothing more than drug dealers, criminals and dissenters.

As time progressed, the same individuals then deliberately disrespected the memory of our fallen colleagues on remembrance day, by parading in another area.

Despite this provocation, we must reiterate that at no time were North Belfast UDA personnel or supporters advised not to support either the flag protest or Twaddell protest.

The North Belfast Loyalist Magazine The True Voice of North Belfast Loyalists

NORTH BELFAST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SAMMY DUDDY CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION CENTRE

OPENING SOON!

OPENING EXHIBITION!

The North Belfast UDA's Journey from Conflict to Peace

Enquiries to: 6 York Road, Belfast. Telephone 90225055

The Sammy Duddy Conflict Transformation Centre is fast nearing completion with work already underway in developing our first exhibition! This exhibition, entitled, "The North Belfast UDA's Journey from Conflict to Peace" is currently being developed with numerous items being collected and displayed. The exhibition plots and details the incredible journey made by North Belfast UDA through conflict to peace. It is supported with artwork designed by Ross Wilson, numerous photographs and examples of items relevant to the process. There is a focus on the work and skills of ex-prisoners whilst in prison which includes crafts and other items. Many of these items have been donated by members across North Belfast and indeed the wider province. If you have any historical items or other memorability please consider donating or lending us these items to be displayed!

If so, Please contact Tommy Whiteside at the Sammy Duddy Conflict Transformation Centre on 90225055

Graves and Memorials Committee - Volunteers Required

Special thanks to this committee for their continued work throughout the years. Keeping graves in good order, organising events such as remembrance day and new memorials requires a lot of patience and a lot of hard work.

To this end we are seeking additional volunteers from within our circles to get involved in this committee to help ensure this valuable work is maintained to the highest of standards.

If you are interested in helping out, please contact Tommy Pearson or Tommy Whiteside (Whitey) at the Sammy Duddy Conflict Transformation Centre on 90225055.

THE BENEFITS AND PITFALLS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Ongoing Demonisation and Destabilising of Loyalism

Unfortunately there remains a small number of anonymous twitters and facebookers who continue to use social media as a tool to intimidate, force their views on to others and promote hate crime / sectarianism within and between communities. There are many examples of loyalists slating loyalists, slating individuals, making false allegations and behaving in an obnoxious threatening manner in what can only be described as vain attempts to use the media/social media to demonise and destabilise loyalism.



We appreciate the positive aspects of social media (Facebook and Twitter in particular) as it widens our support base and allows us to interact with people and showcase our policies and viewpoints. But there are negative sides to social media as well, which we have witnessed recently. We do not intend to get into a long drawn out debate surrounding perceived differences between areas. This is merely mischief making designed to create uncertainty and demonise loyalism.

For too long some people outside of our national grouping have focused on personalities not policies. We do not 'do' personalities. What we do 'do' is hard work on behalf of constituents combined with an analysis that endeavours to fairly represent the views of the PUL community.

We believe that we are a strong family that embraces all challenges collectively and with deeply held convictions. Any slight misunderstanding or wrong assumption can be magnified/amplified by a media yearning to create splits or provide titillation to those who seem to relish arguments and strife. We reject all attempts to put obstacles in our way that could create an atmosphere of distrust or suspicion. A recently held meeting reinforced the need for clear level headed communication and an appreciation of the hard work that we are all committed to.



Our resolve remains strong and we look forward to the ongoing delivery of our work. **Quis Separabit**



THE GROSS HYPOCRISY OF SINN FEIN

We acknowledge the severe reverberations that the OTR controversy has caused right across the entire political spectrum, and we share the widespread concern and revulsion felt across communities, particularly amongst the victims and survivors sector; where distress, uncertainty and anger are understandably palpable over this issue.

We have long held concerns around there being a two-tiered justice system with the HET being seen as nothing more than a programme almost exclusively in place to pursue Loyalists. This has led loyalism to believe that Republicans are being dealt with through political means whilst a security methodology is applied to Loyalists. Without doubt recent revelations have strengthened that analysis and placed more weight on the need to rescind the HET process immediately.

The real distortion of Justice is in Republicans with the agreement of the British Government, constructing an invisible process where they attain a degree of 'immunity' for themselves, whilst blatantly expecting the pursuit of British Soldiers and Loyalists.

It is also ironic that Republicans in Sinn Fein espouse that there can be no hierarchy of victims in dealing with our awful past, yet they have went out of their way to ensure a hierarchy of combatant exists. **Sinn Fein's GROSS hypocrisy is clear for everyone to see.**



The North Belfast Loyalist

Issue 2 - February 2014 Remembering Our Colleagues



Doreen English places a wreath in remembrance of her late husband Thomas English, at the new North Belfast memorial stone situated in the Tigers Bay memorial garden.

"Memories and respect for our colleagues who paid the ultimate sacrifice during the conflict will not be darkened or disrespected. The personal and family sacrifices made by ex-prisoners cannot simply be forgotten, erased, dismissed or disrespected by other groups, organisations or individuals either inside or outside our membership

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