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SATURDAY
10/02/2007
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SF warns over truth recovery

Any truth and reconciliation process in Northern Ireland must involve all sides in the conflict,

Sinn Fein has said.

By: Press Association

But at a conference organised by the party in Dublin it sought to highlight the mounting evidence that loyalist paramilitaries killed people throughout the Troubles with the support of security forces.

The conference heard from people bereaved in a string of major gun and bomb attacks linked to such collusion.

Sinn Fein MEP Mary Lou McDonald called on government to reveal the full extent of such activity, but with unionists seeking a similar approach to IRA violence, she said any truth process must also provide answers to the victims of paramilitary attacks.

"We need a full process of truth recovery," she said.

"We have always argued against a hierarchy of victimhood. Anyone who has lost a loved one in the conflict has suffered. At the end of the day people need to find closure whatever their specific circumstances."

The conference heard there was sufficient evidence of collusion to prompt

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an Irish parliamentary committee to recently conclude that such activity was "widespread".

Ms McDonald told delegates: "Collusion was a policy designed to maintain the Union.

"That is why the belated exposure of this policy raises such fundamental questions, not just for the British Government but for ordinary unionists in the North. Britain murdered fellow citizens in your name. That is the reality."

The conference highlighted attacks on both sides of the Irish border where there is evidence of collusion, including a blitz of co-ordinated bomb attacks in 1974 in Dublin and Monaghan that killed 33 people.

Margaret Urwin, who lobbies for victims of the attacks, used official documents to quote British officials keen to counter IRA violence at the time who believed the Dublin attacks were "focusing Irish minds wonderfully".

Other speakers included John Finucane, who told delegates how Lord Stevens, former head of the Metropolitan Police, confirmed collusion in the 1989 loyalist murder of his father, solicitor Pat Finucane.

Northern Ireland`s Police Ombudsman recently revealed evidence of more recent collusion with loyalists, but there have also been revelations of security force agents at the top of the IRA.

Paul O`Connor, of the Pat Finucane Centre, named after the murdered solicitor, addressed such cases and said collusion affected both communities.

"Usually collusion involving the loyalist side was when the State directed and ordered killings," he said.

"Usually on the republican side, they allowed killings to proceed as they gathered intelligence.

"This clearly leaves many unanswered questions for the families of UDR members, police and civilians."

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DIRECTOR: Edgar Wright.

STARRING: Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, Timothy Dalton, Paddy Considine.

DETAILS: UK / 116mins (15A)

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