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## Local & National

# Dalai Lama gave me courage to forgive

Ex-soldier and the man he shot tell of friendship

Friday, July 20, 2007

By Brendan McDaid

The soldier who shot and blinded Children In Crossfire founder Richard Moore has acknowledged the damage and hurt he caused during his time here in the Troubles.

The former Army captain, named only as Charles, took to the stage before delegates at the Millennium Forum in Londonderry during a visit by the Dalai Lama to tell how he has become close friends in the past year with the man he shot.

Mr Moore, who was 10 years old when he was shot, had been making his way home from school in Derry when he was hit by the rubber bullet, just three months after the Bloody Sunday shootings.

The soldier said hardly a day ever passed when he did not think of the boy he shot.

He said he recognised the damage and hurt he caused to Mr Moore.

Charles, who has since retired from the Army, added that he received a letter out of the blue from Richard last year. On formulating a reply he said: "I took quite a bit of time to compose something I thought Richard would like."

Mr Moore praised the soldier and said it was a very brave move to speak about the incident before an audience mainly consisting of people from Derry.

Earlier, Mr Moore told the conference how the Dalai Lama had given him the courage to forgive and to go through with his plans to meet the soldier.

Since then, both men have met each other's families.

The soldier said: "I consider this man as a great friend.

"If we have been able to do it, and we have done it, surely there is hope for this country and everybody in it."


Earlier this week the Dalai Lama called Mr Moore "my hero" for his ability to forgive.


Praising his positive outlook and compassion, the Dalai Lama said: "He is my hero friend, whether he believes it or not, I don't know. He is really a wonderful son of humanity."


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