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Local & National

Adams apologises for boy's murder

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Warrington victim's parents hold talks with SF leader

Thursday, November 01, 2007

The father of a 12-year-old boy killed by an IRA bomb in 1993 last night received a face-to-face apology from Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams.

Tim Parry (12) died along with three-year-old Johnathan Ball after the IRA planted bombs outside a busy shopping centre in Warrington.

Last night at a Paths to Peace event in London, Mr Parry said inviting Mr Adams had been difficult for himself and his wife.

The talk took place in the offices of law firm Clifford Chance, the closest building in Canary Wharf to the site of the 1996 IRA explosion which killed two people.

Mr Parry said: "I can say that inviting Gerry Adams to join me here tonight was not, as you might imagine, easy for me or for (my wife) Wendy.

"But it was infinitely easier than holding my son dying. It was infinitely easier than carrying him for the final time in his coffin.

"It was infinitely easier than saying my final farewell to him with my wife.

"I can also tell you that it is infinitely easier for Gerry and I to talk than to fight."

Mr Adams said the Parrys had borne their loss with remarkable grace and publicly apologised for the hurt inflicted by Irish republicans during their campaign.

"The Tim Parry/Johnathan Ball Foundation for Peace is an optimistic example of how people, who have been grievously hurt, are able to meet that challenge head-on and to produce something good and constructive, and positive and compassionate, from it," he said.

"I therefore want to acknowledge Colin and Wendy Parry's personal journey and how they have created this positive space from the place of deep trauma and grief they personally experienced.

"Irish republicans - the IRA - was responsible for what happened that day. It brought huge grief to these two families, as well as to others hurt in that incident.

"The IRA expressed its regret at what had happened.

"In 2002 it apologised to all those non-combatants it had killed or injured and their families.

"I have also expressed my personal and sincere regret, and apologised for the hurt inflicted by republicans. I do so again this evening. This is the right and proper thing to do."

As they came to terms with their son's death, Colin and Wendy Parry set up a foundation to encourage reconciliation in Northern Ireland with the support of Wilf and Marie Ball, Johnathan's parents.

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
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