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Education Minister Caitriona Ruane has been reported to the police after she praised IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands.



Ms Ruane made the comments during a speech at a prize-giving ceremony at St Colm's High School in Twinbrook last week.

The complainant claimed the Sinn Fein member's remarks breached the law on glorifying terrorism.

Police confirmed a complaint had been made but it had not been established that an offence was committed.

A PSNI statement issued on Saturday read: "We do not comment on individuals. However, we can confirm a complaint of this type was made this evening at Antrim police station and it will be examined."

Ms Ruane told pupils they should be thankful hunger striker Sands paved the way for a better future for them.

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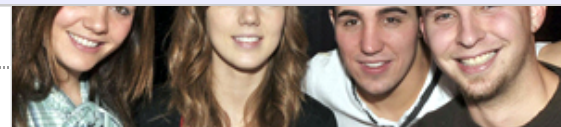
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DUP deputy leader Nigel Dodds described the remarks as "appalling". Sinn F^h said whoever made the complaint was wasting police resources.

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I couldn't care less about Bobby Sands, he is part of the past the fact of the matter is that Ruane is in a position of power within our government. She is as bad as Iris Robinso, 2 people in government from opposite sides who couldn't run a bath!

Posted by Michael | 22.12.08, 13:56 GMT

Remind me Armagh Boy, what's heroic about being a member of a terrorist organisation which kills men, women and children, Protestant, Catholic and Aethiest alike.

Sands was a terrorist. Stone was a terrorist. End of.

Posted by mickey | 22.12.08, 13:39 GMT

There is no green eye'd monster taken over unionism here....just the realisation among unionists that Sinn Fein have literally shot themselves into foot (excuse the pun) by giving the poison chalice of the Minister of Education to an ill-advised Catriona Ruane.

Its a shame because the other two SF ministers are doing a good job.

This is not an issue about religion. This is about our children. She is destroying their future, and I know for a fact that members of her own communities are very angry about the way she is running her department. She has started a storm, and Sinn Fein will reap the whirlwind at the next election. They should sack her immediately rather than rallying behind her because she is damaging their credibility as a party.

Posted by Dave | 22.12.08, 13:30 GMT

Pádraig... One man's courage is another woman's stupidity.

Posted by SP | 22.12.08, 12:50 GMT

Loved the comment by Armagh Bhoy - "when was the last time Bobby Sands ran into Stormont?" - don't think so, some how. Ruane is way beyond her means..

Posted by Stephen | 22.12.08, 12:04 GMT



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Northern Ireland Troubles



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 Mickey,


The difference is Sands "died" for his beliefs in a heroic manner and fair enough he was no angel, but he didnt try to break in to Stormont and kill the leaders of the opposing party because of his self proclaimed "art".

Is that Stones beliefs?

Posted by Armagh Bhoy | 22.12.08, 12:02 GMT

 Loyalists have no heros, who have died for theri beliefs, that is why they hate Bobby Sands, a hero around the world for many diffrent causes. The green eyed monster takes over unionism again.

Posted by Aidan | 22.12.08, 11:50 GMT

 Are the multiple bomb scares at St Colm's High School in Twinbrook and the visit by the Sinn Fein Education Minister linked by the school wanting to use the new but unused facilities at Balmoral High? Is someone sending out a message?

Ruane has nothing to glorify on the general education front yet St Colm's High is known as a good, well run, motivated, achieving school one must wonder if destruction is the only thing she understands.

Posted by puzzled parent | 22.12.08, 11:38 GMT

 Terrorism Act 2006:


Section (1) - Indirect encouragement statements include every statement which glorifies the commission or preparation (whether in the past, in the future or generally) of such acts or offences; and is a statement from which those members of the public could reasonably be expected to infer that what is being glorified is being glorified as conduct that should be emulated by them in existing circumstances."[2]. The maximum penalty is seven years' imprisonment.

(2) A person commits an offence if (i) intends members of the public to be directly or indirectly encouraged or otherwise induced by the statement to commit, prepare or instigate acts of terrorism or Convention offences; or


(ii) is reckless as to whether members of the public will be directly or indirectly encouraged or otherwise induced by the statement to commit, prepare or instigate such acts or offences.

She was praising a convicted terrorist of an illegal terror group. She MUST go.

Posted by mickey | 22.12.08, 11:38 GMT


 Like Bobby Sands, the 9/11 and 7/7 bombers happily committed suicide for their political beliefs etc. Doesn't make them right.

Posted by Pete | 22.12.08, 11:33 GMT


 I think that the problem here is the word 'should'. Its one thing talking to kids about republican history and quite another telling them how they should feel about it. One is free speech, the other is authoritarianism.

The hunger strikers had an enormous impact on developing my political ideologies as a child, so I am grateful to them, but the nature of Ruane's comments were inappropriate in the context in which they were made.


Posted by saz2020 | 22.12.08, 11:29 GMT

 Just get on with governing the country. The majority voted to leave sectarianism in the past where it belongs. Ruane's job is not to glorify figures from the past, just as I'm sure whomever complained to the police doesn't have monitoring Ruane's comments as part of their remit. Can people here not go one day without someone getting under their skin. Somebody said something others don't like - big deal, get on with it!


Posted by Steven | 22.12.08, 11:15 GMT

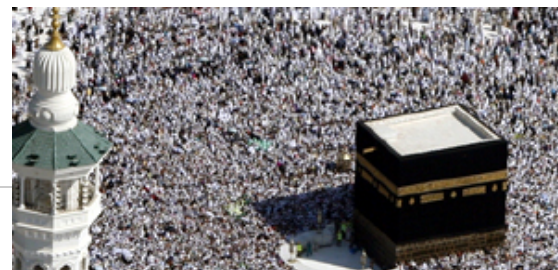
 I actually think this woman is just really really dim and has very little understanding of anything apart from her own daft ideas. she is fast becoming an embarrassment to everyone she is associated with Sinn Fein should boot her out and let her go make the sandwiches for the weekly meeting or something.

Posted by Michael | 22.12.08, 11:05 GMT

 Why has Ruane not been sacked yet?

Posted by Student Union | 22.12.08, 10:54 GMT

 Look the bare facts (whether you support Sinn Fein or the I.R.A or not) is that this has no place in school. People have always had different views on sands and the hunger strikers, just like people have always had different views on David Irvine and the PUP and U.V.F for example. The point is that Mrs Ruane should not have said this. Would all the nationalists on here be glad if a DUP minister went into a controlled school and told the children that they should be thankful to King



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The Pages of History



From The Belfast Telegraph Archives

Billy for defeating the Catholic armies and maintaining "Civil and Religious Liberties"? I think not. Whatever Mrs Ruane's personal convictions on this subject to bring this into ears of young people is disgraceful. Jesus says that "we will be judged for every idel word we say". I would wish Mrs Ruane would think on that.

Posted by *Berty* | 22.12.08, 10:49 GMT

- This is exactly why hard lefties such as Ruane want to destroy good schools including grammar schools. Once parental choice has been destroyed, they will be free to change the curriculum and use all schools to promote their socialist ideology. Exactly the same is happening in England and most of our politicians are too ignorant or stupid to see it. The content of subjects such as history, geography and religious education are being replaced with politically correct, secular, socialist ideology. The children, of course, are the ones who suffer, but why people like Ruane care about that? Education is the future and people like her recognise that - and use it to their advantage.

Posted by *Nick* | 22.12.08, 10:46 GMT

- Armagh Bhoy - and Bobby Sands was an Angel? What's the difference between Sands dying for his "beliefs" and Stone acting upon his "beliefs"?

Bobby, Stone, Bin Laden - all terrorists. Wouldn't you agree?

Posted by *mickey* | 22.12.08, 10:32 GMT

- This country never fails to embarrass me from all angles!. Why do we have to be governed by these numbskulls, both Nationalist and Unionist?

Posted by *RB* | 22.12.08, 10:30 GMT

- Yes Mickey there would be an Uproar, Thats because Michael Stone is a stone cold killer.

When was the last time Bobby Sands tried to run into Stormont to kill the DUP leaders, Oh no thats right, it was performance art.

Wise Up...

Good on you Ruane..

R.I.P Bobby Sands..

Posted by *Armagh Bhoy* | 22.12.08, 09:44 GMT

- Ruane's better future for education? The glorification of suicide?

Her record includes closing schools, ending of choice for a grammar school, the revised curriculum with a themes based approach instead of subject teaching, children discovering for themselves instead of being taught, teachers and pupils self-evaluating, play-based approaches instead of teaching numeracy and literacy facts in primary schools.

It is little wonder the Education Minister has lost the plot and strayed onto matters more comfortable for her party political background. It does not seem wise to talk of suicide to schoolchildren in a part of Northern Ireland with a horrifying picture of loss of young impressionable lives through suicide.

Posted by *M Blair* | 22.12.08, 09:41 GMT

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