

BELFAST TELEGRAPH

BELFAST TELEGRAPH

tv



ADVERTISEMENT

Belfast Telegraph - IPR Website of the Year

Search Site

Advanced Search

- Loadzajobs.co.uk
 - Propertynews.com
 - Belfast Telegraph TV
 - Family Notices
 - Ads For Free
- Belfast Telegraph**
- Home
 - News**
 - Local & National
 - World news
 - Politics**
 - Education
 - Letters
 - Opinion
 - Technology
 - Breaking News
 - Northwest Edition
 - Business
 - Business Telegraph
 - Sport
 - Health
 - Features
 - Columnists
 - Entertainment
 - Homefinder
 - Weather
 - Archive
 - Calendar 2007
 - Telegraph Travel
- Inside Belfast**
- Jobs
 - Training
 - Dating
 - Gaming
 - Reader Offers
 - Diners' Club
- Services**
- RSS
 - Media Kit
- Other Titles**
- Sunday Life
 - Ireland's Saturday Night

[Home](#) > [News](#) > [Politics](#)

Politics

Brian Rowan: Shining a light in the darkest places

Tuesday, June 12, 2007

Security expert Brian Rowan argues that all sides will have much to explain in a consultation process dealing with Northern Ireland's past

The "big conversation" may well ask the biggest questions of this peace process. This is the unfinished business of the conflict - the unanswered questions, the work that is about the search for truth.

It is one of the last pieces of the jigsaw. And the making of the picture depends on those who have the answers being prepared to give them.

The next phase in all of this will be a wide consultation process - looking to see if there is a consensus on how you deal with this thing that we call 'The Past'.

It is about all of those killings. It is about what some call terrorism and others call war.

It is about all of the hurt - about who knew what, who did what, and it is about trying somehow to settle that past - not to forget it.

This will be the peace talking to the war and asking questions that will make for the most difficult and awkward of answers.

At its end, this phase of consultation needs to tell us who is prepared to answer.

The chief constable Sir Hugh Orde talks about all sides being asked " the hard questions".

His side - the security side - will have much to explain, but so too will the republican and loyalist leaderships, and we need to know how and when all of them will be prepared to speak.

Much of the past, the conflict, the war, was hidden in a thick fog. There is stuff we were never meant to see.

And a judgment the Eames-Bradley team will have to make is how much of the truth will be made available.

There is no worth in a half-truth process - no point in this if some of the sides stay away.

It should be all or nothing.

Collusion is a big stick to beat the police and Army with - and there was collusion, but our war had many sides.

Who will explain the orders and the actions of the IRA, the UVF, the UDA and all those other republican and loyalist organisations?

What about those in the most senior positions of paramilitary leadership who were in the pay of the Special Branch and the Security Services?

What side of any truth table will they sit at?

There is some of this that will never come out ? can never come out ? because it would cause turmoil in the peace process.

Would any of us be surprised if at the end of their consultation Lord Eames and Denis Bradley conclude that we may get some more of the truth ? but we won't get all of it.

There is stuff that will be forever hidden in the darkest of places.

- Email Article
- Print Version
- Search
- +Most Emailed
- +Most Read

More articles in Politics

- [Blair's attack provokes anger among newspaper editors and broadcasters](#)
- [First he conquered the press. Then it rebelled](#)

Don't miss . . .

Video Exclusive **tv**



IAN PAISLEY INTERVIEW

In Pictures: Wet wet wet



In Pictures: Before the floods



Homefinder TV: Episode seven



ADVERTISEMENTS

ADVERTISEMENTS

- [Blair speech in full](#)
- [Commission backs end to confusing electoral system](#)
- [MLA attacks 'infantile' Trek themed exchange](#)



*Are you
missing
out on
opportunities?*

[LoadzaJobs.co.uk](#)

With our
Email Alerts
you could
be at the
top of your
game...

Let

[LoadzaJobs.co.uk](#)

**find jobs
for you**



[Letters to the Editor
Click Here](#)

BELFAST TELEGRAPH



Letters...

[Click here to
read your views](#)

ADVERTISEMENTS

Video

IFA scoring



Gary Grattan reports on the IFA's success off the pitch

Clowning around



Gary Grattan reports on the day the circus came to town

Acting the goat in west Belfast



Maureen Coleman chats to Paul Nicholls on set

'She is no longer my daughter'



Killer Crymble's mum talks exclusively to the Telegraph

In Pictures . . .

News

[Devolution Day](#)
[Assembly Elections](#)
[Maze tumbles](#)
[Blair quits](#)
[Last watchtower](#)
[Carrick-a-rede](#)

Events

[Balmoral Show](#)
[Razorlight](#)
[St Patrick's Day](#)
[Mardis Gras](#)
[Justin Timberlake](#)
[Brit Awards 07](#)

Sport

[N Ireland v Sweden](#)
[Six Nations](#)
[World in Sport](#)

Eye on the World

New Cold War?



The nuclear stand-off in Europe between US and Russia

An interview with America's most wanted



Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr gives rare interview in Iraq

UK's private army in Iraq



Thousands of mercenaries and they cost you £200m

Sicko?



Is Michael Moore right about US healthcare?