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# Replica machine gun for 'historical' display

**Published Date:** 19 August 2008

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## By Staff reporter

Sinn Fein has defended a decision to display a replica machine gun during the annual hunger strike commemoration in Derry.

Thousands of republicans were in Derry on Sunday to commemorate the ten hunger strikers who died in Long Kesh prison in 1981.

However, the organisers have come under fire from unionists after a man dressed in military uniform wielded a machine gun as part of an historical re-enactment during the parade.

DUP Junior Minister Jeffrey Donaldson said: "I think it is wholly inappropriate that people should display any kind of weaponry, whether it is replica or not.

"Symbolism like this should not be used, particularly from our party's perspective."

A spokesman for Sinn Fein said the replica firearm was no more than a prop for the "historical re-enactment" of the 1957 Brookborough Raid, one in a series of attacks mounted by the IRA in the early phase of the Border Campaign of 1956-62. He said it was one of two replica guns used in the re-enactment.

The spokesman added: "Jeffrey Donaldson should be more concerned about removing real weapons from unionist paramilitaries rather than criticising an historical commemoration committee for using replica weapons.

"His comments are in stark contrast to his reaction when more than 100 armed loyalist paramilitaries attacked nationalists during a bonfire in Coleraine on August 9."

See further coverage on Pages 6 and 7.

The full article contains 237 words and appears in Journal Tuesday Derry Edit newspaper.  
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