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HUNGER STRIKE FILM IS BASED ON 'WORST CRIMINALS IN HELL'

By Staff reporter

27/05/08

THE new film about IRA hunger striker Bobby Sands's final days has been accused of "glorifying some of the worst criminals in hell".

Republicans should be hounded for war crimes, not recognised by the Cannes Film Festival prize-winning movie *Hunger*, according to Jim Dixon, injured in the IRA's 1987 Poppy Day bombing in Enniskillen, Co

Fermanagh which killed 11 people.

"The IRA should be held accountable for the horrendous deeds that they carried out," he said.

"These men are looking for credibility but if you trailed hell you couldn't find any worse."

Sands refused food for 66 days in the Maze prison, Co Antrim, in 1981 in a bid to be recognised as a political prisoner.

He was the first of 10 republicans to die.

The prisoners died in a protest for the right to wear their own clothing and other privileges formerly ceded to political inmates.

Mr Dixon unsuccessfully stood for election in 2001 in opposition to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

DUP assembly member Robin Newton said the production would offend many victims.

"If the director Steve McQueen actually wanted to understand the fanatical nature of terrorists there are other ways to study the motives of those who are prepared to murder and bomb that cause less offence to those who continue to suffer as a result of their depraved actions," he said.

Belfast City Council refused to allow its property to be used in the making of the film.

A spokesman for the producers said no release date had been set.

"I believe that people need to see the film before passing judgment. They are making decisions about it without having seen it," he said.

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