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Allister denounces Sinn Fein attack on arrest of Duffy

26 March 2009

Statement by Traditional Unionist Leader Jim Allister MEP

"After one ex-Sinn Fein Councillor is charged with murder of Con Carroll, who should protest the lawful re-arrest of Colin Duffy but, surprise, surprise, Sinn Fein! Maskey's attack on the arrest shows that faced with supporting the police and their pursuit of terrorism, or attacking the police, Sinn Fein's immediate response is still to attack the police!

Recent events suggest to me that the NIO should be looking afresh at some of the evidential-related legislation which it repealed as part of the "normalisation" process. In particular under Sections 107-111 of the Terrorism Act 2000 evidence from a senior police officer of belief in an accused's membership of a proscribed organisation was admissible in court. However, these provisions were repealed on 31 July 2007 as part of the commitment in the normalisation programme to repeal all counter-terrorist legislation particular to Northern Ireland.

As part of the politically driven dash to pretend normality and placate Sinn Fein - all as part of the scene-setting for the devolving of policing and justice - many premature changes to our criminal justice

arrangements were made, including the "abolition" of Diplock Courts and these special evidential provisions, which could help obtain convictions of membership of terrorist organisations.

Now, that the premise upon which all this was based, namely that violence was over for good, has been exploded by the return of IRA terrorism, Northern Ireland is denuded of some of the anti-terrorist laws which it previously relied upon. When allied with the parallel run-down of the police, in terms of manpower, expertise, intelligence gathering (including the abandonment of previous use of informers) and the transformation into a mere civic police service - again all at the behest of Sinn Fein - then, we have arrived at a sorry mess.

Having waited out the dismantling of our police and justice defences, the IRA, under whatever guise, is now moving in to take advantage of this foolishness."

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