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O'LOAN: SINN FEIN WEARING BLACK RIBBONS AN INSULT TO MEMORY OF VICTIMS

[Back to Latest News](#)

SDLP North Antrim MLA Declan O'Loan says that the call by Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams for a "March for Truth" wearing black ribbons, to be held on 12th August, is repugnant and an insult to the memory of victims of the troubles.

Declan O'Loan said, "The utmost sensitivity is needed in any event marking the past. Deep wounds are present and they are made worse by inappropriate forms of commemoration or campaigning."

"What is wrong about this call is the one-sided nature of it, the total ignoring of Sinn Fein's own responsibility in the search for truth, and the need for it to accept the massive responsibility that the republican movement itself has for the death and destruction of the past."

"Sinn Fein are eloquent about the need for truth about collusion. This is valid as far as it goes. However it refuses to recognise its equal responsibility with the state in the taking of life. The book "Lost Lives" attributes 1778 murders to the IRA. This is 48.5% of all the deaths of the troubles, by far the largest proportion for any group. There are many killings on which republicans could cast light, including what happened to the disappeared. Martin McGuinness said he would put loyalty to his comrades before the truth."

"Black is the colour of mourning. To appropriate this symbol and to use it in defence of a half-truth is repugnant. It is an insult to the many who have died, the many who have mourned them, and the many others who have suffered."

"To heal this society requires truth about the past and expression of regret for wrong actions. This is the wrong kind of event."

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