



English/Gaeilge



Martin McGuinness to address commemoration in honour of murdered Sinn Féin councillor, John Davey

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Sinn Féin MP for Mid-Ulster, Martin McGuinness will this weekend address republicans from throughout counties Derry and Antrim at a commemoration to be held at St. Mary's Churchyard, Lavey (Co. Derry) on Sunday 15th February at 2.30pm in honour of murdered Sinn Féin councillor, John Davey (20th anniversary).

Announcing details of the event organised by Cos. Derry and Antrim Republican Graves Association, former political prisoner and member of Magherafelt District Council, Cllr. Peter Bateson said:

"I wish to extend an invitation to everyone to attend Sunday's commemoration in honour of Sinn Féin councillor, John Davey who was murdered by unionist paramilitaries working in direct collusion with British forces.

"Although not a native of South Derry, John Davey embodied the republican spirit of his adopted area. A capable and able person he used his talents that otherwise would undoubtedly have improved his wealth and position for the betterment of his community and the Irish people in general.

"John served the republican cause in whatever way the situation needed. No stranger to imprisonment, he was interned on a number of occasions. He was first interned as a young man and held without charge for a number of years during the 1950's. Ironically, the man who arrested John on this occasion was Inspector Brendan Durkan, the father of SDLP leader Mark Durkan.

"John was again arrested and interned without trial in the 1970s. On this occasion his daughter Maria an infant was also arrested and taken into custody. The case made legal history in the British House of Lords when the legal team of General Pinochet, the Chilean tyrant who was fighting extradition on war crime charges from Britain quoted the example of the arrest of Maria Davey, a two year old child to support his credible claim that the type of anti-humanitarian

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crime he was accused of had in fact been carried out by the British in Ireland.

"A life long member of Sinn Féin and a strong campaigner on issues affecting republican prisoners, John played a very prominent role in the campaign for political status during the Blanket Protest and the 1980 and 1981 hunger strike. In the latter years of his life, John served his community as an elected member of Magherafelt District Council. He carried out his constituency work diligently despite the intense harassment he endured daily.

"It was perhaps inevitable that John would die as he did at the hands of an assassin whilst coming home from the monthly council meeting, on the night of 14th February 1989. The Crown Forces had told John that they would ensure that he would die in this way. He had survived an earlier attempt on his life by UDA killer, Michael Stone.

"Twenty years on the spirit of John Davey lives on. More people than ever support the principles for which John and his party colleague and fellow Magherafelt district councillor, Councillor Bernard O'Hagan gave their lives. The party that John helped to build is now the third largest on this island. Sinn Féin is the largest party on Magherafelt District Council and the party in South Derry provides a full-time and efficient constituency service from its Gulladuff office, the site of the former hall which was secured by John and his comrades.

"John's friends and colleagues remain steadfast in their determination to see the establishment of an Irish Republic where all irrespective of creed, class or colour can live as equals." ENDS

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