Just News

CAJ
Committee on the Administration of Justice
Promoting Justice / Protecting Rights

Human Rights in Northern Ireland July/August 2010

Bloody Sunday – Setting the Truth Free

The events of January 30th 1972 uniquely shaped the Northern Ireland conflict. The loss of life and injury, the failure of the state to investigate adequately, with the continued denial of state accountability created a deep reservoir of hurt within bereaved families and the community. Bloody Sunday was a mirror held up to the state's own rhetoric of rule of law and democratic participation. The state was found wanting. But, after decades of legal and political struggle to vindicate the innocence of thirteen persons killed during the civil rights protest, the report by the Hon Lord Saville of Newdigate was released on June 15th to their families and a watchful local and global community.

The Report of the Bloody Sunday Inquiry spans 10 volumes. The Report is unequivocal that the deaths were "unjustified and unjustifiable" and that all those shot were innocent civilians who had given no cause for the use of force against them by members of the British paratroop regiment. The symbolism of the Report's delivery was deeply significant. A packed house in Westminster and the crowd at Guildhall Square in Derry -- both at centre stage -- waited and watched. A newly elected and conservative British Prime Minister, David Cameron in a speech before the House of Commons, gave no political space for dissension. He confirmed that the army had fired the first shots; that no warnings were given before the soldiers opened fire; that none of the casualties were posing a threat; that soldiers lied about their actions; and that on behalf of the government and the country he was "deeply sorry".

The Saville Inquiry was first commissioned by Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair in 1998 as part of the then-embryonic peace process– a confidence-building measure aimed largely at the nationalist community, whose faith in the rule of law and the neutrality of the state had been seriously undermined by the events of that day, and the subsequent and much derided inquiry by Lord Widgery which had exonerated the soldiers and the state of responsibility. The 12-year length of the Saville Inquiry proceedings was testimony to the complexity of the terrain it traversed, as well as to the continual obstacles placed in the way of proceeding by the Ministry of Defence.

The Inquiry's outcome was unexpected for its clarity, for its directness, and for the starkness of its findings. It also tenaciously confirms the importance of redeeming and affirming the truth of contentious actions by the state. The Report is received in the context of an ongoing political transition in a post-conflict society. It immediately raises the question of what comes next? An obvious question is whether the prosecution of soldiers for offences of murder or manslaughter for their actions on the day by the Public Prosecution Service will be sought. Despite the clarity of Saville's report, success is less certain in an adversarial setting. Fair trial concerns for soldiers, the admissibility of hearsay evidence, the passage of time, as well as undertakings given by the Attorney-General in 1999 that witnesses who provided evidence to the inquiry would be protected, all pose prosecutorial challenges. It seems more likely that prosecution of witnesses (specifically soldiers) for perjury would be successful given the depth and scope of evidence in the report itself. The families of the dead and the wounded have stated that they will take some time to read and consider the report before making calls for further specific legal steps.

But, in a wider context, the report has significant precedential importance for transitional societies.
Continues page 5...

Contents

Bloody Sunday- Setting the Truth Free	1
Lessons from Northern Ireland, for Northern Ireland	2
Book Review: The European Convention on Human Rights and the Conflict in Northern Ireland	3
Transgender Woman wins 13- years legal Battle	4/5
CAJ's response to the parading proposals	6/7
Civil Liberties Diary	8

Lessons from Northern Ireland, for Northern Ireland

In January 2008 CAJ launched its publication '*War on Terror: Lessons from Northern Ireland'* as a contribution to the critical discussion about how to most effectively respond to a perceived growing threat of political violence. At the same time, the Institute for Conflict Research and NIACRO facilitated a series of discussions involving participants from Northern Ireland and Bradford to compare how the British state had responded to the emergence of conflict in Northern Ireland and how it was responding to radicalised Islam in Britain. Both projects were critical of the responses of the British government and their apparent failure to learn key lessons from Northern Ireland. However, both were equally assured that the changes brought about through peace-building, including institutional reforms and recognition of the importance of respecting human rights, marked a change from past practices.

Two years later and the situation in Northern Ireland does not seem so optimistic, with some disturbing echoes of earlier times. Since the killings at Massereene barracks and Craigavon in March 2009 dissident republican violence has increased, with stories of planned or foiled attacks appearing regularly in the media. PSNI statistics indicate that there were 79 shootings and 50 bombings in 2009-10, representing a steady increase over the past four years, although the police data does not specifically break down the identity of the perpetrators of such violence. At the same time 'punishment' shootings by republican groups rose to 45, the highest number since 2003-04, while the 81 'punishment' beatings was the highest figure since 2004-5, although 69 beatings were attributed to loyalists. Although dissident violence clearly demands an effective response, a disproportionate response by the state risks creating sympathy for the dissidents.

To date, dissident violence has been countered by a variety of responses. There are now over 100 dissident republican prisoners in jail across Ireland, and in this context there have also been growing complaints about ill-treatment. These have resulted in a hunger strike and other forms of prison protests and there is an increasingly vocal campaign among prisoners' supporters on the outside. There have been complaints of increasing harassment of dissidents, with individuals arrested, questioned and then released without charge, while groups such as Eirigi have complained about harassment and surveillance of participants at their events. Others have raised concerns over police use of 'stop and search' powers under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act, which rose from 913 cases in 2006-07 to over 20,000 cases in the first three quarters of 2009-10. Section 44 is no longer available to the police following the European Court of Human Rights ruling that it was a breach of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (Gilligan and Quinton v UK) earlier this year, but the PSNI still have use of stop and search powers under the Justice and Security Act. It will be interesting to see whether the already growing use of these powers intensifies in coming months.

Through the Troubles public perceptions of harassment of individuals, of criminalisation of political activity, the creation of a 'suspect community' and the abuse of human rights, all contributed to the consolidation of support for armed violence, rather than undermining it. The dissident republican groups may not have the same level of support that mainstream republicans had, but their support is more visible than it was a few years ago, and claims of ill-treatment and harassment resonate strongly in some communities. Perhaps the most notable aspect of the current campaign is the ability of dissident groups to draw young people into their activities.

This suggests that the groups are not simply dependent on disgruntled older republicans but are also proving appealing to individuals, who have no personal experience of the conflict but who feel marginalised from the benefits of peace. It is therefore important that bodies such as the PSNI and the Prison Service ensure that their actions remain fully compliant with their human rights responsibilities and do not serve to increase support for those who are prepared to use force of arms.

Neil Jarman, Director, Institute for Conflict Research

Book Review: The European Convention on Human Rights and the Conflict in Northern Ireland, by Brice Dickson

If (as is surely the case) the story of the Northern Irish peace process has been romanticised and presented as an exemplar par excellence to other conflict-ridden societies, then the story of the European Convention on Human Rights has suffered the same romantic fate. Rather than blandly accept the narrative that suggests that the ECHR played a pivotal, if not indispensible, role in the resolution of the NI conflict and the protection of individual rights during its currency, Brice Dickson's examination of The European Convention on Human Rights and the Conflict in Northern Ireland (2010, Oxford University Press) sets about untangling the fable of the Convention and getting to the heart of its use and performance in the context of Northern Ireland.

There are a number of different ways in which the Convention and the NI conflict are deeply bound up in one another. Not only was the ECHR seen as an important (although not necessarily successful) tool in trying to combat repressive laws and policies employed by the UK in the conflict (in litigation, advocacy and—perhaps to a lesser degree—politics), but so too were the many cases on Northern Ireland that came before the European Court of Human Rights and, in its time, the Commission. In this book Dickson considers the impact not only of the Convention within the conflict, but also of the conflict on the Convention. It will come as no surprise to readers of Just News to hear that the story of the Convention's involvement in Northern Ireland is, in reality, a mixed and sometimes disappointing one. Although advocates and lawyers immediately identified the Convention as an important tool in the civil rights movement (Chapter 3), early attempts to use the Convention and appeal to the Court were frequently fumbled and fumbling. Even when cases came before the Court, they were characterised by an almost crushing conservatism on the part of the judges there who not only failed (in Ireland v United Kingdom) to find that the '5 techniques' in fact constituted torture, but also acceded easily to government assertions in later cases that the conflict in Northern Ireland constituted an emergency threatening the life of the nation (Article 15, ECHR) thereby allowing for some rights to be limited through derogation. It is true to say—as Dickson notes—that as time went on the Strasbourg Court became more resilient against government claims, but even success in Strasbourg did not always translate into change 'on the ground', not only because of the lack of effective enforcement mechanisms within the ECHR but also because of the potential for governments to circumvent these judgments with derogations.

And so what of the other side of the story? For the early decades of its existence, these islands—and particularly Northern Ireland—acted as the source of the vast majority of cases before the Court relating to emergencies, terrorism, state counter-terrorism and conflict. Through these early cases important principles of the European Convention were crafted, not all of which really serve to protect individuals who are caught up in the direct and indirect results of conflict. Setting aside for one moment structural problems with the Convention (such as the demanding admissibility rules, the lack of effective enforcement mechanisms, and derogations), the approach taken by the Court itself in early cases on Northern Ireland suggested to governments that they enjoyed a wide discretion to act as they 'sought fit' in order to repress violence. All too often the Court allowed governments' judgement to supersede its own, accepting with extensive amounts of deference the claims of necessity and emergency that governments submitted to them. In this, it must be said, the Strasbourg Court was not alone—historically courts have generally been deferential to governments who claim their actions are directed towards public order, peace and stability in a time of emergency. The international nature of the Strasbourg Court, however, may have seduced many into believing that these traditional, 'domestic' patters of deference would not reappear. Such hopes were ultimately dashed at the Strasbourg bench.

These issues and more are taken up and considered in an astonishing degree of detail in Dickson's excellent volume. As well as providing a background to the conflict and the Convention, the book considers the use of the ECHR thematically in chapters dealing with, for example, internment (Chapter 4) and fair trial (Chapter 8). For anyone interested not only in Northern Ireland but also in the development of the Convention, these in-depth and meticulously researched chapters will be an important resource. For readers interested in the future of human rights in Northern Ireland and in the future of the Convention the closing chapter, entitled "The Final Picture", offers interesting if not entirely uplifting reading.

...Continues on Page 5

Transgender Woman wins 13-year Legal Battle

When the Irish government recently dropped its appeal against a High Court judgment in favour of transgender woman Lydia Foy, it was not just a victory for Dr. Foy and the small transgender community in the Republic. The decision also helped break down gender stereotypes and showed how the Republic's European Convention on Human Rights Act, 2003 (the ECHR Act) could be used by other marginalised groups as well.

Dr Lydia Foy was registered at birth as a boy but growing up she was confused about her gender identity. She tried to live as a man and married and had two children but became more and more unhappy in her male role. Her health broke down and she was diagnosed with Gender Identity Disorder in 1990. She had the physical characteristics of a male but mentally and emotionally she was female. She had gender reassignment surgery in England in England in 1992 and since then has lived entirely as a woman. It was not an easy road to take. Her marriage broke up, she lost her job as a dentist and she suffered isolation, misunderstanding and abuse. She tried to get a new birth certificate in her female gender to avoid embarrassment and humiliation whenever she was asked to produce her birth certificate as identification or to prove her age. And she also wanted it as official recognition/confirmation of her gender identity. She was refused.

Eventually, in 1997, represented by Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC), Dr Foy began a legal action to get the Registrar General to issue her with a new birth certificate. The case was heard over 14 days in the High Court in Dublin in 2000 and judgment was given two years later in July 2002. Mr Justice Liam McKechnie was sympathetic but he held against her. He said there was nothing in Irish law that would allow her to be officially recognised as female, but he urged the Irish government to "urgently review" the position and do something about it. By a cruel twist of fate, just two days after the decision in Lydia Foy's case, the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg gave judgment in a landmark transgender case called Goodwin v. UK. The Strasbourg court held that the UK law, which also prevented recognition of transgender persons and was identical to the Irish law, was in breach of the ECHR. The UK government quickly changed the law. Would it have made any difference if the Irish court had given judgment a week after the Goodwin judgment instead of two days beforehand? Probably not since the Republic had not yet incorporated the ECHR into its domestic law. But one year later, the Republic passed the ECHR Act, 2003, closely modelled on the UK Human Rights Act, and made the ECHR part of Irish law.

Lydia Foy had appealed the High Court decision but she also made a new application for a birth certificate, this time relying on the new ECHR Act and the decision of the Strasbourg Court in the Goodwin case. And in the meantime, and influenced by the Strasbourg decision, every other country in the EU, including the UK, had provided for the recognition of transgender persons. In October 2007, ten and a half years after Dr Foy had started her legal action, Judge McKechnie, the same judge who had heard her case the first time, gave his judgment. This time he held that the existing Irish law which did not allow for the recognition of Dr Foy's female gender, was incompatible with the ECHR. This was a remedy that had not been available to him in 2002 and it was the first declaration of incompatibility to be made under the ECHR Act. Like the UK provision, on which it was modelled, it put the onus on the Irish government to change the law.

Judge McKechnie was clearly very frustrated at the government's failure to act on his plea, made in his 2002 judgment, to do something to ease the plight of transgender people. He said: "Ireland as of now is very much isolated within the Member States of the Council of Europe" on this issue. Instead of changing the law as the UK government had done after the Goodwin decision, the Irish government appealed the High Court ruling. However, consistent lobbying by FLAC, Transgender Equality Network Ireland and other bodies kept the issue on the agenda and the government was criticised by the UN Human Rights Committee and Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner Thomas Hammarberg over its failure to act.

Eventually, the government committed itself to change the law and in June, 13 years after Lydia Foy began her legal battle, the State withdrew its appeal. The declaration of incompatibility was made final – the first declaration to be finalised under the ECHR Act – and an inter-departmental working group was set up to draft legislation "to provide for legal recognition … of the acquired gender of transsexuals".

A few weeks later Lydia Foy was appointed Grand Marshal of the Dublin Pride parade in recognition of her courage and tenacity in fighting for recognition for herself and other members of the transgender community.

There has been no backlash against the government's decision to recognise transgender people. It has been like the reaction to the recently passed Civil Partnership Act, which went through the Dail unopposed and was passed by the Seanad by 48 votes to 4. The Irish public appears to have a much more tolerant attitude to gender issues than the government feared. Indeed recent opinion polls have shown substantial support for civil marriage of same sex couples, not just civil partnership. Lydia Foy's long, lonely and painful struggle has won a major victory for a hitherto voiceless and very marginalised group in Irish society. And it has performed an educational function, helping to break down rigid stereotypes of gender roles and encouraging tolerance and a welcoming of difference in our midst.

The Foy case has also shown that, despite considerable scepticism and even opposition in judicial circles, the ECHR Act can work and help to assert and defend rights that are not adequately protected by the Constitution and existing laws. It has also shown that to achieve substantial social change, it is not enough to rely solely on legal argument in the courtroom. It is important to make use of international human rights mechanisms and to work hard to convince public opinion of the need for change.

Michael Farrell is the senior solicitor with FLAC, which represented Lydia Foy in her legal action. He is also a member of the Irish Human Rights Commission and of CAJ.

Continued from Page 1...

It demonstrates the capacity of determined victims to successfully challenge and force the state to account for its actions in violating human rights norms. In this, it has given great impetus to other families and communities who experienced human rights violations during the same conflict (including further incidents involving the same paratroop regiment). While the Prime Minister may have fervently hoped that Saville closes the circle of inquiry – it may well be that it has exploded the calls to deal fully with the "past" of the Northern Ireland conflict.

Nonetheless, it is an important vindication of the state – particularly for the democratic state that has engaged in serious human rights violations – as the Report breathes life into the capacity of the rule of law to respond adequately and meaningfully to harms experienced by its citizens. This was deeply evident that fateful Tuesday in June on the streets of Derry as those gathered in Guildhall Square clapped and acknowledged David Cameron's words. In this, the Report also underpins the symbolic and communicative function of law – in its capacity to mend and offer individuals the means to heal deep harms and to bring communities "in" rather than to leave them out. Lord Saville's Report is both symbolically and practically important – for Northern Ireland and other conflicted societies addressing the past.

The debate on "dealing with the past" in Northern Ireland has not likely been closed by this important report. Rather, it opens up the possibility of deeper and more sustained engagement as the transition goes forward.

Professor Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Just News Editor & Professor of Law, Transitional Justice Institute

Continued from Page 3...

Considering both the potential for a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and the capacity of the Convention to play a more effective role in European conflicts (dealing in some detail, in the book, with the Turkey/Cyprus conflict), the chapter closes the book in the same fashion as it was written throughout: gracefully, honestly, and with feeling. Any reader of this excellent volume—of which there should be many in law, politics, advocacy and other fields—will find it difficult to disagree with Dickson's closing sentiment that "Unless the Court is bolder and less deferential than it has been to date regarding the protection of human rights during times of severe societal unrest, it will lose credibility as the foremost standard-bearer for human rights in the world today" (p. 375).

Dr Fiona de Londras, UCD School of Law

Public assemblies, parades and protests

The recent decision by the Office of First and Deputy First Minister to change the draft legislation that had been proposed to deal with parading is welcome, but unsurprising. In the face of concern and opposition from a cross section of society as varied as the police, churches, local community groups, the Orange Order, human rights organisations, trade unions and a significant section of the general public, it is difficult to see how it could have proceeded as was. Particularly welcome is the decision to remove public assemblies from the remit of the proposals. In its submission to the consultation, CAJ had argued that the proposed restrictions on the right to freedom of assembly, in relation particularly to public meetings, were not compliant with Article 11(2) of the European Convention on Human Rights. We further highlighted that section 6(2)(c) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 renders any provision of Assembly legislation that is incompatible with any of the Convention rights outside the legislative competency of the Assembly

The freedom of assembly is central to any democracy and is a recognised human right in several international human rights instruments, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 21), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (article 21), and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (Article 12). Most importantly, it is protected in the European Convention on Human Rights ('ECHR') and consequently in the Human Rights Act 1998. Article 11(1) ECHR states that 'everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others'. While we recognise that freedom of assembly is not an absolute right, restrictions can only be applied in very limited circumstances. The ECHR states that '[n]o restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others' (article 11 (2)).

In our response, we indicated that "we are not aware of any public meetings causing serious issues in the past that could adversely affect national security, public safety, health or morals, or the rights and freedoms of others to the extent that would require such limitations. As such, we do not believe that the inclusion of public meetings in the Draft Bill, and the resulting restriction on the freedom of assembly, is either proportionate or necessary."

As such the announcement of the removal of public assemblies is to be welcomed. However, there are other aspects of the proposed legislation which we believe remain problematic and which warrant further consideration.

Lack of Clarity in Human Rights Framework

The consultation document clearly placed the draft Bill within a human rights context, which is welcomed. However, human rights were only referred to in abstract throughout the document, except for an undefined 'right to freedom from (all forms of / sectarian) harassment' (in the Terms of Reference of the Working Group). It is therefore unclear how human rights will be employed to underpin the processes of the draft Bill. While the recent statement from OFMDFM provides some clarification by saying "we intend to address any confusion about the references to human rights in the legislation to make clear that these references indicate a framework based on the European Convention of Human Rights"

First, the draft legislation states that 'in making a decision PAPPB must have regard to…human rights' (section 26 (7)(a)) and, although it stipulates that at least three members of the PAPPB will have 'relevant legal expertise', we are concerned that this does not explicitly state that any members will have human rights expertise. Furthermore, if the proposed mechanisms go ahead, a large number of people from adjudicators, to mediators, to anyone wishing to make a complaint will have to become au fait with the details and vagaries of the ECHR– which is not always entirely clear. For example, objections and concerns about a proposed public assembly can only be notified if they relate to compliance with the Code of Conduct or 'human rights'. While we welcome the human rights framework and understand that the draft Bill must limit the scope of possible concerns (to avoid vexatious or petty objections), we are concerned that the public will not know which objections 'relate to human rights'. It would be helpful if the OFMDFM provided examples or explanations of the human rights that could be invoked.

Need for Independence
Based on the information provided in the consultation document, it appears that the Appointments Panel and PAPPB may not be sufficiently independent, and that their appointment may not be open to sufficient scrutiny. We question whether the Public Appointments Commission should be involved and are concerned about the potential political influence that may be placed on the Appointments Panel and/or PAPPB. Greater independence for those involved in making decisions about assemblies, notably parades, is needed.

In this regard, we also question whether moving civil servants from OFMDFM to the newly constituted OPAPP will provide sufficient independence. It would seem that a new administrative body would not be sufficiently separate from OFMDFM, and yet would lose the ministerial accountability. This new body, therefore, would arguably place more pressure on the public purse without the benefits of adequate independence or accountability.

We recognise that the above difficulties may be inevitable when quasi-political, as opposed to wholly independent, regulation is applied. We would therefore suggest that a more independent model be employed.

Definition of non-participant
CAJ also expressed concern that the definition of 'non-participant' is too broad (see s9). The ODIHR/OSCE Guidelines on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly state that 'law enforcement officials should differentiate between participants and non- participants. The policing of public assemblies should be sensitive to the possibility of non-participants (such as bystanders or observers) being present in the vicinity of an assembly.' The draft legislation does not adequately discern between bystanders and active participants.

Appeal Mechanism
The ODIHR/OSCE Guidelines on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly advises that 'the assembly organisers should also be able to appeal the decision of the regulatory authority to an independent court or tribunal. This should be a de novo review, empowered to quash the contested decision and to remit the case for a new ruling. Any such review must also be prompt so that the case is heard and the court ruling published before the planned assembly date (in order to make it possible to still hold the assembly if the court invalidates the restrictions).'

CAJ is unclear as to whether there is a right to appeal a decision by PAPPB. The draft Bill contains only a right to review 'on the basis of a significant change of facts' (s26(11)). However, the statutory code of conduct that was subsequently released suggests that it is possible to appeal any panel decision, or review of a panel decision, to the courts via judicial review proceedings (page 17). This inconsistency needs to be clarified. In doing so, CAJ would highlight that the ECtHR has held that such decisions should be subject to prompt and effective judicial control to ensure that the freedom of assembly is not unduly restricted (Appl 8440/78, Christians against Racism and Fascism v United Kingdom, 21 DR 138 (1980)).

Here, and in many other places in the draft Bill, there is a lack of clarity and consistency which will have to be remedied in the redrafting. In addition, the status of the draft statutory code of conduct, which was issued for consultation on 23rd June with a closing date of 14th September, is unclear. The purpose of this code is to "underpin the draft legislation." If the draft legislation is to be redrafted, then clearly the statutory code of conduct will also have to be redrafted, and this needs to be clarified. As ever, the devil will be in the detail, and there is much work to do to ensure that the detail of this legislation stands up.

Civil Liberties Diary - June/July

15th June
The Saville report into the Bloody Sunday killings is made public. The report concludes that the actions of the Parachute Regiment in Derry on 30th January 1972 were both "unjustified" and "unjustifiable." The report confirms that all of the victims were innocent and that none of them posed a threat of causing harm or injury.

5th July
Documents uncovered by the Pat Finucane Centre in Derry show that a legal process was put in place during the 1970s and manipulated to ensure as few internees as possible would be released. The documents also reveal that the RUC and the British army believed loyalists should not be interned as they presented no serious threat of violence.

8th July
The Orange Order rejects the draft legislation to deal with contentious parades.

The families of five men shot dead by the UFF in 1992 are suing the Chief Constable for failing to prevent their deaths. It has been established that the weapon used in the attack had previously been handed over by UDA informer Billy Stobie to his Special Branch handlers to inspect. Official police procedures meant that the weapons should have been bugged and immobilised.

9th July
The families of those killed in the McGurk's Bar bombing of 1971 reject a long awaited report into the UVF killings. They claim that the Police Ombudsman had failed to properly investigate the security force claim that the bomb had been left by the IRA.

The Home Secretary Theresa May announces that the police would no longer use section 44 powers of stop and search.

16th July
Anna Stirrup wins her claim of age discrimination at the Fair Employment Tribunal. She was 50 years old when last year she was told she was too old to be working five days a week. She was also awarded for illegal deductions to her wages.

22nd July
Plans are lodged to build a holding centre in Larne for the short term detention of suspected illegal immigrants.

The First and Deputy First Minister announce that a new Victims and Survivors Service is to be set up to provide funding to victims groups and individuals.

23rd July
Victims of institutional child abuse in Northern Ireland meet with the First and Deputy First Ministers to discuss the possibility of a public inquiry.

27th July
The British government announces that the findings of the Billy Wright inquiry are to be published on 14th September. Northern Ireland Secretary of State, Owen Paterson, said the document would first be inspected by government lawyers to ensure no threat will be posed to the lives of witnesses.

28th July
Assistant Chief Constable Duncan McCausland outlines 21 areas of concern for the PSNI with the draft Public Assemblies Parades and Protests Bill. The PSNI's human rights advisor warned the Bill would pose serious issues for police in carrying out their duties and in complying with the Human Rights Act.

A report released by QUB finds that social housing provision in Northern Ireland does not comply with international human rights standards found in the ICESCR.

30th July
The remains of one of the Disappeared, Charlie Armstrong, are found in County Monaghan. He went missing in August of 1981 and it is believed he was murdered and buried by the IRA.

Compiled by Mark Bassett from various newspapers

Just News

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