

STATEMENT BY COLIN WALLACE IN RESPONSE TO COMMENTS ALLEGEDLY MADE BY COUNSEL FOR THE HIA INQUIRY

7 July 2016

My attention has been drawn to the contents of BBC NI website dated 7 July 2016 and to the comments allegedly made by Mr Joseph Aiken, Counsel for the HIA Inquiry

Some of the reported comments are either totally inaccurate, or so misleading that **they must surely give rise to serious concern about the neutrality of the HIA Inquiry**. I believe the Inquiry should correct those inaccuracies as a matter of urgency, bearing in mind that the true facts are on public record and, therefore, freely available. Failure to do so will indicate that there is a deliberate attempt to mislead the public on these matters and must surely call into question the Inquiry's ultimate findings. The Inquiry should not be allowed to be used as a platform to disseminate incorrect information.

According to the BBC website, Mr Joseph Aiken, Counsel for the Inquiry, "also outlined in detail how, in other cases, evidence from Mr Wallace had been rejected by the Saville Inquiry into Bloody Sunday and by the Barron Inquiry in the Republic of Ireland."

This statement is totally false. My evidence was **not** rejected by the Barron Inquiry.

The Barron Inquiry

In his report, Judge Barron says:

"In person, Wallace comes across as intelligent, self-assured, and possessed of a quiet yet unwavering moral conviction. Though he has reasons enough to be bitter - the abrupt and unjust ending of a promising career in Northern Ireland, five years spent in prison on a conviction which has since been quashed - he displays no outward signs of resentment towards individuals or institutions. He remains intensely loyal to his country and to the Army: insofar as he has a quarrel, it is with individuals rather than the institutions concerned. He says he believes that much of the propaganda work undertaken by Information Policy was justifiable in the interests of defeating subversives and promoting a political solution to the Troubles. When speaking of matters directly within his own experience, the Inquiry believes him to be a highly knowledgeable witness. His analyses and opinions, though derived partly from personal knowledge and partly from information gleaned since his time in Northern Ireland, **should also be treated with seriousness and respect.**"

Most normal people would not regard the above comments as "rejection"!

The Saville Inquiry

The Saville Inquiry did **not** reject my evidence. A number of senior military and government witnesses told the Saville Inquiry that either all Government psychological operations in Northern Ireland had ceased prior to 'Bloody Sunday', or that they (the witnesses) had not been involved in such activities. I was the only witness who confirmed that psychological operations were not only still taking place at the time of 'Bloody Sunday', but also continued for some years thereafter. Initially, it appeared that my evidence was false. However, documents later

released by the MoD show beyond any doubt that my evidence was totally correct. This is highly important because the Government must have known that the sworn evidence given by its witnesses to the Saville Inquiry was incorrect, but made no attempt to correct it. Indeed, in 1990, the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Archie Hamilton, admitted in Parliament that the Ministry of Defence continued to use disinformation until 1975 - four years after 'Bloody Sunday' occurred! Significantly, no charges for perjury were ever brought any of the Government witnesses. The failure by the MoD to correct the inaccurate evidence given to the Saville Inquiry has obvious major significance for the HIA Inquiry.

The Murder of Brian McDermott

My position on the murder of Brian McDermott has not changed - I do not know who killed him, nor am I aware of any direct link between his murder and Kincora.

However, although the murder was entirely a matter for the RUC, the Army did have an initial interest in the case because there were allegations that an associate of John McKeague was a suspect and likely to be charged. I believe that there was also a tenuous connection between that individual and Kincora. In addition, it was known that the area where Brian McDermott allegedly disappeared was a known haunt of 'homosexuals' - the term 'paedophile' was not used at that time. Also, the RUC told the press that the murder may have involved some sort of 'Black Magic' or witchcraft ritual. That information was widely reported in the media at the time. The Army was aware that both William McGrath and John McKeague had separately expressed an interest in the occult. I have no doubt whatsoever that there was a feeling within the Army that the RUC were convinced at an early stage in the investigation that they 'knew' who was responsible for the murder of Brian McDermott, but no prosecution took place. I do not know if the RUC's initial conclusions were correct, but there was a belief within the Army that the original suspect, or suspects, were being 'protected'.

The RUC appeared to have a change of mind and apparently suspected that the murder may have been a domestic one. At that point, the Army's interest in the matter ceased because there was no longer any obvious paramilitary connection. One of the reasons why I was instructed to brief the press for the second time in 1973 about William McGrath and his activities was that, following Brian McDermott's death, General Peter Leng - the Commander Land Forces at HQ NI - became concerned that boys were absconding from hostels in the Belfast area and thus were vulnerable to exploitation in various forms, including by paramilitaries. General Leng later confirmed to the Sunday Times that he was aware of the allegations relating to William McGrath and his sexual activities.

When the Prime Minister promised that "no stone would remain unturned" by the Inquiries which were set up to establish the facts about historical child sex abuse, I am confident that he did not imagine that any Inquiry would devote its energies to attempting to discredit those whose views differed from those of the Inquiry.

As Mr Aiken knows, telling the full truth, not just a convenient, selective part of it, is important! By using selective information about me, as he apparently has, I feel he is not helping to build public confidence in the Inquiry as an impartial entity. It is this perceived lack of trust in the impartiality of the Inquiry that has led to a number of key witnesses refusing to participate. If the comments attributed to Mr Aiken are a true representation of what he actually said, I am personally very relieved that I decided not to participate in this Inquiry.