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A Victory for Victims: Corporate DUP U-Turn on Maze



The campaign launched by TUV Leader Jim Allister MLA along with UUP and UKIP to petition the DUP on the 'Conflict Transformation Centre' at the Maze prison site has been a success.

DUP Leader Peter Robinson has finally listened to the large swathes of the unionist electorate and interest groups who came out against the DUP/Sinn Fein proposals.

Commenting Jim Allister said:

"Congratulations to all who campaigned so hard against the Provo Project at the Maze, particularly innocent victims. Every signature on our petition helped force the DUP into a monumental climb down. We must ensure there is no backsliding on the issue!

"Despite all the diversionary talk from Peter Robinson about the changing stance of others, his Maze u-turn is seismic, but none the less welcome for that.

"The logic of Mr Robinson's analysis of how Sinn Fein is still wedded to justifying terror, leads to the obvious question of why he still sustains them in government?

"Patently, OFMDFM is and will be in disarray over the Maze, which, of course, typifies the paralysis and dysfunctionality at the heart and top of this failed government..

"I have written to the Special European Union Programmes Body to ascertain if other projects can now benefit from the monies that are now going to be unspent on the Maze project.

"There are many worthy projects that should now be prioritised and the political machinations of Sinn Fein should not be a barrier to such going forward."

Another U-Turn: Charter for Innocent Victims of Terrorism

On the back of the DUP U-turn on the Maze the DUP have now, 4 months after its launch, signed up to the Charter for Innocent Victims of Terrorism.

Reflecting on this move Jim Allister said:

"I welcome today's news that the DUP are backing the Charter for Innocent Victims of Terrorism – albeit a full four months after other Unionists did.

"When the Charter was launched I commented: "How can Mr Donaldson and others in the DUP claim that the Centre will contain a balanced and truthful account of the Troubles when innocent victims of Republican violence

are united in their opposition to the plan and will have nothing to do with it?

"Understandably the Charter makes it clear that a project which will "provide the means for terrorists to return to the Maze as "victims", educationalists and quite possibly tour guides – self-cleansing them of their heinous crimes" is totally unacceptable to Innocent victims.

"This isn't the claim of TUV or the political opponents of the DUP but rather the innocent victims of Republican terrorism.

"The DUP claim they have a veto on anything that goes on at the Maze. Today's

event makes it clear that innocent victims of the IRA campaign want them to use that veto to put a halt to the "Conflict Transformation Centre".

"The united stand of victims' groups against the Provo project at the Maze was a huge factor in turning the tide of popular opinion against the project and it is time the DUP acknowledged that the deal they attempted to foist on the people of Northern Ireland was flawed from the outset.

"I'm glad that I can say I supported the Charter four months ago, not just as of yesterday."

"It is clear that Peter Robinson also felt the pressure of the TUV leader Jim Allister and needed to appease him."

Alasdair McDonnell,
SDLP Leader

*Athletico Allister 1 Real
Robinson 0*

Trevor Lunn MLA
Alliance

[Jim Allister] scored two direct hits in the last Parliamentary term on the DUP, both against Mr Robinson's Sinn Féin partners in government.

Eamonn Mallie,
Journalist and Political
Commentator

"He's abdicating leadership to Jim Allister and some people might think he's quite scared of Jim Allister"

Alasdair McDonnell,
SDLP Leader

The Minister, his Special Advisor and the Housing Executive

A recent BBC spotlight programme raised serious questions about the conduct of the Social Development Minister Nelson McCausland and his Special Advisor Stephen Brimstone.

Commenting Jim Allister MLA said:

"Immediately after the Spotlight investigation into the DUP's dealings with Red Sky and Turkington's I wrote to the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, Dr Malcolm McKibbin. I requested that he investigate if Nelson McCausland's Special Adviser, Stephen Brimstone, had breached sections 5 and 6 of the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

"I have received a reply from

Dr McKibbin informing me that the Department of Social Development will be taking the matter forward. I am advised that the Department is to carry out a fact-finding exercise to establish if there is any basis for proceeding with a formal disciplinary investigation."

Continuing Jim Allister said:

"There is much for the Minister to explain. I suggest he starts by spelling out any history of involvement between his party and the principal of Red Sky. How many senior DUP personnel, including Ministers, have attended private dinner parties in the home of the owner of Red Sky? Why the intense interest in the highest echelons of the DUP in Red Sky being reinstated with the Housing Executive?"

"Clearly, the previous DSD Minister saw no reason to question NIHE's treatment of Red Sky. What has changed, other than the DUP taking over the department, to warrant such ministerial interference? There are many questions to be answered.

"There needs to be transparency in all matters concerning the awarding of contracts. If there is no transparency then the public cannot be satisfied that public money is being correctly spent.

"For public confidence all political parties, and in particular the DUP in this instance, need to make abundantly clear if they have a relationship with the companies they award contracts to."

The Mask Slips: Gerry Kelly and Phil Flanagan

Statement by Jim Allister MLA:

"In June the conduct of Gerry Kelly in obstructing a police vehicle was broadcast throughout the world. In a normal democratic state a citizen who prevents the police carrying out their duties would be arrested. Not so in Northern Ireland.

"Having raised Mr Kelly's non-arrest with the PSNI I also made a complaint to the Assembly Commissioner for Standards to ascertain if, in his opinion, Mr Kelly's behaviours had been in accordance with the code of conduct expected of all MLAs. My complaint has been accepted and is being investigated.

"Having thought obstructing the PSNI would be a warning

to Mr Kelly, he subsequently addressed the Provo terror-fest in Castlederg which glorified and revelled in the bloodlust of his comrades in the IRA who killed and maimed their neighbours. The Secretary of State while saying the parade was in bad taste would not seek to ban it.

"Again, I took steps to report Mr Kelly to the Commissioner of Standards on a second occasion in the space of a couple of months.

"Bomber Kelly has not changed his spots.

"Then we have Phil Flanagan, Sinn Fein MLA for Fermanagh and South Tyrone.

"Mr Flanagan feels it entirely appropriate to

tweet offensive and crude jokes about the Royal Couple on the birth of their son Prince George. Such crass behaviour again would appear to contravene the Assembly Code of Conduct, a view supported by the Assembly Commissioner for Standards as he has accepted this complaint as well.

"This summer has proved, if indeed you required it to be proven, that Sinn Fein have not changed their anti-British and pro-terrorism mantra that defines them.

"Sinn Fein were not fit for government when they used the armalite, and they are still not fit for government when they have rested the armalite."

Sorry Mr Spence, We Do Not Want a Police State

Responding to the Terry Spence's (Chair of Police Federation) call to ban 'contentious' parades, Jim Allister said:

"In no free and democratic society can the right to parade and protest be cancelled just because the police force think that would be a good idea. It is the PSNI's duty to protect those fundamentals, not call for

them to be revoked or, for that matter, assault and use foul language towards those who choose to exercise the right as happened Michael Copeland and his family.

"These comments are not just stupid they are dangerous because they will feed the perception within the Unionist community that the PSNI is against them. For years Republicans have

been calling for all Loyal Order parades to stop. Now they have been joined by the Police Federation.

"Sinn Fein have deliberately targeted certain parades in an attempt to make them contentious. This strategy continues as we see the Parades Commission's willingness to reward violence in North Belfast by banning parades. "



Jim Allister MLA attending the "Raze the Maze" Rally at Lisburn Orange Hall.

Allister Deplores Adoption Ruling

Commenting on the gay adoption ruling, Jim Allister said:

"The ruling by the Court of Appeal in favour of 'gay adoption' is a most retrograde step, which further undermines the proven worth and centrality of the traditional family unit in our society.

"Children benefit the most from the influence of a

father and a mother and whereas many single parents do a remarkable job, the promotion and facilitation of children being brought up under a same sex relationship, as if it were the norm, is, in my view, wrong. But, this is where pursuit of a perverse 'equality agenda' has led us.

"I trust the Minister will appeal this decision to the Supreme Court."

"As the attack on traditional family values continues I will continue to oppose the wanton change of such vital institutions. These institutions have served society well, as they promote selfless ideals against the ego of the selfish.

"People need to make their voices heard before it is too late."



World Police and Fire Games: No Union flag or Anthems allowed to represent athletes.

Ann's Law Gets Royal Assent

Jim Allister's Special Advisors Bill gained Royal Assent and put victims at the heart of policy making in a landmark piece of legislation.

Commenting Jim Allister said:

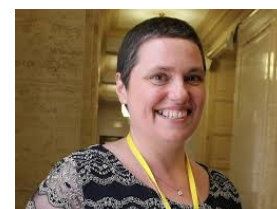
"Henceforth no one can be appointed as a Special Adviser who has a serious criminal conviction. Moreover, the Code of

Appointment and Code of Conduct for Special Advisers will be put on a statutory basis and annual reports on their cost must be produced.

"Royal Assent marks the end of a parliamentary process which began almost two years ago, following the scandalous appointment of Mary McArdle. Getting to this point is most satisfying, not least because of the

great sense of justice it has brought to innocent victims, who so often seem forgotten in a system where victim makers were feted and promoted because they were victim makers. But for the courage and tenacity of Ann Travers this great wrong would never have been righted.

"I now look forward to the full implementation of Ann's Law."



Ann Travers: Ann's Law gained Royal Assent

World Police and Fire Games: Robinson Too Late

Responding to Peter Robinson's comments as reported in the News Letter in relation to flags and anthems at the World Police and Fire Games, TUV Leader Jim Allister stated:

"While I welcome and agree with Peter Robinson's comments that athletes competing in the World Police and Fire Games should be proud to walk or stand under the flag of their nation, I would ask him this: why has he at the 11th hour suddenly become interested?"

"In March this year I raised the issue with Minister Cullen, who provided elusive and non-committal answers as one would expect. I have also raised it with the Chief Executive of the World Police and Fire

Games and made my concerns public in the lead up to the games.

"To claim that as First Minister he has no knowledge of prior games would it not have been prudent to investigate prior protocol to ensure the politically motivated machinations of Minister Cullen were not allowed to prevail? TUV have led the way on this glaringly obvious issue, it is a pity others have not joined us."

Continuing Jim Allister said:

"The protests following the tearing down of the national flag from Belfast City Hall should have made even those Unionists who partner

Sinn Fein in government conscious of how important these issues are to their community and public representatives, including the co-First Minister, should have been exercised long before now.

"Peter Robinson and his DUP colleagues had ample opportunity to question and ascertain the particulars surrounding the World Police and Fire Games. More so, it would be expected that the DUP would challenge their executive colleagues on the issues.

"Regrettably DUP interest in the flags and anthems at the World Police and Fire Games came too late and left no time to put

pressure on the organisers.

"The DUP have shown themselves to be out of step with the unionist people on the issue of the Maze and the Charter for Innocent Victims of Terrorism as they do not want to upset the DUP/Sinn Fein applecart.

"With the DUP being forced to see sense on the Maze I hope that they can find a new found willingness to confront Sinn Fein instead of providing succour to them."

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Folly of Axing PSNI Full Time Reserve Evident

Commenting on the PSNI Chief Constable's reliance on Mutual Aid Officers from the mainland, Jim Allister said:

"While I am supportive of utilising experienced police officers from other UK forces, the PSNI reliance during the G8, 12th July Parades and now the World Police and Fire Games raises serious questions about PSNI operational capability.

"The reduced capability of the PSNI can be traced back

to the disastrous implementation of the Patten Report and the abolition of the Full Time Reserve. Jeffrey Donaldson once claimed the retention of the Full Time Reserve was a pre-condition for the devolution of Policing and Justice "because not only will the DUP not agree to it but the public confidence will not be there to make it happen. That is absolutely clear". In his words it categorically was a 'deal-breaker'. But like so many other "deal-breakers" the

pledge to retain the FTR was quickly abandoned by the DUP as they fell over themselves to accommodate the demands of Sinn Fein."

Concluding Jim Allister said:

"The reality is this - Northern Ireland is still at severe risk of terrorist attack and the Full Time Reserve was essential in supplementing the PSNI

ranks at times when they were under strain.

"They were there to pick up the reins when the going got tough."

"TUV was consistent in its support for the retention of the Full Time Reserve, it is a great shame that another Unionist party's support disappeared when it became politically expedient to do so."