



Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Hearing Witness Biographies

Northern Ireland: Accountability at Risk

Panel I



Mark Thompson is the CEO of Relatives for Justice (RFJ), an Irish based NGO that provides an holistic range of support services from legal advocacy and human rights work addressing conflict related violations, welfare advice and representation, to professionally accredited trauma counselling and psychotherapy. Mark is first and foremost an advocate for human rights and accountable justice for those most impacted and marginalized by over three decades of conflict in Ireland. Mark is responsible for the strategic development and management of Relatives for Justice and has overseen the growth of the organisation from a successful and dedicated voluntary campaigning group in 1991 to the regional professional human rights, advocacy, and support organization that it is today, setting the bar for best practice for victims and survivors of conflict in Ireland. With Mark as its CEO Relatives for Justice has become an internationally recognized and highly regarded human rights NGO. Mark has made representations on families' behalf before the U.S. Congress and the United Nations, European Parliament, European Court, as well as to governments in both Ireland, Britain and across the globe.



Geraldine Finucane is the widow of murdered human rights lawyer Patrick Finucane. Pat Finucane was 39 when he was shot by loyalists from the UDA on 12 February 1989 as he and Geraldine and their 3 children ate Sunday dinner at their home in Belfast. Geraldine was injured. Pat was a well known defense solicitor. After it was proved that there was collusion between the security forces and the killers, the British government apologized but refused to hold an inquiry. In 2019 the Supreme Court ruled that an effective investigation into his death had not been carried out. Geraldine and her family continue to campaign for a public inquiry into his murder.



Alan McBride is the Co-Coordinator of WAVE Trauma Centre. He is an economic Unionist and a strong European, which views have been shaped by the various experiences he has been through. Raised in a Loyalist Housing estate, his father was a member of the UDA. In 1993, Irish Republican Army bombers killed Alan wife Sharon, and her father Desmond Frizzell in their fish shop on Shankill Road in Belfast. That bombing killed seven other people including elderly and small children, and injured nearly sixty more. That incident led Alan to work with victims of the “Troubles.” For the past 13 years Alan has led the campaign for an Injured Pension, which was made it into law in 2020.

Jon Butcher, Head, [Operation Kenova](#)



Jon Butcher QPM Mst (Cantab) is the recently retired Chief Constable of Bedfordshire Police (2019). He is currently in overall charge of Operation Kenova (an investigation into alleged state agent). He has also agreed to undertake investigations into the murder of three RUC officers (October 1982), leading to shoot to kill allegations; and the death of female shot in 1972 which the family claim was the result of security forces activity. He has been requested to take charge of a review into the “Glenanne Gang” series of atrocities arising out of a judicial direction, which is estimated to potentially involve over 100 murders. Jon has been identified for these high profile public confidence cases due to his considerable operational and strategic background in the leadership of covert intelligence gathering tactics. He has a unique senior policing history in running covert and sensitive investigations. Jon is respected for his victim focused approach, putting families at the center of his investigation, giving them a voice. He has appointed a Victim Focus Group and an Independent Steering Group of respected individuals to ensure transparency and accountability. This has been ground breaking in Northern Ireland and welcomed by all stakeholders. As a Chief Constable he built trust and new relationships with communities on a scale not previously experienced in force and led Bedfordshire Police to be the most improved police force in the country. Jon has a long history in Operational Counter Terrorism and Crime Policing, he was entrusted by other forces to build and oversee a specialist unit responsible for tackling serious organised crime and terrorism across the east of England. He was the National UK Policing Lead for Technical Surveillance, Covert Policing and Undercover Policing. He held post of National Coordinator for Pursue under the United Kingdom Contest strategy Jon has an impressive record in the position of Senior Investigating Officer in international terrorism cases including: • War crimes committed in Afghanistan; • Operation ‘Rhyme’ (traced British men who planned mass casualty attacks in USA); • ‘Manhunt’ identifying 21/7 failed terrorist plotters, UK (2005). His early career saw Jon leading a large team of detectives tackling armed robberies in London as a leader for Scotland Yards “Flying Squad” a role in which he received several Judge’s Commendations for his work. Jon is an avid football fan is a supporter and board member for UK Police football and a lifetime follower of Derby County Football team.



Louise Mallinder is a Professor of Law at Queen's University Belfast, School of Law and Legacy Theme Lead in the Senator George J. Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice. She is appearing before the Tom Landos Commission in her capacity as Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), a human rights non-governmental organisation in Northern Ireland, due to participating in the strike action that is being held across Universities in the United Kingdom. Within her broad interests in international human rights law, international criminal law and law and politics in political transitions, Louise has a significant research expertise in amnesty laws. This includes creating the Amnesties, Peace and Conflict Database, which contains detailed information on 289 amnesties used in response to conflict and peace processes around the world since 1990 <https://www.peaceagreements.org/amnesties/> She has also conducted fieldwork on amnesties in numerous sites including Argentina, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Chile, Cambodia, South Africa, Uruguay and Uganda. Her monograph, *Amnesties, Human Rights and Political Transitions*, was awarded the 2009 Hart SLSA Early Career Award and was jointly awarded the 2009 British Society of Criminology Book Prize. She also led the team of multidisciplinary scholars and practitioners who drafted the Belfast Guidelines on Amnesties and Accountability,

https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/BelfastGuidelines_TJI2014.pdf.pdf which have been relied upon by peace negotiators in multiple conflict sites and have been cited in policy documents of the United Nations and leading humanitarian organisations. Louise is also a Member of the Institute for Integrated Transitions Law and Peace Practice Group, which aims to advance creative and realistic solutions to the challenges of legal security and justice that arise in contexts of negotiated transition out of war, crisis or authoritarian rule. With respect to Northern Ireland, since 2013, Louise has been member of the Model Bill Team, a group of academics and civil society activists from CAJ, which has produced a range of technical briefings and reports designed to inform policymaking and public debates on dealing with the past in Northern Ireland. These reports draw on international human rights law as well as international comparative best practice.

The Model Bill Team's response to the UK government's July 2021 Command Paper, together with all other project outputs, can be found this website: <https://www.dealingwiththepastni.com/project-outputs/project-reports/model-bill-team-response-to-the-uk-government-command-paper-on-legacy-in-ni>