

www.checklivescores
andresults.com

HAVE
A
LOOK

ireland.com **i** sport

TIMESTWO

ors [The Irish Times Dating Service](#)

- « Prev
- Next »

IRISHTIMES.com

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

5 °C Dublin » 

-
- [RSS Feeds](#)
- [Site Map](#)
- [News](#)
- [Sport](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Comment](#)
- [Life & Culture](#)
- [Shop](#)
- [Classified](#)

Search 

- [Ireland](#)
- [World](#)
- [Supplements](#)
- [In Depth](#)
- [Other](#)
- [Today's Paper](#)
- **Sport**
- [Soccer](#)
- [GAA](#)
- [Rugby](#)
- [Golf](#)
- [Other](#)
- [irish-racing.com](#)
- **Business**
- [Latest](#)
- [Markets](#)
- [Exchange Rates](#)
- [Agenda](#)
- [Personal Finance](#)
- [The Economy](#)
- [Management](#)
- [Technology](#)
- [Innovation](#)
- [Diary](#)
- **Comment**
- [Opinion & Analysis](#)
- [Letters](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [On the record](#)
- [Pricewatch](#)
- [Politics](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Outside In](#)
- [Pursued by a Bear](#)
- [Today's news poll](#)
- **Life & Culture**
- [Features](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Weekend](#)
- [Magazine](#)
- [Travel](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Pricewatch](#)
- [Education](#)

- [Crossword Club](#)
- [Sudoku](#)
- [Competitions](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Weather](#)

- **Shop**
- [Page Sales](#)
- [Photo Sales](#)
- [DVD Club](#)
- [Readers' Offers](#)

- **Classified**
- [Homes](#)
- [Cars](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Dating](#)
- [Family Notices](#)

- **Other**
- [Search this site](#)
- [Premium Email](#)
- [Digital edition](#)
- [Print on demand](#)
- [Irish Ancestors](#)
- [Irish Times Training](#)
- [RSS feeds](#)

- **About us**
- [Company information](#)
- [Terms & conditions](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Contact us](#)
- [Copyright](#)
- [Privacy policy](#)
- [Help](#)

- [Home »](#)
- [Ireland »](#)
- [SDLP Conference »](#)

- [Email to a friend](#)
- [Email to Author](#)
- [Print](#)
- [RSS](#)
- Text Size:
-
-

Monday, January 26, 2009

Silence the apt response to harrowing victims' stories

[In this section »](#)

- ['We always put people first - your needs are our priority'](#)
- [Children 'caught in the centre' of Sinn Féin/DUP sectarian rows](#)
- [DUP agenda dominates Executive, says Ritchie](#)
- [Proposals on legacy of the Troubles to get a 'fair wind'](#)
- [Quinn praises continued links to Labour and other parties in Republic](#)
- [Dark mutterings about leadership and a drift to the margins](#)

SKETCH: The Troubles may be over, but as a fringe meeting that focused on miscarriages of justice showed, the burden of the bereaved and victims of injustice remains, writes **Dan Keenan**

"EVERY MINUTE of every day my mind goes back to my child. Every minute of every day my mind goes back to that shed." Barely audible and choking back tears Briega Quinn, mother of murder victim Paul Quinn who was beaten to death in a Co Monaghan farm building, made the most striking, the most poignant and the most effective speech in three days of debate.

She told how 12 men, she believed from the IRA, took iron bars and proceeded to break

every bone in her son's young body.

He cried for help but no one heard and no one came, she said.

Those men may as well have inflicted their beating on her. Her indescribable pain was evident and the rapt audience shared it in silence.

She is sentenced to enduring that pain with no hope of remission until her son's killers face justice, she said.

It says something that such a brave and telling speech was devoid of all the tricks that are normally pulled to enhance a speaker.

There was no script, no spin, no bright lights, no musical theme, no advance publicity. Devoid of all conference trappings, Mrs Quinn, looking drawn and all but broken,

addressed a fringe meeting in a side hall normally used for dances. Empty dance halls, like cold hearths, seem particularly soulless. But her words filled it and, despite the harrowing story they told, warmed it.

The fringe meeting was designed to highlight miscarriages of justice. The panel included Gerry Conlon of the Guildford Four and Paddy Hill of the Birmingham Six – both of whom suffered long years in jail for IRA bombings they did not take part in.

Brieger Voyle represented the Ballymurphy families bereaved by the massacre inflicted on them in three days following the introduction of internment in 1971.

She spoke simply and clearly about the actions of soldiers who shot dead 11 people in the west Belfast estate, the summary executions, the deaths of a parish priest and the mother of eight. Those killings left 47 children without a parent.

Members of the same regiment went on to shoot dead 14 more people in Derry just five months later. Raymond McCord, a loyalist and an Orangeman, spoke about the murder of his son and of the manner in which the state acted to conceal the truth surrounding it.

Their stories were as different as the characters who told them. But one thing bound them all together. The Troubles may be over, but the burden of them remains. For those who have suffered, the past continues in the form of a living present. They are condemned to spend each day tethered to injustices which are as fresh today as they were decades ago.

Those of us who have not suffered in such a way can only guess at what they endure and how they do it.

The demands for inquiries and truth commissions, the commemorations and the campaigns do not come from people wallowing in divisions and hatreds of the past. They come from those burdened by monstrous injustices and they want to be freed from them.

Sometimes good conference speeches are received with tumultuous applause. But perhaps the very best of them provoke only silence.

This article appears in the print edition of the Irish Times

ADVERTISEMENT



Car Insurance
from €280*

Quick quote

* Female, 29, full licence, 6 years ncb, 1.6L, comp, based in Dublin Insurers' T&Cs apply. Insurance is arranged by Chill.ie, Elstwell Ltd t/a Chill.ie is regulated by the financial regulator

irishtimes.com/insurance **Chill.ie**
We've got you covered

Latest »

- [16:13 Court protection granted to Chartbusters](#)
- [16:06 Call for Ahern to intervene in Izevbekhai case](#)
- [15:53 Actress jobs disappear after age of 40, report claims](#)
- [15:50 Kildare County Council to lay off 79 people](#)
- [15:49 Man released without charge in cannabis inquiry](#)
- [15:43 No decision yet on date for Lisbon vote, says Cowen](#)
- [15:36 Woman to take Supreme Court deportation challenge](#)
- [15:228,000 NI patients' medical records missing](#)

Popular Stories

- [Most Read](#)
- [Most Emailed](#)
- [1 Bank seeks possession of ex-Smart CEOs Kildare home](#)
- [2 Regulator investigates Quinn disposal of 10% stake in Anglo](#)
- [3 Time for Quinn to come clean on Anglo Irish Bank saga](#)
- [4 Ulster Bank job losses may be 'first of thousands'](#)
- [5 Taoiseach willing to push back deadline on cutbacks](#)
- [1 Predictive texting 'as Gaeilge' now available](#)
- [2 US woman gives birth to octuplets](#)
- [3 Time for Quinn to come clean on Anglo Irish Bank saga](#)
- [4 Bank seeks possession of ex-Smart CEOs Kildare home](#)
- [5 Cambridge library's first female librarian](#)

Your Vote »

[« Yes](#)
[No »](#)
[Results](#)

Are you confident negotiations with the social partners can deliver an economic recovery plan?

[Crossword Club »](#)



[Today's Interactive Irish Times Crosaire and Simplex crosswords, plus 10 years of crossword archive.](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

Ads by Google

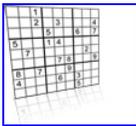
Emla

Eliminates needle pain Hate needles Love Emla
www.ihateneedles.co.uk

Volunteer in Africa

Make a real difference, volunteer in Africa. 3-12 weeks. Year-round.
www.crossculturalsolutions.org

Sudoku »



[Download and print the daily Irish Times sudoku grid](#)



- [Who's the daddy?](#) Sabine Durrant talks to Richard Collier about the long-lasting effects of fatherhood's extraordinary and messy revolution.



- [Video Archive](#) Historic addresses to the Houses of the Oireachtas



- [Employment, emigration and compromise](#) It looked like they would never have it so good, but all has changed utterly for last year's third-level



- [Reimagining Ireland's neutrality](#) Playwright Conall Quinn creates an alternative Irish history, and raises some bold questions, in [The Death of Harry Leon](#).



- [Fantasy Six Nations](#) Sign up and be in with a chance to win a holiday worth €5000 in our free Six Nations fantasy game

THE IRISH TIMES
irishtimes.com

Reader offer

35MM FILM NEGATIVES AND SLIDES TO DIGITAL

Transfer Your 35mm Film Negatives & Slides to Digital for safe storage on PC and copying to CD

€129.95

inc. p&p
(was €169.95)

ORDER NOW!

- ADVERTISEMENT
- CLASSIFIED

Homes



[44 Abington, Malahide, Co. Dublin](#) Price: €3,800,000

[Bedrooms: 7](#) [See More »](#)

- [Jobs](#)

Select your categories

- Accountancy
- Architecture / Design
- Banking & Financial Services
- Construction
- Customer Service, Call Centres & Languages

[Next](#) »

• **Cars**



[A brilliant all-rounder from Opel arrives at exactly the wrong time](#)

[Find](#) »

• **Dating**

I am a Man Looking for a Woman Located All Only with photos: [Next](#) »

© 2009 [irishtimes.com](http://www.irishtimes.com)

- [Company information](#)
- [Privacy policy](#)
- [Help](#)
- [Contact us](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Terms & Conditions](#)