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Conrad Atkinson  
EXHIBITION



# Lá Nua

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## Columnists

# Truth is for all the people

**Martin Morgan calls for a Truth Commission however he also makes the case that any such commission has**

## From the Balcony

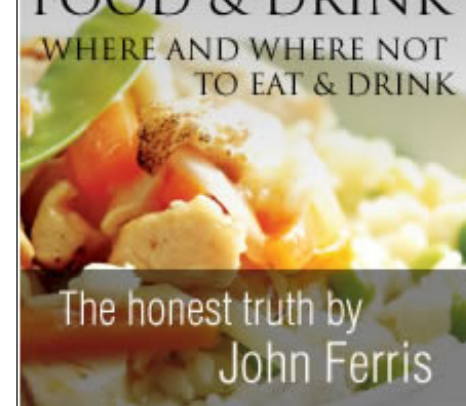


**A publisher's  
blog**

**By Máirtín  
Ó Muilleoir**

## FOOD & DRINK

WHERE AND WHERE NOT  
TO EAT & DRINK



The honest truth by  
John Ferris

## an element of justice for victims

By Martin Morgan

The north of Ireland and the people who live here suffered terribly throughout the period known as the 'Troubles'. Government security forces and republican and loyalist paramilitaries together are responsible for almost four thousand deaths and tens of thousands of injuries.

Catholic, Protestant and neither, Irish, British and neither were the victims of sinister forces within this community and other communities across these islands and Europe. One could almost be forgiven if I dared to suggest that parts of the history of Ireland are being revised to portray some of the murderers and gangsters as heroes and also that we should quite literally forget certain aspects of our past, elements of which of horrible and disgusting, carried out for what, a "zero" sum game and a victory for none of the perpetrators of the crimes against the people.

Unfortunately this society is being exposed to the self gratification of the "former" paramilitaries who celebrate the deaths of their fallen and their disgraceful acts. Commemorations of brutality are portrayed as hero worship. The victims lie in graves that only family will visit, too many and too far back for the public to remember and their relatives will mourn in their homes with the happier memories of absent friends. We can't even agree on how to collectively remember the victims of the past 40 years and we can't agree where to put such a memorial.

In place of these sickening acts, those responsible for our tragedy should merge back into the community, keep their heads down and get on with their own sorry lives. The history of Ireland must be accurate and transparent and with this we must seriously consider the calls for a "Truth" Commission for Ireland. But unlike the South African experience, if such an event ever were to occur, then it should not be some form of catharsis, some form of self-pitying confession, without the fear of consequences. But then that is exactly what the leaders of some of these groups want.

They want to have the opportunity to express their sins publicly, achieve even greater thanks from the fools in the community, gain some token international recognition, and walk away feeling better about themselves.

Anyone who committed these crimes against humanity should, if they have not already done their time, face the justice system. Too many of them ran away and now feel that they have a God-given right to walk our streets freely as if nothing ever happened.

In recent days Gerry Adams debated that consideration should be given to establishing such a Commission for Ireland. Mr Adams criticised the British government's approach to such a matter and no doubt the government is dragging its feet on the matter due to the sensitive nature of what would be disclosed - just look at the toothless Bloody Sunday Inquiry.

However, I agree with Mr Adams that a Commission should be established. It should be an international body that is free from the wrangling of the northern political, and the British political process.

No half measure

It can't be a half commission and if established should be able to make recommendations for prosecutions - if that is what is required.

I would go one step further and suggest that a 'Justice' commission should be established. Why you may ask? Well there are too many people in the north who have never see justice established.

I don't care if it is a Provo, a loyalist or a soldier or police officer - if they did the crime then they should be big enough to do the time.

What worries me about the self-righteous members of Sinn Fein calling for a 'Truth' Commission is that they are in no position to seek such recourse.

The mutterings by Mr Adams in west Belfast highlights the ongoing and systematic attempts by the provisional movement to pin the blame on the British.

Yes the British government and its security forces were responsible for some terrible things in this land but then again the paramilitaries did a hell of a lot as well.

Their hands are as dirty as anyone else's.

It diminishes the legitimate calls for the truth to be disclosed when some of those organisations that were responsible for the lies and mayhem are the main agitators for the establishment of the body.

The brain washing carries on in the north of Ireland and no doubt as long as the message is given repeatedly time and time again by the "poachers turned gamekeepers" then some fools in the community will believe it.

Are we to reach a stage in this community when at some time in the future, these gangsters are to be portrayed as honourable heroes.

Well if that happens then it will be a sorry day for Ireland and its people.

We need to know the truth, the people need justice, and the perpetrators need to face the wrath of the law for their heinous crimes. Some of us can see through the mist of the lies spun out by all of those involved.

**08/10/2007**