

The events that occurred on 30th january 1972 became known as "bloody sunday" ess...



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The events that occurred on 30th January 1972 became known as “ Bloody Sunday” Essay Sample

On January 30th 1972 in Londonderry, British paratroopers opened fire into a Northern Ireland civil rights march holding a protest against a corrupt government. 13 men were injured and another 13 were killed. “ Bloody Sunday” set the agenda for over 20 years of violence. The troops claimed that they were fired on and were forced to shoot. The witnesses in the march claimed that those killed had no weapons on them and that the troops started firing for no reason. Leading up to the event there was an ever-growing hostility there had been many civil rights protests from 1968, often they ended in violence.

Since the British Troops had entered Northern Ireland their initial welcome had changed to resentment. Nationalist groups such as the IRA and Sinn Fein emerged; this increase in paramilitary action posed as a threat to the troops and to Britain. On the day thousands congregated for the march and continued moving until blocked by a British roadblock. The aggravation between the two sides grew: at one point a group of young men managed to break the barrier. Rocks were thrown at troops and the paratroopers used a water cannon and rubber bullets to disperse the crowd.

This confrontation eventually led to 13 members of the crowd were shot dead. British paratroopers persistently claim that they were fired upon first and they only shot those that posed a threat. The IRA indiscriminately carried weapons in public so the troops claimed that they had to use a pre-empted strike on large threats. One soldier said “ My particular Platoon had

nail bombs thrown at them and one of my men shot a man in the process. “; another report told of bricks being thrown in their faces, demonstrating that the soldiers were provoked to retaliate.

He explained later how you only have a split second to pull the trigger. One soldier stated that they weren't firing indiscriminately, “ why were no women or children killed”. Major/ General Robert Ford had a tough, no mercy policy. He used a minimalist method to stop bombers with real ammunition. On the other hand the protestors claimed that the frustrated actions of some marchers resulted in the paratroopers opting for brute, murdering force.. Donaghy admitted throwing stones earlier on but also says “ When I was shot I did not have a nail bomb or anything else in my hands. One report told of a man being shot whilst he had his hands in the air.

Evidence has shown that when the bodies of those killed were found, all but one (a member of the IRA youth) had no weapons on them. The British Government commissioned a report into what soon became known as ‘ Bloody Sunday. ‘ That report, prepared by Lord Chief Justice Widgery left many questions and only infused the argument. Lord Saville was British however, questioning the reliability of the results. The witnesses accounts received were usually biased.

Due to the chaos and confusion it was hard to decipher exactly what happened; in addition to this many people didn't want to open up as they were scared of the possible consequences. Families of the victims were also likely to be against the British troops; they would be caught in the middle and wouldn't know what to do. The inquiry concluded that some of the

victims were carrying weapons at one point and some weren't (he tested for lead on the hands of the victims). The Widgery report also came to the conclusion that the troops were shot at first which caused great disturbance in Derry.

The Nationalists were unhappy with the results of the Widgery report and in attempt to appease dangerous groups like Sinn Fein the Good Friday agreement was created meaning that that a large amount of power was given back to Northern Ireland; this also reduced the threats of terrorist groups. Tony Blair and Lord Saville re-opened the Inquiry into Bloody Sunday. It involved 1, 500 witness accounts and many new stories were reported; Daniel Porter claimed some off-duty troops in an English pub told him of their plan, " they said they would be going to Derry to ' clear the bog'" this however this is clearly bravado as the pub would have been loud.

It was also discovered that the lead found on victims hands (W. Nash and J. Young) could have been from another person contaminated with lead or from emissions like car exhausts. The key reason why " Bloody Sunday" has and so many different interpretations are because the paratroopers and IRA had too much to loose; this was the obstacle for reconciliation and peace in Ireland. Despite the large number of eye-witness accounts it appears that propaganda prevailed over truth.