

The events of bloody sunday



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The events of Bloody Sunday 30 January 30 1972 in Derry has produced many different historical interpretations. While the truth of the events of that day have not yet been recovered. The Saville enquiry, which is running at the current time, is sparing no costs to find out the truths of that day. The march was a huge rally protesting against internment.

This was when suspected IRA men could be arrested without trial. It was organised by the civil rights movement. British forces had suspected trouble because fifteen thousand defied a ban on the march and gathered in the Derry city centre. The situation in Derry at this time was very volatile with rioting and no go areas.

The security forces found it very difficult to police. As the parachute regiment sealed off the area they were met with a hail of stones. The truth has never really been found over confusion of the events that followed. The soldiers fired they say they were fired on first while it has been proven that the victims were unarmed.

As a result thirteen unarmed marchers were killed. The Widgery enquiry that followed was heavily criticised as it had insufficient evidence. It did criticise the soldiers as bordering on reckless but no action was taken. It was considered a whitewash but in 1998 with controversy still raging on.

Tony Blair announced a new enquiry held by lord Saville. Sources A to C offer many different interpretations into the events of Bloody Sunday. Source A is a biased account written in Daily Mail responding to new evidence released in the Bloody Sunday enquiry. The paper is an English Conservative paper so

it immediately moves to defend the Conservative government that was in power at the time. It will be writing to please its readers.

Who would mostly be strong Conservative supporters. It immediately comes across as sympathetic to the Paratroopers. They believe that this new forensic report is too premature and should never have been leaked. The Paras believe that this new forensic evidence is intended to swing public opinion and eventually put them on trial. The reports said that there was no evidence to say that the 14 people shot dead were armed.

They believe that this new Saville Inquiry is not impartial and is against the Paratroopers. The newspaper article says that the, ' Ex Paras have already had to fight a marathon battle to give evidence without being identified, as lord Saville originally ruled they should. ' This is showing sympathy towards the Paras. The chance is also taken to have a swipe at Tony Blair. The people that are interviewed also show bias. For example a Tory MP, whose constituency covers the Paras base calls the inquiry an absolute disaster.

One of the former Paratroopers is also interviewed. The writer is very critical of Dr John Martin a forensic scientist who originally gave evidence to the Widgery inquiry supporting the paras had a U-turn in the release of new evidence. The support does not say the how the Widgery inquiry came to a decision with insufficient evidence. This is not a balanced view the writer is offering the viewpoint and interpretations of the Paras and the Conservative government of the time.

It shows the new evidence in a bad light. It claims that the new evidence is too premature and inquiry is just Tony Blair appeasing Republicans. Source B

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is an article that appeared in the Guardian newspaper reporting on the same new evidence as source A was reacting too. John Mullan the Guardian's Irish correspondent wrote this source. The Guardian is a more liberal paper than the Daily Mail from source A.

It tries more to get at the truth without any bias. It would not see itself as having a duty to support the Paratroopers and the Conservative government in power at the time. This is clear from the headline, ' This backs up what we have been saying for years the victims were innocent. ' It takes an immediate tone of support for the families of the victims on Bloody Sunday. With such phrases as hailed, new evidence and a 27-year fight to prove that those who died were innocent and defenceless victims of British Paratroopers.

It calls the events of that day a massacre. Unlike source it goes into more detail about the Para's behaviour on that day. Saying one of the victims Barney McGuigan was shot in the head with a dum-dum bullet. Which are now illegal under the Geneva Convention. He tries to gain the readers sympathy by saying Barney McGuigan was a father of six and describing how dum-dum bullets fragment on impact. He offers viewpoint of the victim's families and challenges Paras.

He gives a more balanced view than source A although is not unbiased. Openly hails the new evidence. Source C appears in an ITN news broadcast on November 28 2000. It was reacting to more new evidence though not of source A and B. This source is not very reliable.

As the words 'clearing the bog' that the soldiers apparently have said is open to interpretation. This can mean take out all suspected IRA men of the Bogside or to simply clear the barricades. This is unreliable, as it could easily have been misinterpreted. As Mr Porter himself even claims he did not realise what the soldiers meant until sometime after.

This is based on hearsay that would be insufficient evidence in a court of law. If the attacks were pre-planned soldiers would not have been given this information a week or two before to discuss in a pub. However this source is still valuable because it highlights the depth of the inquiry, which indicates the extent to which the Government is prepared to go to reveal the truth. This will be a long and difficult process. This source is balanced because it does not lean towards either of the opposing viewpoints. This contrasts with the stance of the BBC, which would be inclined to support the Government in power at the time given the fact that it is Government funded.

I also used the film 'Sunday' as another source, which is based on research but tends to concentrate more on the Nationalist viewpoint. It is not 100% impartial. All of the sources show the different interpretations on the events of Bloody Sunday. Source C is open to interpretation as it can easily be misinterpreted. Furthermore, source A is highly critical of Dr.

John Martins u-turn, while source B uses him as further evidence. Source B is supportive of the Saville Inquiry while source A feels it is biased against the Paratroopers. Both sources A and B are inconsistent with each other while source C gives a balanced view. I expect when the inquiries findings are published in the future all the Government's money will pay off and finally

the truth of that day will be told. Though until one cannot be sure of the truth because the events of that day have been interpreted in so many ways.