

Interestingly Mikel Segovia said the Spanish government does not give in to ETA or BILDU (the political wing of ETA and one of the biggest parties). The Spanish government will not release its ETA prisoners or give in to their demands. Billy Matchett spoke off the endgame: the way that prisoners in Northern Ireland were released did not bring us closure. Ben Lowry addressed that the media have failed during the Troubles to investigate what was going on. Unfortunately, when there is an action against the State the result is big media coverage. When it is about a victim, there is hardly any media coverage. He emphasised that he does not criticise the courts but the media. Mikel also stated that the Belfast Agreement would never be an idea in Spain; to open the prison gates. At the time the Belfast Agreement was signed the Basque media lauded it as a magnificent thing, to further their agenda. Mikel also noted that Gerry Adams has visited the Basque country and



BILDU and was treated like a prince. He also added that ETA was more defeated than dissolved because of an agreement unlike Northern Ireland.

Solicitor John McAtamney said it was unfortunate that new laws were written that released the prisoners. He also stated "that the law is the law, even if you don't like it" and the courts can only do with what it brought to them. At the moment there are more cases where collusion is

involved, because there is more documented evidence in those cases. Former police officer Hanley told about his arrest of Gerry Adams and that this was not because of political views, but because he was a suspect in a murder case. He also explained about the new HIU, which will follow up the HET, that did not work. He expressed that we need to be careful of raising expectations on the new HIU. Lowry also stated that the fundamental problem is that the British State does not defend themselves. A member off COVITE continued that the Spanish government does not let that happen and has legitimised its actions along the years. She also added that approximately 30% of ETA crimes have been resolved. Ken Funston continued that Fermanagh bears a shocking statistic of 96% unresolved cases, which shocked our COVITE guests. Ben Lowry added that the IRA has never really been defeated: "The IRA and the British government got tired". William Matchett added that it is all about how one defines victory. Maybe if the Blair government lasted 6 months longer, the IRA would have been defeated.

After the second panel, lunch was served. After which it was time for round table with powerful testimonies from four COVITE victims and four SEFF victims, that shared their perspectives on topics such as: 'How can victims of terrorism contribute to constructing memory by telling their testimonies?', but also: 'what do victims think justice means in post-terrorism times?'. Kenny Donaldson (SEFF) and Consuelo Ordóñez (COVITE) rounded off the day's event with concluding remarks. After which the seminar came to a conclusion with a photographic exhibition of the Miguel Ángel Blanco Foundation. It was a very interesting day with many shared insights.

(Coverage by Rachel Glover)



Advocacy for Innocent Victims Newsletter



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Dear Member,

The AfIV Bulletin features a piece by our new Advocate in London, Miss. Iona Gallagher, who has Irish roots. She has a legal background that will be of great use in her new role. I know she will do well.

Following further recruitment in the week past, eight candidates were interviewed for two vacancies. The successful applicants were Ernie Waterworth and Nevin Brown. Mr Waterworth also comes from a legal background and Nevin is a local man. We look forward to working with them and integrating them into the AfIV team.

Rachel has written an article on the conference we held on Friday 4th October in Stormont. What was abundantly clear, despite outside pressures, the Spanish government has stood firm and not rewarded ETA for calling a cessation to their terrorist activities.

Representatives of the Spanish victims' group COVITE will return again in March 20, when there will be an expansive art display and a conference addressing a number of current issues.

John Downey was extradited on Friday 11th evening to the UK jurisdiction on a European Arrest Warrant for the murders of Alfie Johnston and Jimmy Eames in 1972. We have to commend the PSNI for pursuing this case, as at times we have been critical of them. Our thoughts are with the Eames and Johnston families at this time, and also with the Hyde Park families who are pursuing Downey in a civil case. SEFF as an organisation, and the AfIV advocates will support the families in the court cases that lie ahead.

Yours faithfully,

Ken Funston
(Advocacy Support Manager)



Introduction to myself, my career and my new role with SEFF



I have recently joined SEFF as the new Advocacy Support Worker for GB. I will be providing support and guidance to victims that have been affected by The Troubles and are residing in Great Britain. Prior to undertaking this role, I have studied and worked in the legal field.

I studied in Bristol and graduated with a degree in Law in 2015. I then worked in two different law firms as a Paralegal. My work concerned Property Litigation matters, such as boundary disputes, trespass and nuisance claims. Alongside this work, I volunteered with a local be-friending charity that assists isolated members of the community. I was also part of a local mentoring scheme, and I provided guidance and advice to school children that were considering applying for university.

While studying for my Masters in Commercial Law, I volunteered with the Unseen Exploitation that aimed to educate school children on their employment rights and the 'gig economy'. Upon the completion of my LLM, I began the Bar Professional Training Course. I was extremely fortunate to have been awarded an Exhibition Scholarship from the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple to fund my studies. I was called to the Bar of England and Wales in July 2019.

Throughout my studies I have also competed, and won, several advocacy competitions. One such competition was run by the Personal Support Unit (PSU). The PSU assist people facing court on their own and provides emotional support and procedural guidance. I volunteered with them for twelve months and worked with a range of people facing different legal issues. I believe that my work with them, and my other volunteering and work experience, has prepared me well to begin work with SEFF.

I wanted to work with SEFF because I identify with their ethos that 'Terrorism knows no Borders'. A civilian victim will not be discriminated against no matter their race, religion or location. They deserve to be supported and SEFF offer that vital support. Prior to joining SEFF, I thought I had a fair understanding of the historical events concerning The Troubles. However, what struck me most was how so many victims have never been in receipt of any support or received an acknowledgement of what happened to them. I admire SEFF as it is providing an all-round service encompassing support and acknowledgement that is victim focused.

I will be working exclusively with victims based in Great Britain and I am very much looking forward to undertaking this role.

Iona Gallagher

From now on people will be able to find **SEFF on Google Maps**, making our outreach offices easier to be found:



- South East Fermanagh Foundation Central Office
- South East Fermanagh Foundation West Tyrone Gateway Service
- South East Fermanagh Foundation South Down Gateway Service
- South East Fermanagh Foundation South Armagh Gateway Service
- South East Fermanagh Foundation Great Britain Gateway Service

The COVITE Seminar on Friday 4th of October 2019

The morning started off with a welcoming refreshment followed by a warm welcome from SEFF's Director of Services (Kenny Donaldson) and COVITE's President (Consuelo Ordóñez) with a remark from the event sponsor; Doug Beattie MLA. After the welcome the first panel took place hosting Gaizka Fernández (a historian expert on ETA) and Henry Patterson (a historian expert on the Provisional IRA.) This was facilitated and translated by Ana Aizpiri, an ETA victim from COVITE. Henry Patterson spoke about 'Dealing with the Troubles'. He addressed the problems about collusion, that was issued by Sinn Féin to question the hierarchy of responsibility for deaths during the Troubles: 87% of deaths were responsibility by paramilitaries. He also questioned whether the Stormont House Agreement can address the fundamental problems with the present situation: the discursive war over the Troubles. Victims groups like SEFF have been losing the arguments over the Troubles - victors so far have been republicans, human rights NGO's and transitional justice academics. Gaizka Fernandez spoke of the distinctions between victims. According to Fernandez we should not state there is only one victim, therefore not equating victims with perpetrators or victims from different victim pools. He also stated we cannot keep the number of killings together as one. The need is to split up killings per group, which will show the main perpetrator. He gave the example of two groups who are listed as one figure. One group is responsible for 50 killings and the other 850, which clearly shows who the main perpetrator is. Fernandez furthermore spoke of ETA prisoners in Spain are being received as heroes when they are released from prison, receiving champagne, flowers and parties in their honour. Sadly, the Spanish government tries to forget about ETA and what they have caused. Fernandez concluded by saying testimony from victims would contribute to the truth, and work against the terrorist narrative.

After a break, it was time for the second panel to take place, consisting of: Mikel Segovia (a Spanish journalist expert in ETA) and Northern Ireland representatives: Ben Lowry (dep. editor of the News Letter), William Matchett (academic who has written a book on the Troubles), John McAtamney (solicitor), and Tim Hanley (retired PSNI), and facilitated by Ken Funston (Advocacy Manager at SEFF).



Picture showing Panel 2: Experts - Media, Policing and Academia. Pending issues after the cessation of terrorism: The Spanish and Northern Ireland Cases