
Ireland: Mgr. Martin (Bishops' President) decries "amnesty" decided in London for Troubles-related crimes. "Deep hurt, betrayal of trust"

The British government's decision to ban civil and criminal prosecutions for the perpetrators of crimes committed before 1998 will be seen as a "betrayal of trust". For Mgr. Eamon Martin, president of the Irish Bishops, "it is disturbing that victims and survivors, those who have paid the highest price for the fragile peace we all enjoy today, once more feel marginalised and neglected". That would be the outcome of the "amnesty" London wants to introduce for Troubles-related crimes. The Bishop also said he was "particularly disappointed by Prime Minister Boris Johnson's naïve comments" in the House of Commons suggesting that this proposal would allow Northern Ireland to "draw a line" under the Northern Ireland conflict. "Dealing with the legacy of our shared past is not an easy task", Mgr. Martin remarked. "It is a complex undertaking which belongs to all of us. It has no quick-fix. No line can be drawn to relieve the deep hurt still carried in the aftermath of years of violence, death and life-changing injury". The 2014 Stormont House Agreement, which includes provisions for investigating Troubles-related murders and crimes, "sought to deal with our legacy in a collaborative and honest way", Mgr. Martin explained. This "reneege" on this joint commitment is therefore "deeply disheartening". "As the British government is now facing criticism from all quarters concerning its unilateral decision", Bishop Martin concluded, the announcement begs the age-old question: "Cui Bono? (Who benefits?)".

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