

# Press Release 7<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2014 – Press Release 7<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2014

## Bloody Sunday 2014 ***“Justice... it concerns us all.”***

In keeping with the aspirations of the original civil rights movement and the spirit of successive Bloody Sunday commemorations, the march and programme of events for 2014 will act as an inclusive platform for the many seemingly disparate campaigns that concern the people of these islands and beyond. As in previous years it will be a moment to come together, make connections and raise our issues and voices in debate and solidarity.

We are living in a time when ordinary people are being coerced by government and corporate institutions. A time when our natural resources are being systemically ravaged and exploited by multi-nationals for the benefit of the few. A time when the values of accountants and bankers dictate how we all live our lives, and it's us who are being made to pay the bill for their greed, while they continue to grab more and more.

Throughout Ireland and Britain working people and those struggling to find work are being harassed by employers who seize the opportunity to roll back equality and fairness in pursuit of greater profit. Everything is calculated, costed and measured by 'the market', and it says ordinary people's lives and concerns don't matter! We see the old tactic of divide and rule diverting anger & frustration into sectarian, racist and sexist support for demands to drive somebody out of somewhere. Now, more than ever, we need to make common cause with all those struggling for justice in its many aspects.

Against this backdrop of right wing policies and so called 'austerity', the unresolved justice questions of our past continue to make the headlines. Many long years after their loved ones were taken from them, relatives and friends still calling for truth and justice are increasingly being met with counter voices saying: no to investigations, no to prosecutions and no to inquiries and inquests. Through its surrogates the state tells us we as a society need to move on. Justice and accountability for past events is considered to be too expensive and we are told: we can't afford justice for the dead, think only of the living. Those who challenge that view are systematically isolated, alienated and even demonised.

In this context **this year's programme** begins with the launch of an exhibition by the families of those 'disappeared' by the IRA in the course of the conflict (Pilots Row, Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> Jan.)

Events then shift to the Nerve Centre where film screenings will explore amongst other things, the British Army's 'Military Reaction Force', a secret terrorist unit operating in Belfast in 1973 (Thur 30th). Then on Friday evening (31<sup>st</sup>), Professor of criminology at Queens University Phil Scraton will deliver a talk on the extent of the British state's coverup of responsibility for the Hillsborough Football Stadium disaster (Sheffield 1989).

These events set up the two **panel discussions** in Pilot's Row on Sat, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. The first event will explore different approaches to dealing with the violent acts perpetrated in the course of the conflict. The second will give voice to a range of contemporary campaigns for social and environmental justice including, Shell to Sea (Co. Mayo) and opposition to Fracking (Leitrim & Fermanagh) as well as opposition to the so called 'Austerity Cuts' on both sides of the border

**The march** will assemble on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. at 2.30pm at the Creggan shops, Central Drive.