

09 *Untouchable*

"As children and as teenagers they were told that they were less than others. Significant numbers have struggled all their lives with depression and addiction. Many now look back sadly on failed marriages and broken relationships. And larger numbers are now proud grandparents, contented with the achievement of creating and holding their own family, in spite of growing up without being taught about family life. They are victims but also survivors. They hold a wisdom. Things they have learned from their own brokenness; how to be strong in the face of adversity; how to recover from separation and disruption; about the loss of control; about isolation and, perhaps worst of all, about what it means to live a life trying to recover from being violated in the most intimate of ways. Many got on the Liverpool boat at 16 years of age and have never come back. But most have lived their lives here, though their stories have been largely invisible to us."

Brendan McAllister, Interim Advocate for Victims and Survivors of Historical Abuse, 2020



KinCORA Boys' Home, East Belfast

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Lord Mountbatten loved Ireland. "No place has thrilled me more," he wrote to his wife Edwina, when he first laid eyes on Mullaghmore and CLASSIEBAWN CASTLE in Sligo. He thought the Irish were his friends and it's said that he held sympathetic views on the republican demands in the North of Ireland. But the royal family wasn't welcome. Mountbatten ignored the emphatically expressed warnings of the Gardaí, not to holiday in these parts of the world and eventually paid the ultimate price. The IRA blew him to kingdom come while he was out on his boat SHADOW V lifting lobster pots. With him were his fourteen year old grandson Nicholas, fifteen year old Paul who's said to have been a paid hand and Nicholas' grandmother. That was in 1979.

The Newtownards and then Upper Newtownards Road cuts right through East Belfast and straight into STORMONT, the Northern Irish Parliament. After two arson attacks in the last two years, a Victorian-style building half way up the road is waiting to be demolished to make place for a new apartment block. The KINCORA BOYS' HOME for troubled teenage boys was closed in 1980, after it emerged that at least 29 boys have been sexually abused during their stay there.

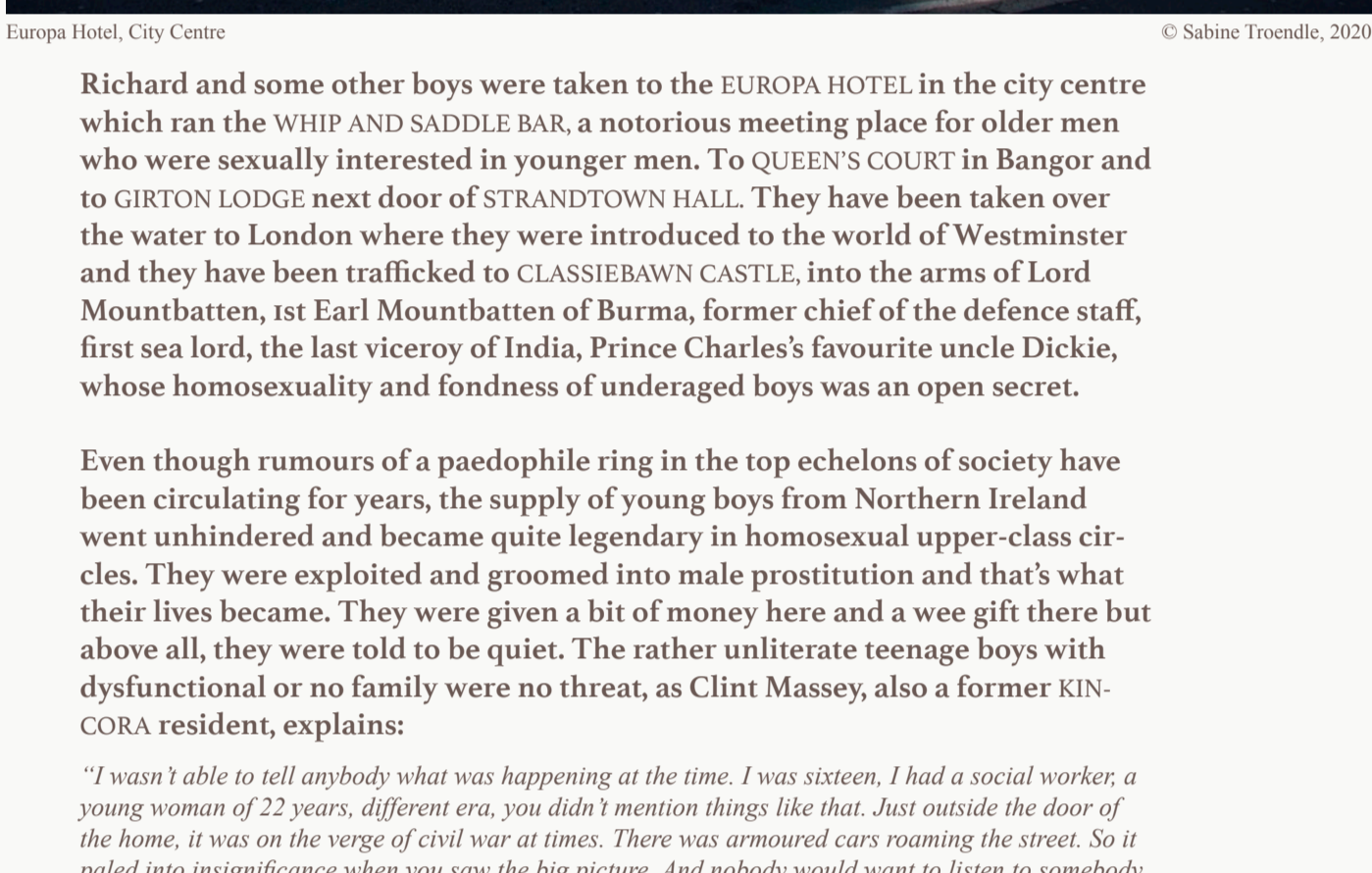
In close vicinity, East Belfast's long-established four-star PARK AVENUE HOTEL opposite the STRANDTOWN HALL – home to the VICTORIA ULSTER UNIONIST ASSOCIATION and since 2008 also the ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY – also stands empty and could be razed to the ground. Given its location, the hotel was very popular with unionist politicians. Richard Kerr was in KINCORA. In 1977, at age 15, he and a friend were taken to the hotel. They were given drinks and

"there was other gentlemen there. And then he would say to me 'we have somebody nice, why don't you go up and spend some time with him, he's got a gift for you.' And we would perform oral sex in one of the rooms of Park Avenue Hotel. My friend said 'it's always best to say nothing, Richard. Nobody is going to believe you.'"



Park Avenue Hotel, East Belfast

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Europa Hotel, City Centre

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Richard and some other boys were taken to the EUROPA HOTEL in the city centre which ran the WHIP AND SADDLE BAR, a notorious meeting place for older men who were sexually interested in younger men. To QUEEN'S COURT in Bangor and to GIRTON LODGE next door of STRANDTOWN HALL. They have been taken over the water to London where they were introduced to the world of Westminster and they have been trafficked to CLASSIEBAWN CASTLE into the arms of Lord Mountbatten, 1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma, former chief of the defence staff, first sea lord, the last viceroy of India, Prince Charles's favourite uncle Dickie, whose homosexuality and fondness of underage boys was an open secret.

Even though rumours of a paedophile ring in the top echelons of society have been circulating for years, the supply of young boys from Northern Ireland went unhindered and became quite legendary in homosexual upper-class circles. They were exploited and groomed into male prostitution and that's where their lives became. They were given a bit of money here and a wee gift there but above all, they were told to be quiet. The rather unilaterate teenage boys with dysfunctional or no family were no threat, as Clint Massey, also a former KINCORA resident, explains:

"I wasn't able to tell anybody what was happening at the time. I was sixteen, I had a social worker, a young woman of 22 years, different era, you didn't mention things like that. Just outside the door of the home, it was on the verge of civil war at times. There was armoured cars roaming the street. So it paled into insignificance when you saw the big picture. And nobody would want to listen to somebody like myself."

The big picture would imply Orangeism, Unionism, Paramilitarism, Royalisms, M15, M16 and the British government. Clint Massey might have had a point assuming that he and his fellow abuse victims are just small fish in the big sea of a dirty war with powerful pawns – an unpleasant situation emphatically denied by consecutive inquiries and evenly emphatically researched and exposed by various renowned investigative journalists like Joseph de Búrca, Lyra McKee, Andrew Lownie or Chris Moore.



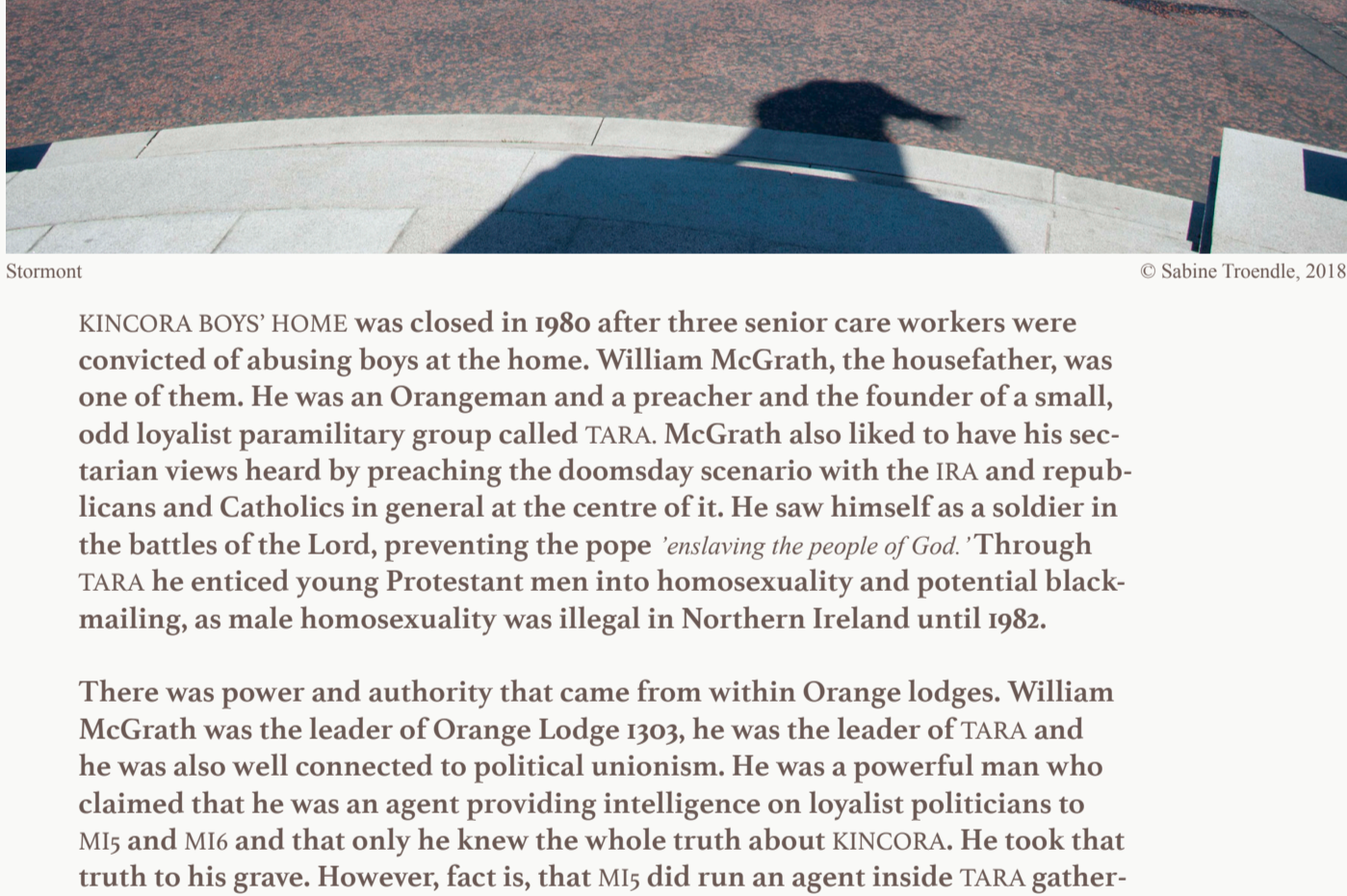
Classiebawn Castle in County Sligo

© Sabine Troendle, 2019



Entrance to Classiebawn

© Sabine Troendle, 2019



Stormont

© Sabine Troendle, 2018

KINCORA BOYS' HOME was closed in 1980 after three senior care workers were convicted of abusing boys at the home. William McGrath, the housefather, was one of them. He was an Orangeman and a preacher and the founder of a small, odd loyalist paramilitary group called the doomsday scenario with the IRA and republicans and Catholics in general at the centre of it. He saw himself as a soldier in the battles of the Lord, preventing the pope 'enslaving the people of God.' Through TARA he enticed young Protestant men into homosexuality and potential blackmailing, as male homosexuality was illegal in Northern Ireland until 1982.

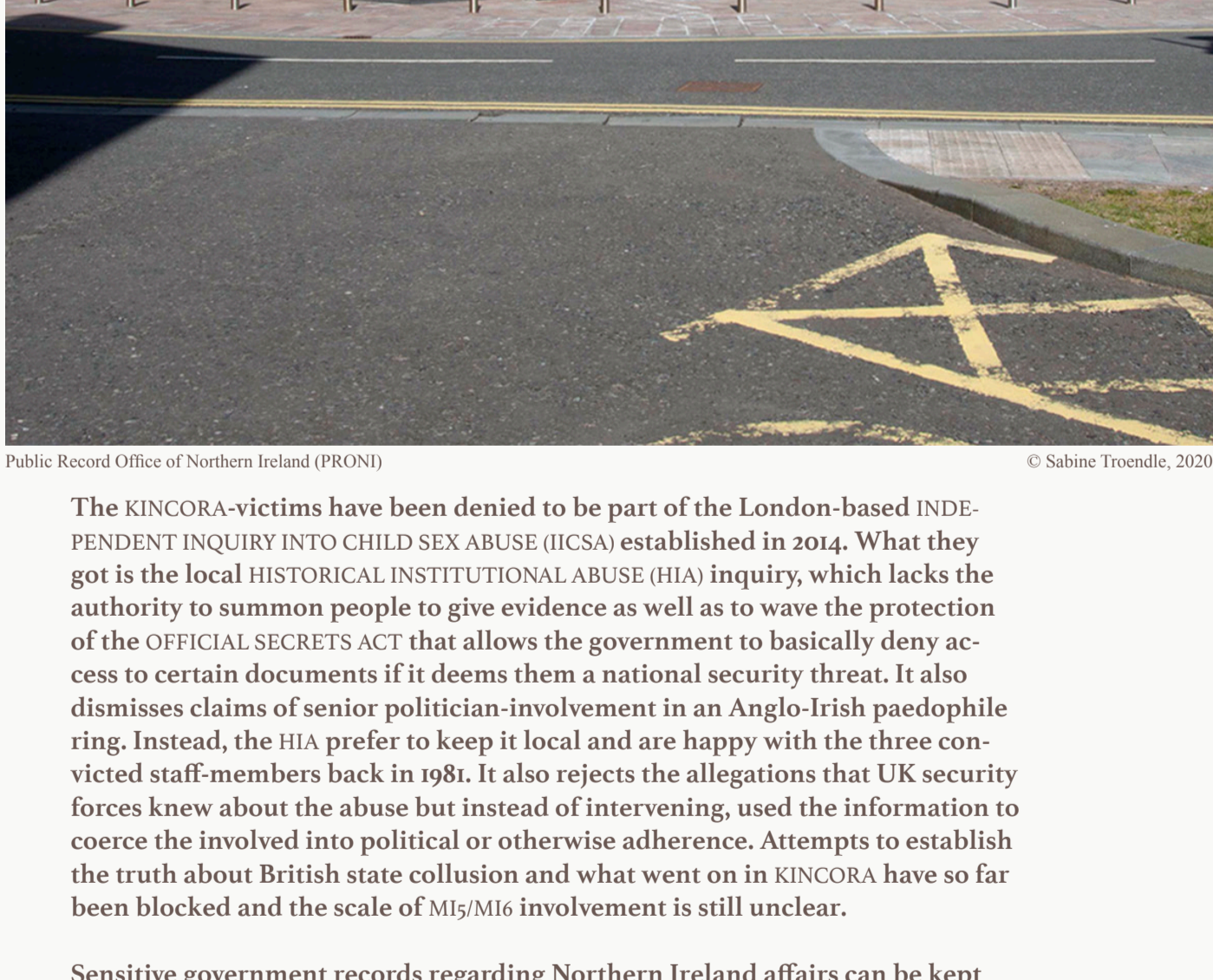
There was power and authority that came from within Orange lodges. William McGrath was the leader of Orange Lodge 1303, he was the leader of TARA and he was also well connected to political unionism. He was a powerful man who claimed that he was an agent providing intelligence on loyalist politicians to M15 and M16 and that only he knew the whole truth about KINCORA. He took that truth to his grave. However, fact is, that M15 did run an agent inside TARA gathering information on William McGrath and it was well known to the authorities what was going on inside the walls of KINCORA. Intelligence officers from all sorts of security departments tried to blow the whistle, but they were either told to forget about it by their superiors, or if they were senior army officers themselves, such as Colin Wallace who was with the ultra secret PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS UNIT (PSYOPS), they were vilified and taken out of the picture by fabricated and false accusations, which, in Wallace's case, landed him in prison.

"I can only conclude, who ever did stop action being taken had considerable power. That must have been from London. I can think of no one in Northern Ireland who would have had that level of authority. My job was to fight terrorism. Kincora was only a small but very distressful sideline and I find it frustrating more than anything else because it should have been very easy to resolve." Colin Wallace

Wallace was able to clear his name. John McKeague, notorious paedophile loyalist paramilitary of the RED HAND COMMANDO and Robert Bradford MP were not so lucky. They were both shot dead by M15 agents within the IRISH NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY (INLA) and PROVISIONAL IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY (PIRA). McKeague threatened to talk about KINCORA, should he ever be arrested and Bradford, the outspoken unionist politician, knew things and was a liability. The paramilitaries have been highly infiltrated by the state for a long time. According to journalist Dónal Lavery, the Anglo-Irish paedophile ring included Lord James Molyneux, Enoch Powell MP, Doctor Morris Fraser, Lord Mountbatten and more people with real sway and clout in society.

"They were protected by the state via the Intelligence Services and their exposure was legally barred on grounds of 'national security' in various instances. Essentially, they were practically 'untouchable', and could literally get away with all sorts of serious crimes."

The paedophile ring was shielded by M15 and M16. But state intelligence also used the network by luring targets like unionist politicians, Orangemen and loyalist paramilitaries to so called 'honeypots' – young boys in hotels made 'available' to them – and recording the 'event'. The threat of being exposed made the members of the paedophile ring vulnerable to blackmail and M15/M16 weren't shy to use their leverage forcing them 'to do their bidding'.

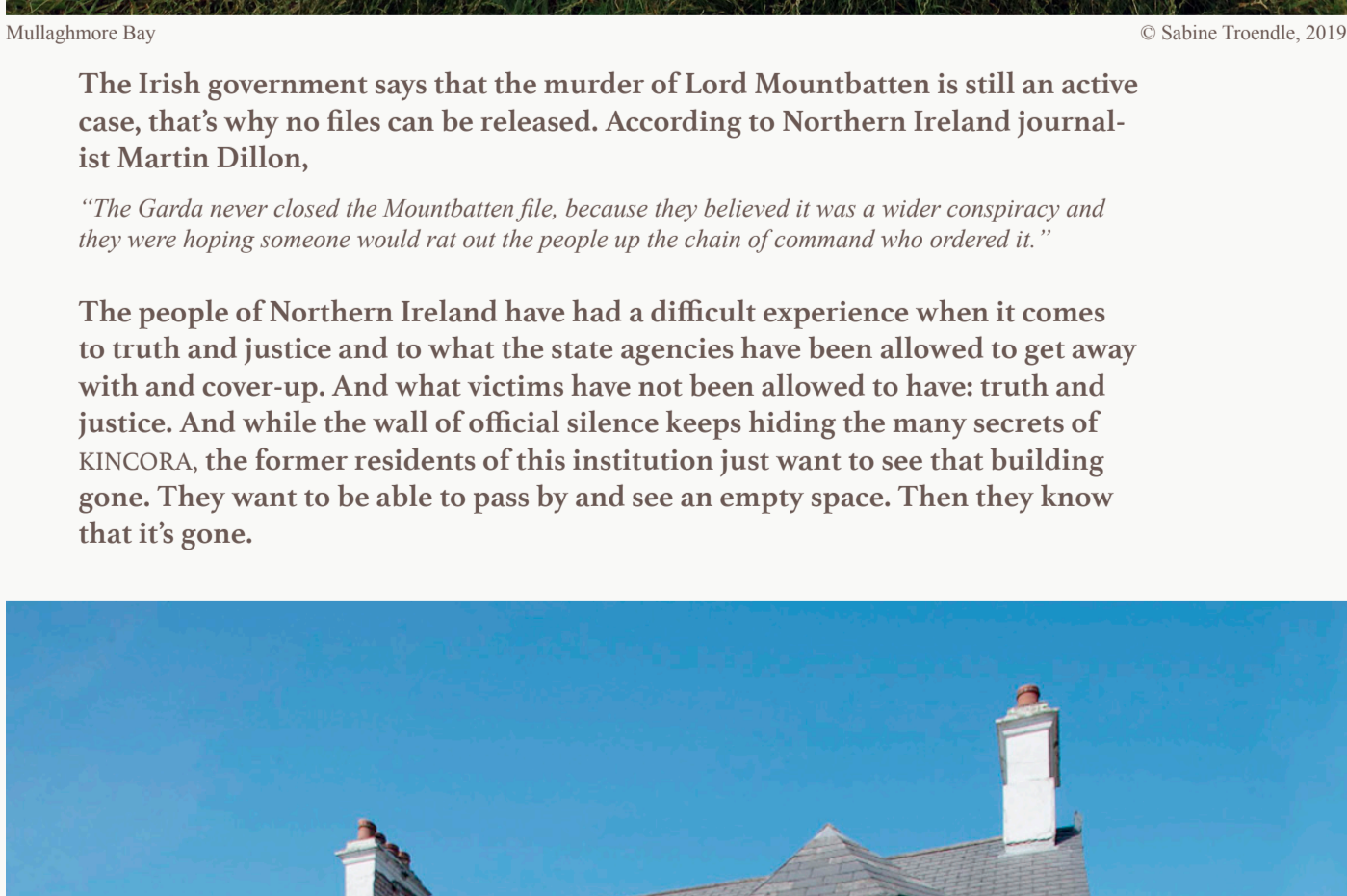


Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)

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The KINCORA-victims have been denied to be part of the London-based INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEX ABUSE (IICSA) established in 2014. What they got is the local HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE (HIA) inquiry, which lacks the authority to summon people to give evidence as well as to waive the protection of the OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT that allows the government to basically deny access to certain documents if it deems them a national security threat. It also dismisses claims of senior politician-involvement in an Anglo-Irish paedophile ring. Instead, the HIA prefer to keep it local and are happy with the three convicted staff-members back in 1981. It also rejects the allegations that UK security forces knew about the abuse but instead of intervening, used the information to coerce the involved into political or otherwise adherence. Attempts to establish the truth about British state collusion and what went on in KINCORA have so far been blocked and the scale of M15/M16 involvement is still unclear.

Sensitive government records regarding Northern Ireland affairs can be kept secret for 30 years. They are held at the PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND (PRONI) in Belfast. Every year official records are being reviewed and some made publicly available. In January 1982, after the trial of William McGrath, Joseph Mains and Raymond Semple, the press started to report on KINCORA. However, files on KINCORA have been prominently absent when documents from 1982 were declassified in 2012. A list of closed files held by PRONI show that some of those files will not be reviewed before 2067 and 2085.



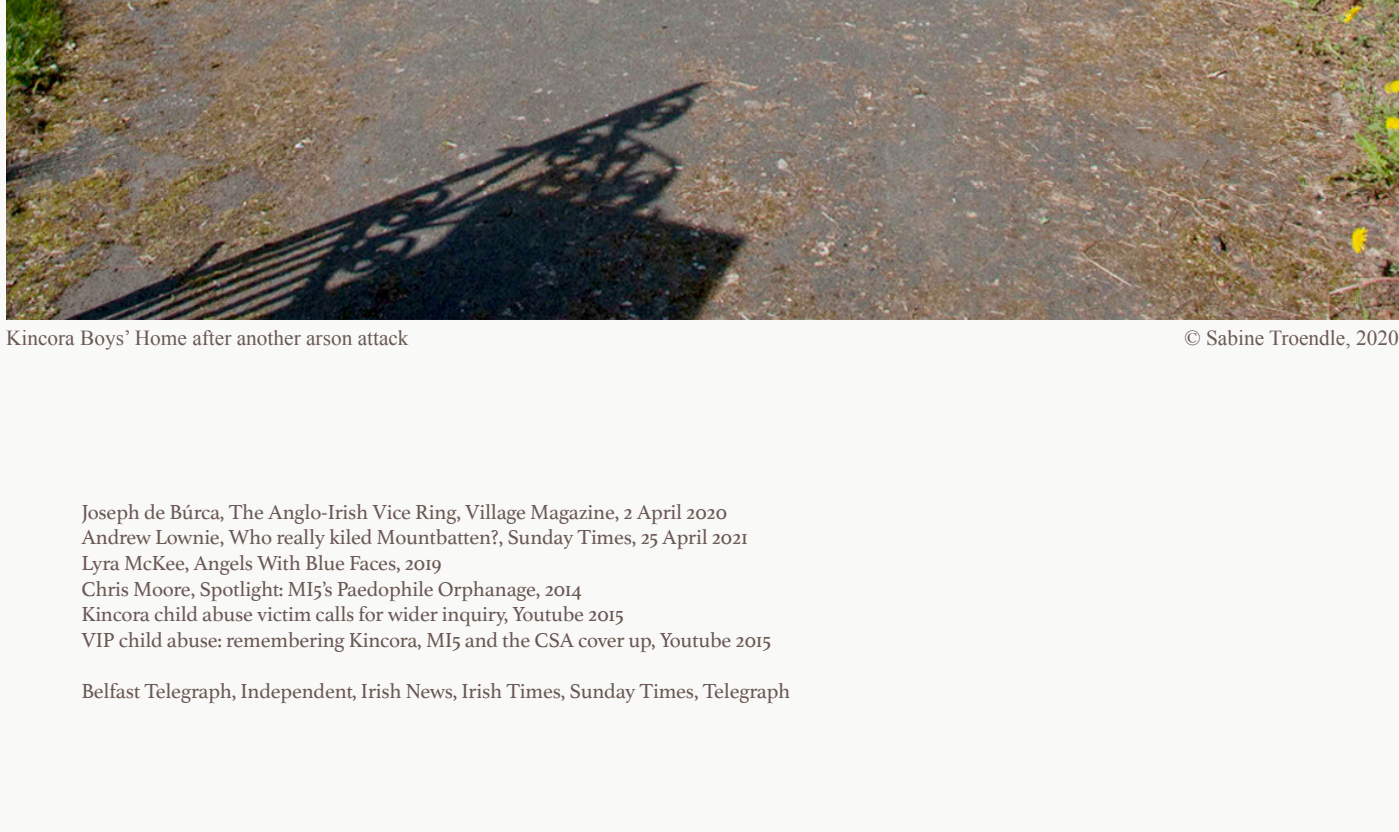
Mullaghmore Bay

© Sabine Troendle, 2019

The Irish government says that the murder of Lord Mountbatten is still an active case, that's why no files can be released. According to Northern Ireland journalist Martin Dillon,

"The Garda never closed the Mountbatten file, because they believed it was a wider conspiracy and they were hoping someone would rat out the people up the chain of command who ordered it."

The people of Northern Ireland have had a difficult experience when it comes to truth and justice and to what the state agencies have been allowed to get away with and cover-up. And what victims have not been allowed to have: truth and justice. And while the wall of official silence keeps hiding the many secrets of KINCORA, the former residents of this institution just want to see that building gone. They want to be able to pass by and see an empty space. Then they know that it's gone.



KinCORA Boys' Home after another arson attack

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