

Bloody Sunday, January 30, 1972

He was a young 16, a silly kid really ... that photo of him atop a barricade, a stolen Brit soldier's helmet on his head, a huge grin ...

An altar-boy team of 6, St. Columb's College – home to Friel, Heaney and Hume. It could have made for a grand life - but for them, it ended in strife. Five behind prison walls - futures shot to hell, Catholics all - a thing NOT to be in this colonial outpost of the 'IRISH' UK.

Inspired by the memory of Dr. King, a rally had been planned - march to the Guildhall, where speakers would call for an end to Internment – a fascist concept of equal justice for all.

His dad asked if he wanted to go - Of course, he said, sounded like grand craic to him. So they joined the thousands who headed out that day. On their way, they noticed armed troops had blocked all roads out - and, without a word, fired a volley of shots. 13 marchers lay dead or dying - his neighbor friend's dad, gunned down on the spot.

He and his dad turned and ran - a silly kid, now frightened to death, his head no more buried in the sand. He remembers thinking if he'd have to live in fear, then he'd take up arms and face his fate. He soon joined the IRA.

By the age of 20, imprisoned, the next 10 years in the Kesh – then released, married, a family and jobs – but his future forever carved into the stone of his past.

Thirty years on, England's then PM admitted they'd done wrong – they'd lied, caused so many innocents to die, he apologized, hoped all could forgive them for their crimes of mis-rule.

Him? The alter-boy? Now 70 ... with a walker and cane. Does he have regrets? Tho much older and wiser, he says he'd do it all again ...

That's how you manufacture a terrorist from a promising young kid with a silly grin.