

Justice William Hoyt, a former Chief Justice of New Brunswick, has spent the last ten years as one of three judges on the Bloody Sunday Inquiry, which was set up after the Good Friday Agreement to look into the events of 1972 when fourteen people were killed in a clash with the British army. Judge Hoyt was made an Officer of the order of Canada here in Ottawa last week.

Professor Clifford Shearing of the University of Toronto was a member of Chris Patten's team which laid the groundwork for the transformation of the Royal Ulster Constabulary into the PSNI, and Justice Peter Cory, formerly of Canada's Supreme Court, was called on by Britain and Ireland to conduct examinations into five cases where allegations were made concerning state involvement in assassinations carried out by Loyalist and Republican paramilitary groups. Ricki Schoen, a Canadian resident in Dublin, has been the in-place Assistant at the Decommissioning body's office there since the Commission started in 1997, and she was recognized in last years Queen's birthday honours list with an MBE for her service to the peace process. And, finally, a number of members and former members of the RCMP have been involved in the recently ended Police Oversight Commission, set up to monitor the introduction of the new Police Service of Northern Ireland. Led by retired Deputy Commissioner Al Hutchinson, now the Police Ombudsman in Northern Ireland, this multi-national Commission oversaw all aspects of the PSNI's training and development through the early years of its transition.

The Canadian government and the Foreign Affairs Department have remained committed to assist the peace process in Northern Ireland whenever that has been called for. Prime Ministers Chrétien and Martin both visited Dublin and Belfast during their time in office and Chrétien re-established Canada's contribution to the International Fund for Ireland. The Canadian and American Defence Departments have each provided the Decommissioning body with the services of an army Explosives Ordnance Disposal officer whenever we request it. The individuals selected have provided valuable technical and on occasion practical expertise to the Commission at the same time as convincing the British and Irish security forces that we really do know what we are doing. Finally, Ireland's President, Mary McAleese, was hugely impressed by the Irish connection in Canada when she toured the Maritimes and came to Ottawa a few years ago. It seems clear from what she and many on both sides of the Atlantic have told me that on the island of Ireland, Canada – like the United States which