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LETTERS

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Triumphalism over flags re-opens old wounds

Jonathan O'Brien's letter (Dec 10) states well how "For over 100 years, 365 days a year, the Union flag is flown over Belfast City Hall ... the cultural and national alliances of nationalism have not been recognised".

Edmund Burke denounced similar demonstrations of Britishness in Ireland when he wrote in the 1790s: "One would not think that decorum, to say nothing of policy, would prevent them to call up, by magic charms, the grounds, reasons and principles of those terrible confiscatory and exterminatory periods when they established their rule."

He had little sympathy for these triumphalist versions of Britishness—parades, banners, etc — which reopened wounds and trampled on the rights of other cultures, ie Irish Catholics.

As long as the Union flag flies over Belfast City Hall it marks a wound that will not clot.

Robert F Lyons
Kennebunkport
Maine
USA

[NOTE: December 12, 2012: Protests by Loyalists continue in Belfast after City Council voted to reduce to 18 days from 365 that the Union Jack could fly over City Hall.—BOB]