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Troubles killers' families in line for £12,000 pay-out

By Brian Rowan
Friday, 23 January 2009

The families of Shankill bomber Thomas Begley and LVF leader Billy Wright would receive a £12,000 payment if proposals by the Eames-Bradley group on the past are accepted, the Belfast Telegraph can reveal today.

In a £40m costed plan, all families who lost a loved one in the Troubles — security force, republican, loyalist and other — would be entitled to the new payment. The proposal — from the Consultative Group on the Past — will be viewed as the most controversial recommendation as it will pave the way for families of terrorists killed during the Troubles to receive money.

Begley died in 1993 while planting a bomb in a fish shop on Belfast's Shankill Road which killed nine others. Wright was murdered in 1997 by the INLA in the Maze Prison where he had been serving eight years for threatening to kill.

The plans aimed at dealing with Northern Ireland's violent past also propose that victims should be able to discover more details on how and why loved ones were killed.

Over 30 recommendations will be made in a nine-chapter, 200-page report due to be unveiled by Lord Robin Eames and former Policing Board vice-chairman Denis Bradley in Belfast on Wednesday.

The document will be presented as The Report of the Consultative Group on the Past, which was formed in June 2007 by then Secretary of State Peter Hain.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown was briefed on the plan in Downing Street yesterday.

Today, the Telegraph reveals key elements of the Eames-Bradley blueprint — its plan and proposals for dealing with the past. The recommendations also include:

IThe Legacy Commission — three commissioners including an international chairman appointed by the British and Irish Governments after consultation with the First and Deputy First Ministers.

IIvestigations Unit — part of the new Legacy Commission and headed by one of the three commissioners. The proposal is confirmation that there will be no amnesty. It will continue to investigate unsolved killings.

This replaces the Historical Enquiries Team and some of the Police Ombudsman's work.

- Information Recovery Unit — Part of the new Legacy Commission and headed by one of the three commissioners. Its role will be to draw out information from republicans, loyalists, security forces and intelligence services as requested by families. The aim is to provide families with as much information as possible on past killings.
- Reconciliation Forum — will work alongside The Legacy Commission. It will include the International Chairman of that commission, the Victims' Commissioners and the Community Relations Council.

The Belfast Telegraph understands there is a 12-page chapter on Remembrance, but no proposal for a single memorial to remember all victims of the conflict.

Big goals in the recommended process will include combating sectarianism and creating a story-telling process on the conflict. Eames-Bradley will set out aims and criteria for this.

Yesterday in Downing Street Mr Brown and Secretary of State Shaun Woodward were briefed by the co-chairs of the Consultative Group on the Past.

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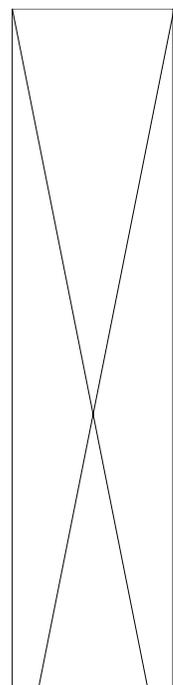
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my brother was shot dead by the ira during the troubles, would i be entitled to the compensation as i am living in the south

Posted by *pjm* | 30.01.09, 14:48 GMT

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Im an ex soldier and did three tours of northern ireland, ive been diagnosed with ptsd, ive had nightmares, flashbacks and have been a nervous wreck ever since, i find it hard to live my life everyday. Im currently waiting for the veterans agency to decide if to give me anything, and now i hear this, im disgusted, and i will do everything i can to stop it, i would rather not get a pension then have some power to go to papers and make people aware. Its an insult to every service personnel that ever served in northern ireland.

Posted by *chris* | 29.01.09, 21:29 GMT

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"Begley died in 1993 while planting a bomb" Now IF he hadn't been PLANTING the bomb he and a lot of others would STILL be alive now. His family should get NOTHING.

Posted by *Stuart* | 25.01.09, 19:50 GMT

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I agree; no good can come of this. Yes, I'm deeply sorry for the families and dear friends of all victims; unquestionably. And it should be noted that the little children of the terrorists did not do those crimes, so they too are victims. All that aside; education, hospital and community programs would be better served with this funding... plus, there would be no costly court cases to decide who really is a victim. Besides, 12k is really not very much anyway; is it. Nuf said.

Posted by NI-USA | 25.01.09, 09:33 GMT [Complain about this comment](#)

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CRAZY!!.. where do these ideas come from ? (NI Assembly tea room....."umm!, I have an idea....why don't we pay murdering scum (by scum, I refer to all members of the IRA).....12k for murdering innocent people.....and we'll pay for it out of the public purse....."). What planet do these people live on, and yet again 'commonsense' is lacking in the people entrusted with the public purse. I despair at the elected bodies not just in Northern Ireland but in England

Posted by OrangeBilly | 25.01.09, 07:13 GMT [Complain about this comment](#)

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If such a proposal were flagged anywhere else in the world it would be declared scandalous for that is what it is. Just where do these two amigos get off? Both Eames-Bradley are an utter disgrace! To think, for one second, these two clowns would dare contemplate, let alone recommend, parity for murdering gangsters and their victims is the hight of all hilarity! But wait.... This is Northern Ireland, where gangsters can murder an innocent man in cold blood and get clean away with it. Where debauched mobsters can rob a bank of millions and depraved scumbags can plant a bomb in the centre of a busy town killing thirty, plus, and maiming hundreds more and no one will ever be convicted. So why should anyone be surprised by Eames and Bradley's vacuous, but benevolent testimonial? Only in Northern Ireland, it's enough to scunner a dog, so it is!

Posted by Blazer | 25.01.09, 04:03 GMT [Complain about this comment](#)

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This suggestion is ludicrous and a total waste of money. The £40 million could be used to provide a new maternity hospital for Belfast as the Royal Maternity cannot cope with demand and the facilities on the wards are abysmal! My daughter has just been informed she may have to have her twins in Altnagelvin hospital as it's likely there won't be two spaces in the Royal's neonatal unit. A new Maternity unit would benefit all communities and especially the next generation.

Posted by Carol Calder | 24.01.09, 21:32 GMT

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Most terrorists families live on the dole, receive maximum benefits for every member of their family, get pay-outs from their organisations, buy most things on the black market, receive free satellite, and never pay taxes, and now Eames/ Bradley want to give them 12.000 pounds extra. I think they both need counselling and treatment. They are obviously suffering trauma. Have a vote on it, and I would bet my life savings that the normal people in society would unanimously vote against this ridiculous suggestion. Why should 2 persons decide on policies, it should be up to the people. How do you think hard working decent families would feel if their neighbours who were involved in illegal activities got more free government money. Catch a grip of your senses.

Posted by canuck | 24.01.09, 18:13 GMT

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I have never heard of anything so ridiculous in my whole life. I don't mind the true victims getting compensated, if they haven't already, but never the guys on the terrorist side. The traumatised Police Officers didn't get their compensation in their PTSD claims, so why rub salt into their wounds by compensating their tormentors. Maybe a better solution would be to cut taxes, and let everyone in the country receive a fair payout, and let by-gones be by-gones.

Posted by canuck | 24.01.09, 18:06 GMT

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Disgraceful!

Posted by Andrew | 24.01.09, 12:53 GMT

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Eames-Bradley...? never heard of them but they get my vote if Service Personnel are included in the £12000 hand-out.

A Bushell

Posted by A Bushell | 24.01.09, 09:22 GMT

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This is the usual 'upside down' mad house we come to expect from politicians and the hangers on. If something is blatantly wrong to the ordinary thinking person on the 'Clapham omnibus' why does the system almost always go the opposite way. Why should the spawn of terrorists be paid out of my pocket-If those in power think they should have the money then pay it out of their own pockets (and not expenses)

Posted by PETER LLOYD | 24.01.09, 09:10 GMT

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Outrageous. If they have a pot of money for this it should be divided so the victims families get more than £12k. Not a penny should go to relations of scum.

Posted by soarer | 24.01.09, 08:57 GMT

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If this happens it should mean that all the families of servicemen who died in or from injuries recieved whilst serving in the province should recieve the same or is it the usual double standards of our present government

Posted by nigel | 24.01.09, 08:00 GMT

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It wont work at all. Below are some reasons why I think this:
#1- How can they distinguish what people are illegible for receiving this?
ie, it states that families or "next of kin" will receive this.
Will this be sons, daughters, husbands, wives, brothers or sisters of the victim as surely some have suffered more than others and £12,000 pounds would be an awful lot to pay each party equally for individuals (how can anyone define next of kin under circumstances such as war?) however, if £12,00 will be divided equally between families of large amounts which means £12,00 would have to be broken down to a very small amount per each " victim" and in turn prove to be unfair to some people.
My point is: where do they draw the line regarding families?

Posted by Jack | 24.01.09, 02:04 GMT [Complain about this comment](#)

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Yes, it's yet another indication that the world is becoming more and more crazy every day.
If you really love your family, no amount of compensation would help alleviate the pain.

Posted by robbo | 23.01.09, 22:36 GMT [Complain about this comment](#)

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Post

Only in Ireland, absolutely ridiculous, a guy gets killed trying to kill others and they will get the same benefit as those who lost their lives trying to uphold the law.
This is pathetic.

Posted by John | 23.01.09, 22:31 GMT [Complain about this comment](#)

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Only in Ireland, absolutely ridiculous, a guy gets killed trying to kill others and they will get the same benefit as those who lost their lives trying to uphold the law.

This is pathetic.

Posted by John | 23.01.09, 22:26 GMT

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Does anyone know of a petition against this proposal? I would certainly sign it - it is an insult and a disgrace that it is even considered.

Posted by Stephanie | 23.01.09, 22:24 GMT

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Dr Eames, Mr Bradley and the team please hang your head in shame. How can the families of dead OFFICIAL IRA PIRA, UDA UFF UVF RHC INLA RIRA CIRA LVF CRA PAF AND ROGUE SECURITY FORCES get the same offer as innocent people who did no harm to anyone. Have you gone mad? This is an insult beyond belief.

Posted by Geoff Toner | 23.01.09, 22:14 GMT

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