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# Sinn Féin

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Policies

Peace Process

Elections

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Newsroom



## Eames/Bradley Consultative Group undermined from the start

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Sinn Féin West Belfast MLA Jennifer McCann speaking in an Assembly debate on the Eames/Bradley Consultative Group has said that it was undermined from the start.

Ms McCann said:

"The Consultative Group on the Past, while having genuine people with integrity in its membership was undermined from the start by being set up by the British government. I do not believe the Eames/ Bradley Group as it is called is the way forward in terms of the search for the Truth. That is also the view of many relatives' organisations.

**"No one should have anything to fear from a genuine Truth Recovery Process but such a process is doomed to fail if it is constructed by the British government or has its terms set by it. That is why the current Eames/Bradley approach is so flawed.**

"The issues of accountability, truth and justice are paramount for all those who were victims and survivors of the conflict but the British State must also recognize its role in the conflict and acknowledge they too had a strong part to play.

**"No truth recovery process can be completely open and fair unless it is set up in an independent and transparent manner and is not affiliated with any of the protagonists. Sinn Fein supports the setting up of an Independent, International Body which is victim led.**

"Families who are the victims of State Violence and Collusion will not feel they are being treated as equals until their loved ones who died are recognized as victims of the conflict and treated in the same way as those who were killed by Republican Organisations. The B Specials, British Army, UDR, RUC and Unionist Paramilitaries were responsible for many deaths and injuries to people. The British State whether directly by deployment of their Crown Forces or

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indirectly by arming and directing Unionist Death Squads were responsible for killing 1,414 people including men women and children.

"Over the years, more and more evidence of direct Crown force involvement with Unionist paramilitaries emerged yet the ruthless and random nature of the campaign of Collusion and the fact that it went right to the door of the British Cabinet still has never been exposed. This campaign was a result of careful organisation and planning and was unable to happen without direct State involvement.

"It wasn't until Pat Finucane a human rights lawyer was murdered that the level of State Collusion in the murder of Irish citizens began to be exposed. It was clear that the British state, in the guise of the British Army and the RUC, and the UDR instigated and planned Pat Finucane's murder and facilitated his execution. A photograph and an address were supplied, weapons were procured and roadblocks were removed at the last minute to ensure a clean getaway for his killers.

"I have previously worked with some of those families whose loved ones were killed by the State and I know how aggrieved and angry they are that their loved one and they themselves are constantly demonized and made to feel like second class citizens and that their pain and their grief doesn't matter.

"All victims of this conflict should be treated in the same way and all the families who have lost loved ones given the respect and dignity they are entitled to. All sides to this conflict need to be open to that.

"All participants of this conflict need to take responsibility for their actions over the course of the last 35 years and the British State too must take responsibility for their role.

"It is now time for the establishment of an International, Independent body with the necessary resources which is capable of investigating the past and recovering the truth for all the relatives of all those who lost loved ones in the conflict." ENDS

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