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From: William Stevenson
Victims Liaison Unit
15 May, 2000

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Mr Layberry, DFP
Mr Shaw, DFP
Mr Clarke, NIO

file
Bloomfield
Report / Victims
Issues



EU FUNDING AND VICTIMS

Mr Ingram recently met with Jim Nicholson, MEP, and Ian Paisley Jnr, MLA along with representatives from the victims groups FAIR and HURT. The meeting was at the request of Mr Nicholson to discuss EU funding following the recent visit to Brussels by representatives of the Northern Ireland Terrorist Victims Together (NITVT) which is an umbrella group of victims groups from the unionist community.

The Minister essentially listened to the delegates concerns which majored on the perceived imbalance in funding to victims group in relation to ex-prisoner groups, and complaints about NIVT as an IMF. No commitments were given.

The delegation left 2 documents with the Minister, ie a copy of a letter to Mr Thomas Bender, EU Commission in Brussels, and a report entitled "Crime Doesn't Pay – An analysis of Funding Under the European Union's Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation". I have attached a copy of both documents for your information.

William Stevenson

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Mr. Allen
Please copy to Don Hasley,
Mike Thompson, George
O'Donohy and Tony Curran
by today
Text fax plus
SH 1315

cc PS/Mr Ingram (B&L)
Ms Butcher
Ms Burns
Ms Dullaghan
Mr O'Mahony
(all without attachments)

KM/VLU/1312

CRIME DOESN'T PAY ?

**ANALYSIS OF FUNDING UNDER
THE EUROPEAN UNION'S SPECIAL
SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR
PEACE AND RECONCILIATION**

Families Acting for Innocent Relatives

'HELP US BUILD A BETTER FUTURE'



FAMILIES ACTING FOR INNOCENT RELATIVES

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For over thirty years the rolling hills and idyllic countryside of South Armagh has hid a terrible secret. It is only now emerging the extent of the suffering of ordinary people at the hands of Republican murderers. A catalogue of ethnic cleansing and Human Rights abuses including murder and torture has gone unpunished.

Families Acting for Innocent Relatives was formed in 1998 as a support group for the victims who felt themselves marginalised by the 'peace process'. For over thirty years the ordinary law abiding people of South Armagh have held the line for democracy against Republican terrorism. In that time the area where we live has suffered the highest level of terrorism per head of population. Three hundred and seventy eight murders, 1255 bombs, and 1158 gun attacks occurred in an area of roughly ten square miles.

The idea was to create an organisation to help ordinary people rebuild their lives, and provide friendship for those who have a shared experience of suffering. This was the first time in over thirty years that these people had any real form of support or help. Those who had suffered most had received least help, and were fast becoming the forgotten victims, as the changing political climate threatened to marginalise the victims of terrorism even further. It was against the backdrop of the appeasement of terrorists, prisoner releases, the destruction of the forces of law and order and the undermining of justice that our group began to function.



THE USUAL SUSPECTS

In that short time we have become Northern Ireland's largest victims group with over 600 members and are growing daily. Many of those who have joined are telling their stories for the first time, and it only through the support and facilities we provide that they are able to do so.

FAIR has provided a voice for the victims who have been silent for so long, and have taken their case to the media locally, nationally, and internationally. Membership is open to residents and former residents of South Armagh who have lost relatives or who have themselves been injured or affected by terrorism. We also welcome those who have served in this area and the families of so many young soldiers who died protecting us.

As an organisation we are maturing, and have set up an office and taken on full time staff. These people will not only help us research and tell our stories but will help to provide training to the wider community. These developments will help us to proceed towards our vision more professionally and efficiently. The best fulfilment of our goals would be a "Living Memorial Centre" where the victims could go to remember their loved ones. The centre would also give something back to the community and would be self-sustaining. It would also provide the group with a base from which to proclaim the truth and continue the fight for justice.

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

The story of republican ex-prisoners establishing an extensive network of support for themselves and their families can only be told fully when one realises how closely this is linked with the paramilitary groups to which the prisoners adhere. The idea that the ex-prisoners leave jail having renounced violence and broken their links with terrorist groups must be dismissed. Our findings concur with several leading academics, one of which stated "Ex-terrorists tend to become dependent upon the organisation that turned them to terrorism in the first place, unless they are content to live on normal state benefits. Many therefore seek careers in their political wings as a natural extension of their military past. Consequently a dependency grows upon the maintenance of the organisation." (ibid p46). Many of the ex-prisoners have not only gone into politics but have now also diversified into community and residents groups. The voluntary sector has also become the home for many through the channel of ex-prisoners' groups.

Many in the unionist community believe this network to be little more than a front for Sinn Féin/IRA and see the ex-prisoners role as a way for the republican movement to continue controlling nationalist communities. Such fears were confirmed when Gerry Adams boasted of the work that Republicans had put into engineering the trouble over Orange parades. This along with the fact that a convicted terrorist Brendan McKenna is the spokesman for the residents' group in question has led many people in northern Ireland to the conclusion that the opposition to parades is orchestrated by Sinn Féin/IRA.

The ex-prisoners' groups which have sprung up recently also attract such criticism. The first of these groups was Tar Anall, established in 1995. Since then, groups have been established throughout the country with support from the EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. In 1998, the various groups began meeting on a regular basis in order to seek to co-ordinate their activities. In April of that year a Charter was drawn up which outlined the purpose of the Coiste and the way in which groups should work with and relate to each other. In the summer of 1998, an application for funding to support two workers was successful and led to the appointment in November 1998 of Mike Ritchie as project manager and Dr Laurence McKeown as outreach/development worker. The funding was approved by the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust and Area Development Management / the Combat Poverty Agency.

The prisoners inherit the benefits of a growing infrastructure under the guise of resettlement and reconciliation projects. Also they are supported by both British and Irish Governments in their drive for an all-Ireland organisation, this has been assisted by the fact that they have been able to secure funding from the Irish Department of Social Community and Family Affairs to open an office in Dublin.

In short the paramilitary experience and support structures have given the ex-prisoners a head start, which victims groups are struggling to make up for. The expectation that the same funding would result in the same product for both a victims group and an ex-prisoners group is misplaced as the victims simply do not have the experience or the capacity to develop as quickly as the other. This disparity must be addressed by funders in the forth-coming round of funding.

LEARNING THEIR LESSON ?

Any study of the provision for ex-prisoners would be seriously lacking if it did not include the funding they benefited from whilst in prison. It takes an astonishing £80,000 per annum to keep each prisoner. Much of the money is well spent in guarding these dangerous individuals and keeping them behind bars and we would pay tribute to the professionalism and dedication of the Prison Officers, many of whom were murdered for doing their job. However the victims of terrorism have throughout the Troubles been disgusted by the amount of money spent on the education, training and recreation inside maximum-security prisons.

Consistently in surveys of victims the idea that terrorists were not being properly punished has been reiterated. The question of restoring the death penalty and increasing the severity of sentences have continually been raised as possible solutions to the terrorist problem. With incredibly short sentences and a soft prison system there appears no deterrent to the murderers. Indeed the leniency of the courts and the comfortable conditions and endless opportunities have become a joke in certain circles. Often murderers have taunted the widows and orphans about how soon they will be out. To be bereaved is a life sentence with no reprieve, however under the current political settlement those convicted of the worst atrocities and serial murder will be free to walk the streets once more. The shortness of sentences have been an increased injury to many victims who pin their hope on the idea of justice- the victims have been consistent in their calls for 'life' to mean life. The current early release scheme has compounded the already intense feelings, which include betrayal, devastation and disbelief. The victims hopes for justice have been shattered and the rule of law which was one of their last remaining points of reference has been swept away.

Another recurrent complaint from the victims has been the amount spent in education, training, leisure and recreational facilities for prisoners. The analogy of a holiday camp has often been used to illustrate the relaxed regime, which has seen paramilitary groups practically running areas of the prisons. The whole prison experience has done little to punish many terrorists rather it has provided a wealth of opportunity for them. They have been able to receive a free education and vocational training. This has produced a stream of educated articulate ex-prisoners who find a home in the political wing of their terrorist organisations. In many cases the efficiency, effectiveness and numbers of the paramilitaries have increased because of the prison experience. The time in jail increases the sense of persecution, camaraderie and trust needed to maintain a guerrilla campaign. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the prison experience has not punished terrorists for their crimes. They have learnt nothing in moral terms and show little remorse for their actions. What they have learnt however, at the expense of the

WHEN THE DOOR EVINGS OPEN

taxpayer, can be seen in the high number of educational and vocational qualifications that are awarded to inmates. The vast sums spent educating prisoners and looking after their every recreational need stands in stark contrast to the lack of provision for the widows and orphans they created. The whole issue of the treatment of prisoners and their education must be measured against the treatment of victims. While many victims were forced to give up their education in order to step into the gap left by the murder of a close relative, the prisoners were going back to school. The Inmate Activities Branch is responsible for the education and training budget in the prisons. In programmes, which have taken terrorists to tertiary education, and beyond some have come away with no less than three PhDs. They have been able to build a bright future for themselves at the expense of the taxpayer, while their victims struggle to rebuild their lives. A victim who after the death of his father was forced to drop out of school at the age of 15 and start work to support his family articulated the most sickening sinario. He said that he often imagined the tax he paid being used to give a terrorist the education he had missed out on.

Even the most cursory glance at the latest Inmate Activities Branch figures reveals that £450,000 is needed to pay full time teachers, of which £90,000 is attributed to the Maze. Part-time teachers cost £248,000; £52,000 of which is attributable to the Maze. It therefore takes £698,000 per annum to pay staff on top of an overall programme budget of £120,000 - £25,000 of which is spent in the Maze. Overall the Education of the prisoners costs the taxpayer £818,000 each year. At that level since the start of the Troubles a possible £24,540,000 has been spent on education in prisons. Despite the ongoing prisoner releases the classes continue, regardless of the numbers involved.

The vocational, training and occupational services drain the Exchequer to the tune of £1,097,000 per annum, going mainly on Instructors bills. The whole aim of the programme is to equip the prisoners for life after prison and the Maze alone spends £19,000 in this area. In many other countries prisoners are made to work both as a punishment for their crime and to contribute to their keep. However after the Hunger Strikes terrorist prisoners were given unbelievable freedoms in the prisons. They don't have to work or wear prisons clothes and have the free run of their areas of the prison. This state of affairs has been consistently condemned by victims and prison staff alike, the latter often wondering who really ran the prisons.

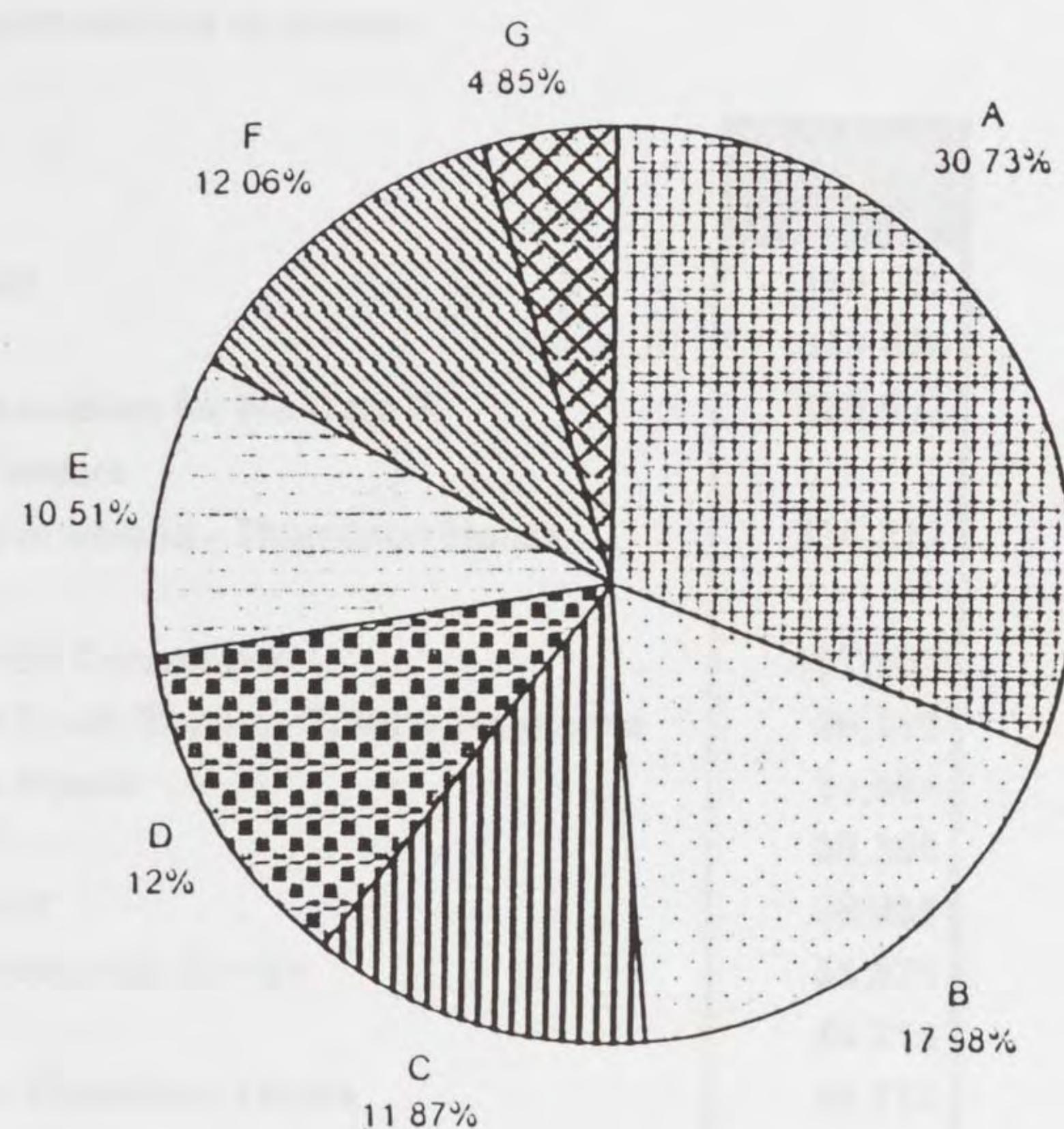
WHEN THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN

Despite the millions that have been spent educating and training the prisoners, not to mention tens of thousands on recreational activities like learning to fly-fish (a vital life-skill in West Belfast which cost the taxpayer £22,100), the state provides a safety-net for ex-prisoners once they get out. This is on top of the high levels of support provided by the paramilitary groups. For example the Republican Movement has An Cumann Cabhrach (the Republican Aid Committee) which subsidises the Green Cross. Millions have been raised in America by the Irish Northern Aid Committee, much of which goes to prisoners and their families. A range of Irish American groups, like the Ancient Order of Hibernians give millions towards the Ex-prisoners issue. Other groups like Irish Political Prisoners Children's Holiday provide holidays for the children of prisoners

The Probation Board for Northern Ireland is specially set up to deal with terrorist offenders. It helped to rehabilitate offenders and to prevent re-offending. The body which will no doubt be swamped by the release of all terrorist prisoners.

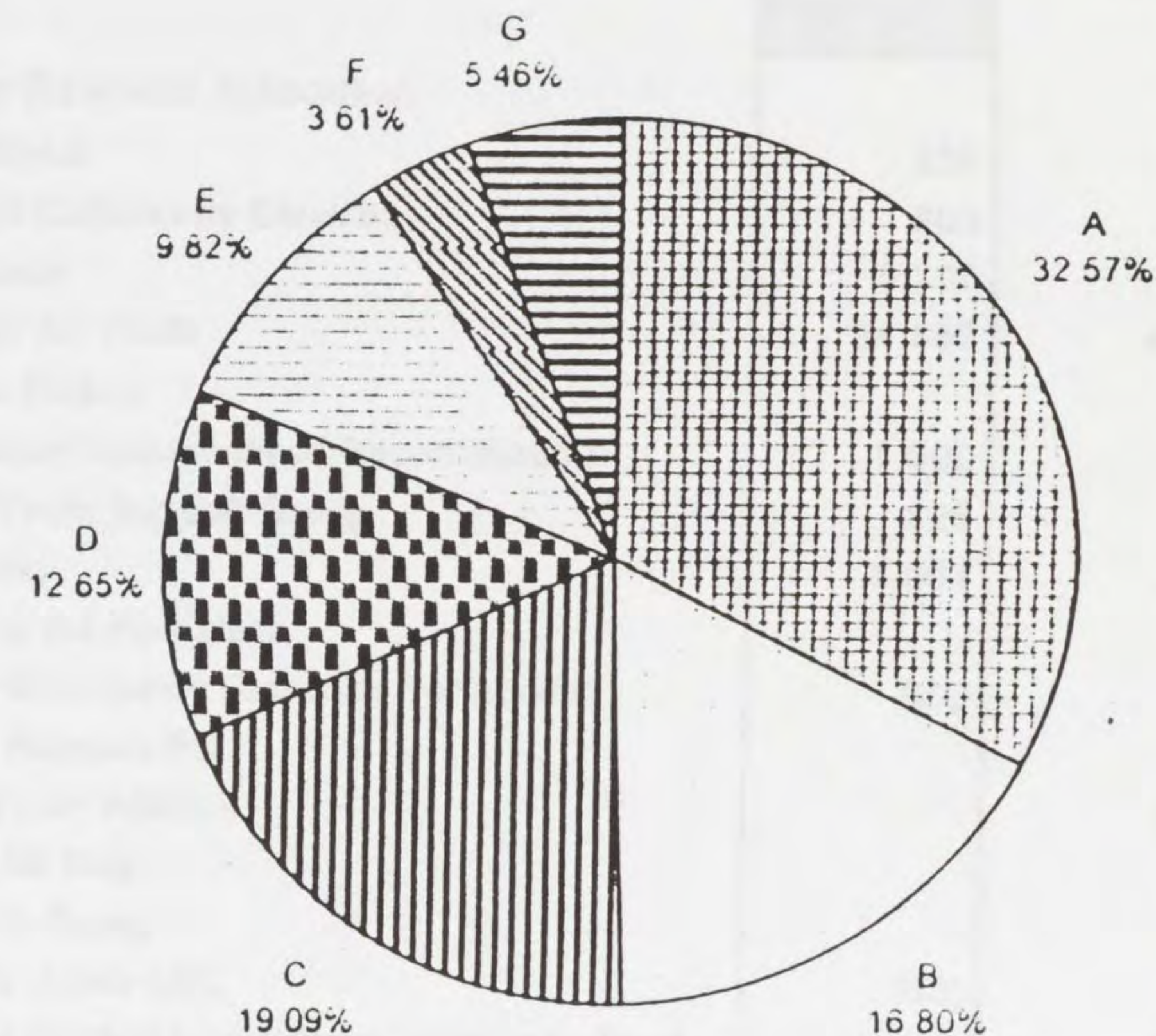
Many of the paramilitaries have convictions for 'ordinary crime' and even those activities that are obviously linked to their terrorist activity like punishment beatings, drugs and racketeering are being designated as ordinary crime to insulate the peace process from criticism. Because of this, and the fact that the board does not differentiate between categories of offender, it is difficult to state which projects are aimed at, or include terrorist ex-prisoners. The afore stated leniency of the judicial and penal system has led to a high level of re-offending, which the probation Board has to deal with. Many of those recently released have re-offended and even taken up where they left off in their terrorist careers. For these reasons it is educational to include some of the Probation Board's grants to Voluntary bodies involved with ex-offenders.

GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY BODIES 1998/99
ACTUAL EXPENDITURE



- A Accommodation Services
- B Employment Services
- C Intermediate Treatment Schemes
- D Prisoners' Families
- E Prison Visitors' Centres
- F Crime Prevention
- G MBW Funded Projects

GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY BODIES 1999/2000
BUDGET ALLOCATION



- A Accommodation Services
- B Employment Services
- C Programmes supporting statutory supervision
- D Prisoners' Families
- E Prison Visitors' Centres
- F One-off grants (also supporting statutory supervision)
- G Subject of discussion with NIO

Grants to Voluntary Bodies

Grants in respect of Hostels, other establishments and schemes for the supervision and assistance of offenders and the prevention of crime:-

	1998/99 £	1997/98 £
Dismas House Hostel	149,785	145,628
Extern Organisation	344,826	443,113
Northern Ireland Association for the Care & Resettlement of Offenders	460,602	551,657
Presbyterian Church in Ireland - Thompson House and Carlisle House	156,212	152,380
Ulster Quakers Service Committee	197,162	198,328
West Belfast Parent Youth Support Group - Roghanna	86,385	86,385
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	31,504	33,504
Edward St Hostel	35,308	22,473
Lower Falls 'New Start'	26,958	26,958
Stadium Youth & Community Centre	35,875	35,875
The Lynx Project	40,814	40,814
The Salvation Army - Centenary House	48,713	-
123 House	-	(260)
Antrim YMCA	-	3,450
Ardoyne Youth Forum	(297)	800
Ardoyne Youth Providers Forum	-	(800)
Ballysillan Youth Forum	-	(493)
Ballymurphy Bullring Community Group	500	-
Beechmount Community Project	-	2,525
Bone Youth Association	1,000	1,000

	1998/99 £	1997/98 £
Bowtown Residents Association	-	420
Bytes Project	350	(160)
Cathedral Community Services	800	-
Centre Care	5,300	3,500
Challenge for Youth	24,887	43,887
Chrysalis Project	-	(706)
Columbanus Community of Reconciliation	1,000	-
Contact Youth Support Group	825	-
Corrymeela	1,964	2,200
Council for the Homeless	-	500
Cregagh Community Churches Partnership	650	-
Cregagh Rangers FC	-	500
Crumlin Youth Initiative	-	2,000
Cumann Na Nog	-	250
Dale Youth Group	-	780
Deramore Junior LOL	(63)	-
Drumcree Festival Committee/Community Trust	-	3,000
Drumellan Community Association	-	350
The First Step	500	-
Forum for Action on Substance Abuse	1,000	-
The Fountain Project	-	2,000
Foyte Homeless	19,846	15,609
Glasvey Residents Association	-	400
Glencairn Parent Youth Group	2,000	5,000
Gort na Mona Parent Youth Support Group	3,240	12,232

Grants to Voluntary Bodies

	1998/99 £	1997/98 £		1998/99 £	1997/98 £
Greater East Belfast Partnership	-	500	Mount Vernon Young Women's Group	990	-
Grosvenor Youth Project	-	250	Mourne Workshop Trust	13,408	13,408
Highfield Unemployed	-	1,000	Moyravery Youth Development	2,000	-
Hi Spring Forum	500	-	Murlough Community Association	-	600
Inner East Youth Project	5,000	-	MUST Hostel	9,576	27,599
Inter Agency	8,036	3,125	Newbuildings Com & Environmental Assoc.	2,000	-
Intercommunity Development Project	5,009	2,400	Newhill Youth & Community Centre	-	5,000
Kickstart Programme	-	500	Newington ABC	-	500
Kilmakee Rangers Junior FC	-	500	Newington Youth Club	-	300
Lagan Valley Education Project	900	-	Newry Adolescent Partnership	2,000	-
Ledley Hall Boys' Club	1,100	-	Newspring Cross Community	-	500
Lighthouse Homeless Association	3,311	-	Newtownabbey Prisoners' Resettlement Group	-	806
Ligoniel Improvement Association	500	-	North Belfast Cultural Society	2,398	1,645
Link Community Association	-	600	Northside Project	2,500	3,250
Linc Enterprises Limited	13,920	-	Omagh Area Training Limited	2,500	-
Linc Resource Centre	-	13,978	PANDA	6,150	6,150
Lisburn Safer Neighbourhood	-	1,000	Parkside Community Association	-	200
Lower Cavehill Residents' Association	1,350	-	Passionist Youth & Parent Resource Group	3,620	2,000
Lower Middle Andersonstown Festival	-	500	Portrush Community Development Group	-	482
Lower North Belfast Community Council	200	-	Phoenix Drama Society	1,140	-
Lower North Belfast Community Forum	-	700	Poleglass Residents' Association	500	-
Lower Ormeau Residents Association	-	1,000	Pop Bar Drop-In Centre	4,000	4,000
Lower Shankill Football Club	200	-	Prison Arts Foundation	1,000	-
Lower Shankill Parents Group	-	(1)	Prison Fellowship	15,301	15,301
Macosquin Community Association	1,000	-	Research Group on Chemical Dependency	-	500
Manor Street/Cliftonville Community Group	500	400	Railway Community Dev Assoc - Amber House	250	-

Grants to Voluntary Bodies

[illegible]