



House of Commons
Northern Ireland Affairs
Committee

**Ways of Dealing with
Northern Ireland's Past:
Interim Report -
Victims and Survivors**

Tenth Report of Session 2004–05

Volume I



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Report, together with formal minutes

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The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Northern Ireland Office (but excluding individual cases and advice given by the Crown Solicitor); and other matters within the responsibilities of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (but excluding the expenditure, administration and policy of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Northern Ireland and the drafting of legislation by the Office of the Legislative Counsel).

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Contents

Report	<i>Page</i>
Summary	3
1 Introduction	7
Victims and survivors	7
Interim report	8
2 Observations on evidence received	10
Political process	10
Victims and survivors –ambassadors of the past to the future	10
Approaches to dealing with the past	12
Funding	17
‘Disappeared’	19
‘Acknowledgement’ and ‘apology’	20
3 Government’s announcement - 1 March 2005	23
Consultation on dealing with the past – the government’s decision	23
Consultation – victims and survivors	23
4 Conclusion - ways forward	26
Conclusions and recommendations	28
Formal minutes	35
Witnesses	36
List of written evidence	38
List of unprinted written evidence	40
Reports from the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee since 2001	41

Summary

When we set out on our inquiry, *Reconciliation: ways of dealing with Northern Ireland's past*, four months ago, it was our intention to conduct a comprehensive set of investigations over an extended period which would contribute to the process of inter-community healing on which the future of Northern Ireland depends. We also hoped that our work would assist the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in his process of discussions and consultation about Northern Ireland's past which was announced in May 2004. We began our oral hearings with the victims and survivors of the conflict of the last decades as the group most immediately and tragically affected.

Unfortunately, the prospect of a United Kingdom general election has meant that we have had to curtail our inquiry. It was not possible even to hear from all those who wished to speak to us about the first part of our work, listening to victims and survivors. We hope that there will be an opportunity, if our successor committee in the next Parliament so decides, to return to and continue our work on this very important subject.

It is evident from the large amount of written material which was sent to us and the considerable numbers who wished to present oral evidence, that the subject of this inquiry is of great general interest in Northern Ireland and elsewhere. The evidence we received is of a high quality, and we have decided to publish it with the intention that it should be disseminated as widely as possible.

Despite not having had the opportunity to finish the inquiry as planned, we thought that it was right to publish alongside the evidence gathered an interim report containing a small number of preliminary observations. These are to be understood not as the usual conclusions of a select committee (which would have required the completion of the full inquiry) but as a commentary on issues which struck us as particularly topical and of especial interest and importance:

- We were heartened by the hard and imaginative work that a large number of individuals and organisations are putting into the task of inter-community healing in Northern Ireland. This work is the essential culture from which the day-to-day development of peace and normalisation in Northern Ireland is developing, and all of civil society, led by the government, must ensure that it receives constant encouragement and generous support.
- Many intractable problems remain over how to 'deal' with the past in Northern Ireland. For example, a clear and widely accepted definition of what it is to be a 'victim'; what 'reconciliation' means, and whether it is applicable to Northern Ireland; even whether the violence of the sectarian conflict there has ceased fully and permanently, remain in some degree unresolved, as is clear from the evidence presented to us. It is the continuing existence of problems of this fundamental nature, and the potential these have for setting back the process of peace, which make it vital that the healing work of the individuals and organisations we have mentioned above continues and is strengthened. Despite such problems, there is a measure of agreement about how the sacrifice and suffering of victims may inform

the creation of a more peaceful and prosperous society in Northern Ireland. The ‘Healing Through Remembering’ initiative has done impressive work in identifying and summarising imaginative ways for this to be carried forward.

- One initiative which was mentioned frequently is that of a formal and official ‘truth recovery’ process, an idea which the government has decided against pursuing for the time being. This is an idea that may have its place in the healing process in Northern Ireland, but which is complicated and contentious at present. We are supportive of the idea, particularly where an independent element is included, but are not convinced that this is the right time to begin to put it into practice. Community consensus about the nature of such a process, and a positive political context would be required to enable a wide variety of groups and individuals in Northern Ireland to participate in such a process with sufficient confidence for it to be worthwhile. Unfortunately, this essential context has not yet been created, and we are concerned that to embark on this process now would not achieve the aim of truth recovery and could exacerbate inter-community tensions. We expect the government to keep the appropriateness of initiating a truth recovery process under constant review.
- It is of great importance to stress that a formal and official ‘truth recovery’ process is one means only by which society in Northern Ireland may come to resolve its past. Our evidence shows in detail the myriad opportunities which the people of Northern Ireland are taking to come to terms with the realities of the past and to ensure that the mistakes made then are not carried forward to blight the future. As we have said, such efforts must be sustained by all means possible.
- When we were drawing this inquiry to its premature close, the government announced a major consultation on a Victims’ and Survivors’ Commissioner and a number of measures designed to strengthen the support victims receive. This happened in time for us to include it in the evidence we took from Mr Paul Murphy, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and Angela Smith, Northern Ireland Office Minister with responsibility for victims. We welcome these signs that the government is taking support for victims and survivors seriously, and we encourage a strong participation in this public consultation. However, we consider that the measures announced, while unexceptionable, do not break new ground in the approach to victims and survivors, and an opportunity may have been missed to maximise the positive impact which victims can have on rebuilding Northern Ireland society.
- Victims represent a primary resource in the process of transformational healing which lies at the centre of a better future for Northern Ireland. This potential will be unlocked only when their experiences are given a central position in society which requires full, practical acknowledgment of their hurt, and the respect to which their experiences entitle them. The government needs to examine further whether sufficient funding is available for victims: in our view it is not. It must also examine as imaginatively as possible ways in which victims, and their experiences, may be drawn into the effort to promote peace and tolerance in Northern Ireland.

Much of the evidence we received in the course of our work was deeply upsetting, but our final impression is one of optimism for the future of Northern Ireland. The hunger for peace, mutual respect between individuals and communities of differing traditions, the enormously impressive, cross-community work of victims, survivors, other groups, and individual citizens to promote healing is, day by day, building a new social fabric in Northern Ireland which is testament to a potentially bright future. Of course, extremely serious problems remain, and we do not underestimate them. However, the work we saw in Northern Ireland, and the evidence we have been privileged to hear, provide a shining example to all the leaders of civil society in their own task of forging a better future for Northern Ireland. We trust that they will keep it clearly before them.

1 Introduction

1. On 4 November 2004 we announced an inquiry into “ways of dealing with Northern Ireland’s past”.¹ The terms of that inquiry were to examine:

“The experience of efforts in other jurisdictions to move forward from a history of division and conflict, on a basis as widely acceptable as possible to affected communities and individuals who have suffered from violence.”

2. The context of our work was the Secretary of State’s announcement in May 2004 that he was embarking upon a programme of discussions about how Northern Ireland could find “ways of dealing with the past which recognises the pain, grief and anger associated with it” but which “enables it to build a better future for the next generation”.² We had no illusions about the difficulty of the issues involved, but considered that it was important to seek to make a contribution to this process at a time when the overall political climate appeared to promise real progress in the process of normalisation in Northern Ireland.

3. Since then, the prospect of further immediate progress in the peace process has faded. While constraining what progress towards normalisation in Northern Ireland may reasonably be hoped for in the short term, the present difficulties make it all the more important that the often unsung, but absolutely vital local work of inter-community healing there, which we discuss in detail below, should receive appropriate recognition and encouragement.

Victims and survivors

4. The initial response to our inquiry was excellent, and a large number of written submissions from a wide range of individuals and organisations were received. We quickly realised that, given the importance and complexity of inquiring into Northern Ireland’s past, and the large number of people who wished to contribute to our work, hearing an appropriate range of evidence was likely to be a lengthy process.³ We felt strongly that the first step should be to hear the views of those most directly affected by the conflict, the victims and survivors and those groups which represent them, and we made an announcement to that effect on 20 January 2005.⁴

5. We made clear that the evidence we received in written and oral form would be published. However, we chose to hear all our witnesses in private in order to create the circumstances in which they would be most comfortable when giving evidence. A number of witnesses would not otherwise have given evidence.⁵

¹ Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, Press Notice, 4 November 2004

² HC Deb, 27 May 2004, cols 91-92WS

³ The original deadline of 3 December 2004 for receiving submissions was extended to 31 December, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, Press Notice, 9 December 2004.

⁴ Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, Press Notice, 20 January 2005

⁵ Q 558

6. Since 20 January, we have held ten sessions of evidence in Northern Ireland and Westminster during which we heard from over sixty victims and survivors, representatives of victims' groups, and other important witnesses whose evidence was relevant. On 9 March, our final session of evidence, we took evidence from Mr Paul Murphy, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and Angela Smith, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Northern Ireland Office with responsibility for victims and survivors.

7. We also paid three highly informative and memorable informal visits to meet victims: first, to the Belfast premises of the WAVE Trauma Centre where we were given the opportunity to learn about the range of support work for victims being undertaken by the organisation, and to view both striking art work and a performance by young people which highlighted movingly the human costs of the violence and the desire for those most hurt to move forward;⁶ the second, facilitated by Relatives for Justice, to view the splendid 'Remembering Quilt' and to meet victims and survivors;⁷ and the third to the Shankhill Stress and Trauma Group.⁸ We also visited the powerful and informative exhibition, 'The Irish at War' at the Ulster Museum.⁹ We wish to thank our hosts for the warmth and hospitality with which they received us.

8. Throughout, we have had the benefit of guidance from Professor Paul Arthur, Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, and Professor Mari Fitzduff, our distinguished Specialist Advisors. We wish to thank warmly all those who have facilitated our work, in particular the victims and survivors who generously and bravely shared with us their views of Northern Ireland's past and future, and whose words will remain with us. We owe a particular debt to those who helped us to contact a number of individual victims and whose testimony was of particular value.

Interim report

9. The prospect of a general election has meant that we have had to cut short this first phase of our work on the inquiry. We are acutely aware that the victims and survivors we have heard from so far represent a proportion only of those who wished to give evidence to us. Nevertheless, within these constraints, we sought to hear from a broad range of witnesses. **We recommend that our successor committee in the new Parliament considers how it may continue the work we have begun.**

10. We did not start our work with the intention of arriving at a narrow and prescriptive set of recommendations. As we have been able to complete only a part of the inquiry's first phase through circumstances beyond our control, we are not in a position to reach any complete conclusion. It is our firm view, however, that the evidence we have gathered on the fundamental objectives of our inquiry, the views of victims and survivors on the future of Northern Ireland, and their role in that process, deserves to reach a wide audience, and it is with that main purpose that we are therefore publishing this short, interim report.

⁶ 22 February 2005

⁷ 28 February 2005

⁸ 28 February 2005

⁹ 21 February 2005

11. Our evidence, incomplete though it is, demonstrates, primarily, the enormous amount of courageous healing work being undertaken throughout Northern Ireland by a wide variety of individuals and organisations frequently at considerable cost to themselves and with great difficulty. This work, unlike the political developments which frequently dominate both the media headlines, and the world's perception of Northern Ireland, rarely receives the recognition it deserves, but is the foundation of the day to day development of peace and normalisation in Northern Ireland. Our evidence also demonstrates the extraordinarily wide range of intractable issues which those striving to confront the past with the future firmly in mind must grapple if progress in inter-community healing is to be maintained.

12. There are no easy solutions to the problems which remain. It is our view, however, that the people of Northern Ireland must continue to seek from their political leaders the conditions in which peace can flourish, and that while this pressure exists there is every reason to be optimistic about the future. We urge the government, and all members of civil society in Northern Ireland, to ensure that no opportunity to heal the grievous wounds inflicted by over thirty years of conflict is lost, and to strive for a future that is vibrant and optimistic and, above all, peaceful and tolerant.

2 Observations on evidence received

13. The issues with which any process of ‘reconciliation’ is likely to require to deal – treatment of victims, truth telling, the merits and demerits of formal commission processes, memorials in archival or physical form, clarity as between truth recovery and judicial processes, and more – are so numerous and complex as to rule out any comprehensive and definitive conclusions in the absence of the opportunity to complete our inquiry. There are, however, a small number of observations arising from the evidence we received which we feel it may be generally helpful to make.

Political process

14. **A positive political context is required in order to bolster the confidence of local communities and individuals in seeking ways of reaching out to each other.** While some witnesses were sceptical about the Peace process,¹⁰ we were struck forcibly by the sense of insecurity expressed about the recent faltering of that process and the detrimental effect this has had on the day-to-day life of many people.¹¹

15. **The importance of the overall political context to every aspect of normalisation in Northern Ireland places a great responsibility upon the shoulders of the political parties, and in particular the leaders of those parties, and of the governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, to reflect fully the desire of ordinary people in Northern Ireland for permanent peace and a normal political process. We are not convinced that the parties are devoting anything approaching sufficient effort to this vital task. To our disappointment, most did not contribute any written submission to this inquiry, and we think this was reprehensible. We cannot stress with sufficient force the importance of the contribution of the political leaders in Northern Ireland to the creation of the overall framework of confidence necessary for communal and individual healing.**

Victims and survivors –ambassadors of the past to the future

16. There is no broad and solid consensus in Northern Ireland about the definition of a ‘victim’. While many urge that an ‘inclusive’ approach is adopted,¹² we heard that some distinguish between “innocent victims”, and those killed or injured carrying weapons.¹³ One victims’ group began by confining its services to “innocent victims of sectarian murder”, only to open them to “anyone regardless of their circumstances” in the light of experience.¹⁴ The government’s definition, which we think is reasonable and which is used

¹⁰ Q 493

¹¹ Qq 470, 475

¹² Qq 25, 158

¹³ Qq115-118, 256, 396

¹⁴ Q 256

throughout this report, is “The surviving physically and psychologically injured of violent, conflict related incidents and those close relatives or partners who mourn their dead.”¹⁵

17. Whatever definition of ‘victim’ is used, however, it is abundantly clear that because violence in Northern Ireland has been so prolonged, and society there so permeated by the ‘Troubles’, the numbers who consider themselves to have been affected adversely is very high. This is not to claim ‘victim status’ for everyone in Northern Ireland, but to recognise that the quality of life there for all people has been diminished substantially for over three decades by the appalling and sustained violence which has left almost 4,000 dead and over 40,000 injured.¹⁶

18. It is impossible for any written report to do full justice to the hurt and suffering of all whose lives have been touched so tragically over the years. It was therefore all the more important to record in the evidence that we are publishing the stories of those who have sought to build their lives anew, not by forgetting their hurt, but by using their experiences with often astonishing bravery, magnanimity, and imagination to seek a positive future for themselves, their loved ones, and for society generally.¹⁷

19. In the course of this inquiry we encountered frequently the phrase ‘victim centred’, particularly in relation to the services provided to assist victims and survivors. This is an approach which we support fully. However, we see the phrase as having a wider application than to the provision of services for those physically and psychologically hurt in the ‘Troubles’, vital though that work is. If Northern Ireland is to realise fully the opportunity of the present cessation of major conflict operations, victims and survivors must have a crucial part to play in that process.

20. Indeed, in our view, the process of social normalisation in Northern Ireland cannot proceed without the full participation of the victims. The way in which that influence is exercised is of course a matter for each victim and survivor in their own lives and in society generally. Nothing could be more disastrous for the future of Northern Ireland, therefore, than the “ghettoising” of victims. It would also be absurd where virtually all the people of Northern Ireland, in very different and individual ways, have been affected adversely by the violence of the conflict. **We believe firmly that without the active participation of those who consider themselves to be the victims of the ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland, the processes of inter and intra community healing cannot succeed.**

21. The role of ‘victims and survivors’, and their individual experience of ‘victim – hood’, properly extends throughout society and into every aspect of life in Northern Ireland informing and transforming life there at all levels. This is a process which we heard is going on at present without fanfare or formality and is one which must continue. The leaders of civil society, the political parties, the churches, and the governments must respect that process, and encourage each and every one whose life has been affected adversely by violence to use his and her experience to the fullest in ensuring that Northern Ireland will never again have to endure the terrible suffering of

¹⁵ *Services for Victims and Survivors*, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, 1 March 2005, p 6

¹⁶ Q 848

¹⁷ Ev 214, Ev 100, Ev 100, Q 768

the past generations. This experience will surely provide the most compelling example to the rest of society.

Approaches to dealing with the past

22. To many people, ‘truth and reconciliation’ and ‘dealing with the past’ are synonymous with the well-known Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. This was a single, large-scale, country-wide process of finite timescale which included public ‘story-telling’, and the possibility of amnesty for some offenders.¹⁸ However, this is by no means the only model for a formal ‘truth recovery’ process, and Priscilla Hayner’s work sets out the variety of ‘truth and reconciliation commissions’ which have been set up worldwide.¹⁹

23. When announcing his exploration for a way of “dealing” with Northern Ireland’s past in May 2004, the Secretary of State indicated that there were no “ready-made solutions”.²⁰ The wisdom of this caveat has been reinforced by the evidence we have received. While in the short time available to us we have been unable to explore in detail the approaches of other countries to such healing processes, from the evidence we have received we are strongly of the opinion that, if a single Northern Ireland-wide process of healing is proved to be required, then the commitment of Northern Ireland people as a whole will be needed for it to operate successfully. While we received evidence that significant sections of the population were in favour of some form of a truth recovery process, we also received evidence that other parts were not, and were unlikely to co-operate with any process set in train now.²¹

24. We heard about many other important areas of divergence of view which are likely to make the establishment now of a Northern Ireland-wide official process of ‘truth recovery’ and ‘reconciliation’ virtually impossible. For example, some found it difficult to conceive of such a process until the violence of the past was ended irrevocably.²² **It is unfortunately abundantly clear that paramilitary violence and intimidation have not ceased, and that certain communities, for example, those in ‘border’ areas remain under very considerable pressure.**²³ **The authorities and the Police Service of Northern Ireland must consider the level of support currently afforded to all vulnerable communities and ensure that it is sufficient.**

25. ‘Reconciliation’ was not accepted as a desirable common goal by all, although the striking definition offered by Colin Parry of “a process of narrowing gaps, of bringing people together who might otherwise not want to be together as a mechanism for re-establishing relationships, breaking down distrust, warming up the atmosphere instead of

¹⁸ http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/trc_frameset.htm

¹⁹ DP 64. Hayner P.B. (2002) *Unspeakable Truths, Facing the Challenge of Truth Commissions*, London, and New York, Routledge, pp1-9. She discusses 21 commissions, but indicates that there may be more, op cit. p 32

²⁰ HC Deb, 27 May 2004, col 91WS

²¹ Q 24

²² Q 761

²³ Q 477

it being bitterly cold” is surely attractive.²⁴ Also, there is no consensus about amnesty for perpetrators.²⁵

26. The work of the new unit within the Police Service of Northern Ireland which was announced by the Secretary of State on 8 March 2005 to look into the many unresolved deaths in Northern Ireland from 1969 to 1998 has yet to bear fruit.²⁶ One witness, whose son had been murdered relatively recently, was unaware of any police action on her case, even though she believed that the killers were known.²⁷ **The police and those who serve the judicial process in Northern Ireland as a whole must work very hard indeed to re-establish the trust of ordinary people, and this is not likely to be an easy task.** We have had occasion recently to comment adversely on the poor record of the police in keeping victims’ families in touch with investigations.²⁸ **We expect to see very substantial improvements in the way the police communicate with victims and the families of victims of crime. This would increase the sense of trust in the police felt by the community.** How the work of the police, and that of the judicial process generally, would co-ordinate with any official and national truth-recovery process is unclear.

27. The Secretary of State told us that he drew the lesson from his visit in 2004 to South Africa that a truth recovery process could “flourish”, and people would only be “prepared to tell their stories”, where there was “progress in the political sense”.²⁹ Since that visit his extensive private discussions have reinforced this view:

“If we were to have something along the lines of, but not the same because it has to be tailored to Northern Ireland, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission we would have to have two things occurring: one is political progress and, secondly, consensus on it.”³⁰

However, the Secretary of State “was not convinced that we could get either” at present.³¹ Angela Smith, Minister with responsibility for victims, reported that many victims and survivors had told her that while a truth recovery process was attractive “many of them felt the time was not right for them personally”.³²

28. While we agree that the ‘few’ should not be able to hold up progress for the ‘many’ in seeking a truth recovery process, where large sections of the population withhold co-operation from such a process the outcome is likely to be circumscribed and its value reduced correspondingly. In addition, many uncertainties remain to be resolved over the way in which such a process would work alongside the normal judicial process.

²⁴ Q 755

²⁵ Qq 248, 464, 543, 553-554, 726

²⁶ Northern Ireland Office, News Release, 8 March 2005

²⁷ Q 508

²⁸ Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2004-05, *The Functions of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland*, HC 344, para 48

²⁹ Q 837

³⁰ Q 838

³¹ Q 838

³² Q 845

Finally, it is clear that many in Northern Ireland remain unconvinced that the terrorist campaign of violence is truly at an end.

29. We accept the view of those who have told us of the importance of an ‘official’ version of history and truth which might be a key feature of any truth recovery commission.³³ But the Northern Ireland communities must be fully ready and able to accept and share that official version of historical truth, and it is our view, based on the evidence we have been given, that this stage has yet to be reached. In these circumstances, and with considerable regret, it seems to us appropriate to wait until the probability of success for any Northern Ireland-wide truth process is realistically high, rather than press ahead with the likelihood of failure, or partial success at best.

30. We expect the government to keep the possibility of a truth recovery process under constant review, and that it should be alert to, encourage and publicise, imaginative and proven local ways of facilitating truth telling which might have a wider application. We were encouraged that the Secretary of State was in favour of such a process when the time was right, and that he did not rule out an independent element in setting it up in order to provide confidence to all parts of the community.³⁴ He is to be commended for this open minded approach.

31. In explaining the reasons for his decision to place on hold progress towards a full consultation about a truth recovery process for Northern Ireland, the Secretary of State drew on the comparison between South Africa, where fundamental political consensus provided a solid basis for a truth and reconciliation process, and Northern Ireland where political “accommodation” prevails at best between those who wish to continue to be a part of the United Kingdom and those who wish Northern Ireland to be unified with the Republic of Ireland.³⁵

32. This raises the question of whether, if full political consensus similar to that enjoyed by South Africa is an essential prerequisite for a truth recovery process, such a process, if initiated, will *ever* be able to contribute positively towards healing the wounds of the conflict in Northern Ireland. **The government is right to be wary of initiating truth processes which do not appear to enjoy firm, cross-community support. At the same time, we hope that in these matters the government will balance caution with imagination and leadership. Northern Ireland has made astonishing progress in the past ten years, and while care must be taken not to place too great a strain on what is a fragile peace, no sensible opportunity must be lost to carry the process of healing forward.**

Activities

33. **The decision of the government to halt consultation on a formal process of truth recovery for the time being does not mean, however, that vigorous parallel action now to promote the improvement of inter-community relations, to assist victims and survivors, and to encourage their contribution to society at all levels and in all possible**

³³ Q 807

³⁴ Q 843

³⁵ Q 842

ways, is not necessary. An official truth recovery process is only one component of ‘dealing’ with the past.³⁶ The justification for such activities has never been stronger, and the evidence we have published with this interim report is testament to the broad range of high quality work which is being undertaken currently by a large number of organisations and individuals.

34. The activities of non-governmental organisations which are responsible for providing a broad range of support to victims, encouragement in remaking their lives after trauma, and assisting them to live again in wider society are impressive: for example, Combat Stress,³⁷ The Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Trust,³⁸ The Haven Project,³⁹ Families Acting for Innocent Relatives (FAIR),⁴⁰ Families Achieving Change Together (FACT),⁴¹ Firinne,⁴² WAVE Trauma Centre,⁴³ Omagh Support and Self Help Group (Omagh Victims Group),⁴⁴ Families of the Disappeared,⁴⁵ Training for Women Network,⁴⁶ Disabled Police Officers Association (Northern Ireland).⁴⁷ The work of the trauma advisory panels is also important and must not be overlooked.⁴⁸

35. These organisations, and many other like them, undertake a wide range of important work. For example, WAVE, which was set up in 1991, and which provides cross community support services to people who are bereaved, traumatised or injured as a result of the ‘Troubles’,⁴⁹ undertakes an average of 4,000 client visits and receives over 600 new referrals annually.⁵⁰ It provides accredited training programmes, and specialist services and group support, in a number of centres throughout Northern Ireland.⁵¹ This is one example only of such groups. There are many others in the evidence we have collected.

Strategies

36. We have been impressed also by the positive contribution of other organisations and individuals, not all necessarily oriented exclusively to the particular needs of victims and survivors of the Northern Ireland ‘Troubles’, whose contributions to the literature and practice are extremely important in providing a stimulating and challenging context for

³⁶ Ev 202

³⁷ Ev 131

³⁸ Ev 12

³⁹ Ev 228

⁴⁰ Ev 173

⁴¹ Ev 62

⁴² Ev 47

⁴³ Ev 68

⁴⁴ Ev 172

⁴⁵ Ev 68, Ev 343

⁴⁶ Ev 194

⁴⁷ Ev 123

⁴⁸ Ev 315, Ev 330

⁴⁹ Q 255

⁵⁰ Q 279

⁵¹ Qq 281, 282, 283

activities in this area: for example, Healing Through Remembering,⁵² the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission,⁵³ Falls Community Council,⁵⁴ The Pat Finucane Centre,⁵⁵ Community Relations Council,⁵⁶ One Small Step Campaign,⁵⁷ Mr Brandon Hamber,⁵⁸ Professor Tom Hadden,⁵⁹ Mr Oscar Daly,⁶⁰ and Ms Priscilla Hayner.⁶¹

37. As an example, the ‘Healing Through Remembering’ initiative has identified a wide range of “forms of remembering”: “storytelling and oral history; memorials; museums, exhibitions and art; public and collective commemorations; truth recovery processes; other forms of legal processes; community and intercommunity interactions; support for individuals and victims; research and social policy development; centre for remembrance; a financial response; education and training; supporting current remembering processes; self-examination of institutions and apologies.”⁶² This list constitutes a very bracing renewal agenda for any society, and has gained acceptance as “probably the most thorough public and civil society investigation to date of strategies for dealing with the past in Northern Ireland.”⁶³ The Secretary of State, too, emphasized that one particular lesson he had taken away from those who had been involved closely in the truth and reconciliation experience in South Africa was the great importance of story-telling in a wide variety of forms.⁶⁴

People

38. Amongst the most striking and illuminating evidence we heard was from individuals who were prepared to assist our inquiry by taking the time to share with us their views on the subject of inquiry in the light of their searingly painful personal experiences, for example, Mr Colin Parry,⁶⁵ Mrs Barbara Deane,⁶⁶ Mrs Celia Gourley,⁶⁷ Mrs Rosalind Dillon-Lee.⁶⁸ We are enormously grateful to all of them, and others, for giving us the opportunity to learn from what they have experienced, and to hear their views of how the future should be informed by the past. We urge anyone who reads this report to look carefully at the views which these individuals have expressed in their evidence to us.

⁵² Ev 197

⁵³ Ev 144

⁵⁴ Ev 325

⁵⁵ Ev 80

⁵⁶ Ev 33

⁵⁷ Ev 118

⁵⁸ Ev 202

⁵⁹ Ev 164

⁶⁰ Ev 285

⁶¹ Ev 331

⁶² Ev 198

⁶³ Ev 202

⁶⁴ Qq 838, 842

⁶⁵ Ev 214

⁶⁶ Ev 100

⁶⁷ Ev 100

⁶⁸ Ev 142

39. The activities of many organisations and individuals at community level throughout Northern Ireland amount, in effect, to a labour of rebuilding society to try and ensure that the problems of the past do not extend to the future in the lives of communities and individuals whom they serve. The lives of many thousands of individuals are affected by the work of these groups, and the evidence we received, and the visits we undertook, strengthened our view that these efforts are absolutely essential to the process of ‘dealing’ with Northern Ireland’s past; indeed, that at present these efforts constitute ‘dealing’ with the past in a very real sense, and should be recognised collectively as so doing. The details of the work being undertaken by these groups and individuals is set out in the evidence we have gathered which accompanies this interim report.

40. It is also necessary to be realistic about the length of time that ‘healing’ society in Northern Ireland is likely to take. It is clear to us that this is not a process which will take months or years, but rather decades. The government, and all those involved, need to ensure that their policies and structures of support for victims and survivors are tailored with this timescale in fully mind.

Funding

41. Official funding for victims groups comes from a variety of sources.⁶⁹ One of the problems faced by victims’ organisations, a variety of support bodies,⁷⁰ and individual victims, is adequate funding. We heard that several worthy groups, for example, WAVE were concerned about the continuity of funding.⁷¹

42. There also seems to be a troubling disparity between the compensation received by those at the start of the “Troubles”, often astonishingly small, and those injured later.⁷² We asked the Minister about this and she indicated that while cases of need had been addressed by the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund, no money from central funds had been used for the purpose of enhancing the early payments.⁷³

43. In reply to a Written Parliamentary Question the government stated that, in the period 1998 to 2004, it provided almost £28 million to victims’ groups.⁷⁴ In stark contrast, the total cost of the ‘Bloody Sunday’ inquiry which began hearing oral evidence in 1999 will have cost £155 million by its anticipated close in 2005 according to the Northern Ireland Office’s

⁶⁹ The main sources of funding for victims and victims’ groups are listed in the government’s consultation document of 1 March 2005, *Services for Victims and Survivors* and include: the EU PEACE II Victims measure under the European Programme for Peace and Reconciliation - £6.1 administered by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland; the Victims and Survivors Core Funding Scheme “which is essentially designed to allow the work of victims’ groups to be sustained” and the Victims’ Survivors Groups’ Development Grant Scheme “which provides grants of up to £10K to allow groups to carry out specific pieces of work” – both administered by the Community Relations Council which also runs the Community relations and Cultural Diversity Scheme; and the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund, an independent charity, “for individual victims and survivors” and which is “substantially funded by the UK and Irish Governments”, pp 24,25; see also, Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, *Reshape, Rebuild, Achieve: delivering practical help and services to victims of the conflict in Northern Ireland*, April 2002, pp 19 – 22. Full details of all funding sources for victims and survivors may be found at the website <http://www.victimsnri.gov.uk/funding.htm>

⁷⁰ For example, Training For Women, Ev 194. A good example of the effect which funding difficulties have on such organisations is contained in the supplementary submission of Training For Women, Ev 194

⁷¹ Q 316

⁷² Q 448

⁷³ Q 869

⁷⁴ HC Deb, 18 January 2005, cols 891W - 894W

Departmental Report 2004.⁷⁵ The Minister told us that annual funding for victims in 2004-05 from the UK government directly was “just under £4 million”; and “around £5 million” if European PEACE II funding is added.⁷⁶ **The sums spent on victims in Northern Ireland are not insignificant, but pale by comparison with those absorbed by the ‘Bloody Sunday’ inquiry alone.**

44. **It is vital that the work of groups supporting victims and survivors is supported and developed financially as a priority by the government. High profile inquiries such as that into the ‘Bloody Sunday’ deaths, and those of others,⁷⁷ may have their place. But the constant work of supporting victims and victims groups is of incomparable value in providing a tangible way for those most damaged by the past to make a positive contribution on a daily basis to Northern Ireland’s future.**

45. **We note that the government’s consultation paper of 1 March contains some proposals to co-ordinate present funding mechanisms for victims and victims groups more effectively. This is welcome, but seems to us a disproportionately modest response to a vital area. We think a more radical approach is needed, carrying with it the promise of a ‘step change’ in the level of funding available to victims and survivors. The government must consider, as a matter of urgency, whether the present level of victims’ funding truly matches the importance of the work that the victims and victims’ groups undertake. It is our present view, based on the evidence we have had, that these are by no means in proper balance, and that more funding is required.**

46. **However, what is holding many groups back is not only lack of money, but the uncertainty of funding in the medium to long term. We wish to stress that no group which is undertaking such valuable work should be in doubt over the continuity of funding. The Minister’s view is that the three year plan for victims’ groups set out in the consultation document will inform future funding decisions, and that this will be a job for the proposed Victims’ and Survivors’ Commissioner.⁷⁸ However, we are very concerned that there is no precise timescale attached to achieving this planning conclusion, and that even if the government’s plans to appoint a Commissioner proceed, that it will be 2006 at least before the present unsatisfactory financial arrangements for victims’ groups begin to be tackled. This appears to us a too tardy response. It is the government’s responsibility to ensure that uncertainties over the funding for victims’ groups are reduced to the minimum as quickly as possible, and it should begin immediately to prepare for implementation of the corporate and financial planning model set out in the consultation document which a Commissioner, if appointed later this year or in 2006, can pick up in due course.**

47. **Some of the victims in the late 1960s and 1970s when the ‘Troubles’ were at their height received very small amounts of compensation by comparison with later payments. The government must ensure, so far as is possible, that the level of compensation received by victims of violence throughout the ‘Troubles’ is**

⁷⁵ This sum represented the Department’s “best estimate”, Northern Ireland Office, *Departmental Report 2004*, Cm 6229, April 2004, p 22

⁷⁶ Qq 866, 867

⁷⁷ Ev 236

⁷⁸ Q 869

demonstrably fair and, in particular, that a way is found of enhancing the relatively poor compensation offered to those in the late 1960s and 1970s. We expect the government to consider this point as a matter of priority.

'Disappeared'

48. We were privileged to hear from relatives of some of those who have 'disappeared' as a result of the violence over the years. Their plight is particularly poignant: "Abducted, murdered and secretly buried, their families have struggled with the pain and trauma of bereavement in addition to the agony of not knowing where their loved ones are buried and why and how they were taken."⁷⁹ There are seventeen "known cases of individuals who are suspected of having been murdered and secretly buried....nine were named by the IRA in the Spring of 1999 as having been murdered by members of their organisations and their bodies hidden across a number of areas in the South. The INLA claimed one death that of Seamus Ruddy buried in a forest near Rouen in France. The remaining are unclaimed...."⁸⁰ Twelve of the seventeen remain undiscovered.⁸¹

49. We were deeply disturbed to hear that the representatives who spoke to us were far from satisfied with the support they had received from the UK and Republic of Ireland governments as well as, in one case, the French government.⁸² There appeared to be a reprehensible lack of international governmental co-ordination in striving to bring closure to these cases, and perhaps most disturbing, poor communications with some, at least, of the families.⁸³ While we appreciate that this is an issue of particular sensitivity and difficulty, it applies to a relatively small group of families, and we find it extraordinary that the governments appear to have been so unsuccessful in ensuring the recovery of the remains of the families' loved ones.

50. **That a significant number of the 'disappeared' remain unaccounted for, and their bodies undiscovered; that the families of the 'disappeared' feel obliged to take the opportunity afforded by this inquiry to bring their concerns and frustrations to us, in some cases over three decades since the disappearances took place; that the governments have, to date, failed in their efforts to enable these families to achieve closure for their hurt and, as a result, the families feel, in their own memorable words that " We might as well disappear when it comes to it because we have to keep coming forward and saying we are still here",⁸⁴ is very disappointing. We look to the governments for a renewed effort, and to those who have relevant information to come forward without delay.**

51. **The lives of these families have been blighted by the uncertainty about what exactly has happened to their loved ones. Until those who have information come forward to enable the remains outstanding to be discovered, it will in our view be impossible for**

⁷⁹ Ev 343

⁸⁰ *Ibid*

⁸¹ Ev 343

⁸² Q 294

⁸³ Qq 312, 335

⁸⁴ Q 335

Northern Ireland to move forward fully. The governments concerned need to give this issue a much higher priority, and must seek success much harder and more consistently than before. Named Ministers and officials should publicly take individual responsibility for the cases, and there should be regular, fixed meetings to update the families until a satisfactory outcome is achieved. We expect the UK government to press the governments of the Republic of Ireland and France to agree a similar approach, and for there to be a renewed determination to bring all these cases to a satisfactory conclusion.

'Acknowledgement' and 'apology'

52. Just as the conflict in Northern Ireland has diminished the quality of life in all sorts of ways for a majority of people for over 30 years, and has in a real sense 'victimized' everyone, so we heard that there are many who need to take responsibility for the situation which resulted directly and indirectly in the deaths of thousands and widespread physical and mental trauma, including some of those acting in the name of the United Kingdom government.⁸⁵

53. It is true that many in Northern Ireland "refuse to accept that they did anything wrong or that their action (or inaction) was complicit in perpetuating the conflict",⁸⁶ but we were struck forcibly by how often those who wrote or spoke to us sought relief from the acknowledgement by others of a shared responsibility for the tragedy in Northern Ireland of the past decades.

54. The power of such acts was also expressed in the words of one witness who sought to stress that the process of 'truth recovery' "could usefully begin with an acknowledgement on the part of all the key players of their part in the conflict. She considered that "Such acknowledgement can 'loosen up' the resistance to reconciliation" and instanced the Prime Minister's recent apology as "a useful contribution to this process."⁸⁷

55. While the advantages of such actions may be manifest, extreme difficulties emerge when the demand for 'acknowledgement' appears to stray over into 'apology', and some of these difficulties were expressed vividly and lucidly by the representative of a Loyalist organisation, the Ex-prisoners interpretative centre (EPIC):

"I would have preferred to have lived my life and caused no harm to anyone, but given the circumstances that I was brought up in and the political conflict that raged at that time, I certainly was not sorry about what I was engaged in at that time. Certainly, with hindsight there could have been better ways to do things and that is how I would look to give some reparation to the community, use my influence and my experience to impress upon young people that violence is perhaps not the best

⁸⁵ For example, Ev 43, Ev 46, Ev 47, Ev 280, Ev 291. The Secretary of State's statement to Parliament on 1 March 2005 acknowledges that "for some, the Government's role in past events is itself seen as an issue; and it is hard for some sections of the community to see us as a genuinely neutral party. ", HC Deb, 1 March 2005, Cols 81 -84 WS

⁸⁶ Ev 204

⁸⁷ Ev 218. Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, made an apology on 9 February 2005 to the families of those mistakenly convicted of the Guilford and Woolwich terrorist bombings in 1974. The apology was recorded for television transmission from No 10 Downing Street and may be viewed on line at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/4249175.stm

way to go about resolving conflict. If I can do that then I will have performed some service, but to express remorse for something that happened 20 or 30 years ago, at that time I believed in what I was doing was right.”⁸⁸

56. While a measure of understanding of the circumstances in which the heinous acts of the past were committed may be necessary, such understanding alone is not sufficient to provide a means of future ‘reconciliation’. This is particularly so when the anger of those who have been the unwitting victims of acts of extreme violence remains raw years after an outrage, and they are uncertain about how any process of ‘reconciliation’ or ‘dealing with the past’ can start in their own lives.⁸⁹ Arriving at a balance between acknowledgment of, and apology for, past violence is a profoundly difficult issue for all those concerned.

57. What is not at issue is the strength of the desire for apologies on the part of the victims of terrorism. We heard that ‘apology’ can take many forms, and serve many purposes. For example, Mrs Janet Hunter told us that “The best apology they could give me is never again to pick up a gun, bullet or harm another human being in this Province.”⁹⁰ We heard a similar point, “If the peace process were to go forward I would be quite happy if the 17 B-men never said they were sorry as long as nobody’s children or grandchildren had to go through what we went through.”⁹¹

58. Mrs Gourley said “I think that there do need to be apologies right from the top down and from all the political parties.”⁹² Mrs Maureen Mitchell said “They [terrorists] need to admit it. I am not saying that they have to go down on their knees; that is not going to make any difference to people, but they have got to acknowledge that they did wrong.”⁹³ Mrs Deane told us movingly that “The point of having an apology right across the board is to begin to respect each other and for me to say that you are different but that does not mean that I should wipe you off the face of the earth. That is a reason I would ask for an apology, for the community. I do not need one for myself because I have forgiven and that is me personally.”⁹⁴ These eloquent words spoken by witnesses who have been touched most tragically by the brutality of the past speak for themselves.

59. When we raised the question of apologies with the Secretary of State he said that “governments have to say sorry and paramilitary organisations have to say sorry”. He also pointed to uncertainty about whether “such general apologies have the impact that people think they might have upon the reconciliation process”, and suggested that a “more bottom-up process where you actually deal with individual human beings and their problems is the most effective way because people differ so much.”⁹⁵ He considered that one task for the postponed government consultation on ways of dealing with Northern

⁸⁸ Qq 48-52

⁸⁹ Qq 438,439

⁹⁰ Q 243

⁹¹ Q 550

⁹² Q 461

⁹³ Q 461

⁹⁴ Q 463

⁹⁵ Q 848

Ireland's past was to assess the importance of general apologies by the government and other organisations.

60. The difficulties of assuming personal responsibility for the problems that have scarred Northern Ireland are obvious. Equally obvious, from what our witnesses have told us, is the profound power of wholehearted 'acknowledgment' and 'apology' in re-establishing the mutual respect between the people and communities of Northern Ireland, and beginning to heal the personal agony of individuals, that is the foundation for a truly shared future. The extent of the brutalisation and agony suffered by Northern Ireland over the past decades is so great that there is surely room for all those who have been involved to bear a measure of public witness to their culpability.

61. Not everyone is ready to accept apologies from perpetrators of crimes arising from the conflict, and it is probable that some people, for perfectly understandable reasons, will never be able to do so. It is also important that apologies are couched in ways which do not diminish the deaths, injuries and sacrifices made by the people of Northern Ireland. Apologies by themselves are not likely to transform mutual incomprehension and mistrust. We are convinced, however, that acts of contrition are a key element in the overall construction of a shared future. As always, we look to the government to demonstrate active leadership in seeking to build a positive future for Northern Ireland, and in this spirit we expect it to continue to reflect carefully on how 'acknowledgement' and 'apology' can play a part in this central process.

3 Government's announcement - 1 March 2005

Consultation on dealing with the past – the government's decision

62. As our interim work on this inquiry was drawing to a close, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland made an announcement about proposals for a Victims' and Survivors' Commissioner, in which he also expressed views about the process begun last year to "find a way to deal with Northern Ireland's past" arising from his private discussions, his visit to South Africa, and the parallel work of Angela Smith MP, the Minister responsible for victims, in consulting victims and survivors of the 'Troubles' on services to meet their needs.⁹⁶

63. The Secretary of State had envisaged that the first stage of the process announced in May 2004, his own "private discussions", would at some stage be succeeded by a public consultation, but he had concluded that the time was inopportune for "such a broadly based consultation process", and thought that "we need to be realistic about what can be achieved in advance of a political settlement".⁹⁷

64. As we pointed out earlier, it is our view that the time now is not right for any large - scale 'truth and reconciliation' type of process, if indeed any such process will ever command support in Northern Ireland and will contribute positively to healing the wounds of the past 35 years. We also accept that the Secretary of State is right that the success of any such process at national level is linked to a favourable general political context.

65. It is in our view absolutely vital that in sending out the message that the time is not right to launch a broadly based consultation process about Northern Ireland's past, there is no impression given that the government has somehow stopped listening to the views of people there about how they wish the past to be dealt with. We are sure that this is not what is intended, and the Secretary of State makes clear that the proposal to establish a Victims' and Survivors' Commissioner does not mark the end of the process of dealing with the past, or the government's contribution to it. We hope that the government will take every opportunity both to facilitate the contributions of those who wish to express their views about Northern Ireland's future, and to affirm that all options to further the processes of communal healing and peaceful co-existence remain open.

Consultation – victims and survivors

66. In addition to his proposal to establish a Victims' and Survivors' Commissioner, the Secretary of State published on 1 March a consultation document "on the future of victims' and survivors' services" which includes details of the job envisaged for the Commissioner.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ HC Deb, 1 March 2005, Cols 81 WS – 84 WS

⁹⁷ *Ibid*

⁹⁸ News Release, 1 March 2005

Views on the government's consultation about victims' and survivors' services are invited by 30 June 2005 and we urge all interested parties to read the document and write to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. We expect the government to publish the result of the consultation and take the results fully into account in making final decisions.

67. We commented earlier on the funding proposals in this document,⁹⁹ and have the following comments on other aspects of what is proposed:

- In 2002 the government decided against a Victims' and Survivors' Commissioner "Given that no clear view emerged during the consultation as to whether a Commissioner should be appointed".¹⁰⁰ In 2003-04, the Minister with responsibility for victims conducted another consultation in which "there was a divergence of views on the need for a Victims Commissioner".¹⁰¹ **In appointing a Commissioner, and finalising a remit for the post, the government will need to keep clearly in mind that there appears to be no demonstrable consensus for such an appointment. While the Secretary of State told us he believed that a majority of victims groups supported the initiative,¹⁰² there is clearly a degree of scepticism about whether the post is required and will 'add value'. To dispel some of this scepticism at least, it will be important that the cost of the appointment is modest,¹⁰³ the remit is a powerful one which enables the Commissioner to 'add value' quickly and demonstrably to the support for victims, that he is able to hold the government and other bodies strictly and publicly accountable, and that the positive impact of the post is measurable and kept under close review. The post should preferably have a statutory foundation.**
- At present there is a Northern Ireland Office Minister with responsibility for victims. We understand that the appointment of a Commissioner will not affect that arrangement, and this is reassuring.¹⁰⁴ It is most important that the appointment should not be seen to imply any reduction in the status of victims and survivors. The responsibilities of the Commissioner and the Minister need to be carefully and clearly distinguished in order that there is no confusion over their mutual responsibilities.
- We understand that the normal public appointments process will apply to this appointment.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the appointment of the Commissioner must be made with the active involvement of victims and survivors, and relevant groups. Any sense of the government imposing an appointment must be avoided if the aim of making the post-holder a powerful and effective voice for victims is to be

⁹⁹ Paras 41 – 47 above

¹⁰⁰ *Rebuild, Reshape, Achieve*, p 16

¹⁰¹ *Services For Victims and Survivors*, Annex A, p 5. Northern Ireland Office officials were unable to quantify the proportion of support for a Commissioner amongst consultees, Q 859

¹⁰² Q 864

¹⁰³ The Secretary of State had no firm figure, but thought that the costs might be in the region of £0.5 – 1 million, Q 863

¹⁰⁴ Q 860

¹⁰⁵ Q 862

achieved.¹⁰⁶ We note that the way in which the proposal has emerged has received adverse comment from one prominent group already.¹⁰⁷

- **There must be high, but not unreasonably high, expectations for any Commissioner if disappointment is to be avoided. The Minister indicated that the government was “putting a lot of faith” in the post-holder to address a number of difficult issues such as acknowledgement, truth, and justice.¹⁰⁸ To make critical progress on all of these may be asking too much of any single official, however competent. We certainly expect the person appointed to be of the very highest quality, and for the incumbent to make a discernable contribution to the entire range of victims’ issues. We have no doubt that our successor committee will wish to meet the person appointed quickly. Equally, we expect the government to continue to bear its full share of the responsibility for addressing the most intractable problems of communal consensus building.**
- We do not dissent from many of the other measures proposed in this document, for example, the needs for “an overarching strategic approach” towards victims and survivors;¹⁰⁹ an enhanced role for trauma advisory panels;¹¹⁰ strengthening the “Interdepartmental Working Group”;¹¹¹ the development of a “one stop shop” approach drawing together, for the convenience of victims and survivors, all available expertise, and the naming of Victims and Survivors Advisors in each HSS Board area.¹¹² **We are surprised, however, that some of the initiatives (many of which appear administratively routine) proposed by the government in its consultation document of 1 March have not been undertaken already in response to the expressed needs of victims. We note that the range of issues identified by the Minister in her consultation in 2003-04 are reflected in those presented in a report on victims in 1998 which suggests to us that progress in addressing these concerns has been slow and patchy, at best.¹¹³ We expect to see the measures which have been proposed, and which receive support in the consultation, pressed forward with the utmost vigour.**

68. Overall, we wonder whether something of an opportunity has not been lost to make a ‘step change’ both in the support given to victims and to the wider question of an enhanced role for victims in building the future of Northern Ireland. For example, no consideration appears to have been given to the creation of a ‘victims’ department’ within the Northern Ireland administration which might have had the effect of invigorating and focussing the approach by government to victims and their role in Northern Ireland society as a whole, or any substantial enhancement of financial provision.

¹⁰⁶ Q 852. *Services For Victims and Survivors*, p 64

¹⁰⁷ Relatives for Justice, Press release, 8 March 2005

¹⁰⁸ Q 852

¹⁰⁹ *Services for Victims and Survivors*, p10

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, paras 26-34

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, paras 35-37

¹¹² *Services for Victims and Survivors*, pp 41-45

¹¹³ *Ibid* p 9; Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, *We Will Remember Them*, Report of the Northern Ireland Victims’ Commissioner, April 1998, Appendix 1

4 Conclusion - ways forward

69. There may come a time when a formal, national ‘truth recovery’ process will contribute positively to the normalisation of society in Northern Ireland but, on the basis of the evidence we have received to date, that time has not yet arrived: the peace is as yet too fragile, the scars of the conflict too fresh, the co-operation of parts of Northern Ireland’s population is not assured, the political conditions are not yet sufficiently settled, and the conflict in the estimation of many people is not yet finally over. Were such a process to be put in train now, it is our view that this might have the effect of exacerbating community tensions.

70. While we agree, therefore, with the Secretary of State’s decision, announced on 1 March, not to proceed at present with his broad consultation on the form of any such process, it will be absolutely essential for the government to ensure that the people of Northern Ireland understand fully that this decision does not imply that the government has ceased to listen to their views on Northern Ireland’s future. The government needs also to be constantly alert to, and be prepared actively to nurture, any emerging future consensus which indicates that a formal ‘truth recovery’ process would be timely and helpful. The Secretary of State has given his personal view on the matter, namely, the hope that such a process will be possible at some suitable time. We agree with that.¹¹⁴

71. Properly approached, we consider that the level and quality of support available to victims and survivors, and their status within society is an excellent measure of that society’s maturity and sensitivity. We have suggested in this short report that the government needs to examine whether it is giving sufficient priority, and being sufficiently imaginative, in approaching this vital task.

72. Victims represent more than a group which requires and is wholly worthy of broad support. Victims are a primary resource in the process of transformational healing which is at the core of building a better future for Northern Ireland, but their full potential will be unlocked only when their experiences are fully acknowledged and respected throughout Northern Ireland society. Nothing could be more detrimental to the progress of peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland than to marginalise victims. We look to the government to take a strong lead in ensuring that victims have the influence and esteem, and the part in the rebuilding of society at all levels in Northern Ireland, to which their experiences entitle them.

73. It is far from our intention to place any additional pressures upon those who have suffered most from the ‘Troubles’. It is our hope, rather, that the government will do everything possible to enable and empower those who have been touched uniquely by the conflict in order that they may contribute centrally to the wider process of building a normal society for Northern Ireland, should they so wish.

74. While much of the evidence we heard and read has been harrowing, our final impression is one of enormous optimism. There is evidently a keen hunger for peace

¹¹⁴ Q 838

and the re-creation of mutual respect between the communities, coupled to an ingenuity and imagination on the part of many in seeking a meaning for the future of life in Northern Ireland free from the terror, pain and seeming despair of the past. These admirable characteristics are exemplified magnificently in the lives and experiences of many of those whom we have been privileged to hear from over the past eight weeks. We commend this signal bravery to the government, churches, political parties, and other leaders of civil society as a spur to their own efforts to forge a society for Northern Ireland based firmly on peace and tolerance.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. The prospect of further immediate progress in the peace process has faded. While constraining what progress towards normalisation in Northern Ireland may reasonably be hoped for in the short term, the present difficulties make it all the more important that the often unsung, but absolutely vital local work of inter-community healing there, which we discuss in detail below, should receive appropriate recognition and encouragement. (Paragraph 3)
2. We recommend that our successor committee in the new Parliament considers how it may continue the work we have begun. (Paragraph 9)
3. Our evidence, incomplete though it is, demonstrates, primarily, the enormous amount of courageous healing work being undertaken throughout Northern Ireland by a wide variety of individuals and organisations frequently at considerable cost to themselves and with great difficulty. This work, unlike the political developments which frequently dominate both the media headlines, and the world's perception of Northern Ireland, rarely receives the recognition it deserves, but is the foundation of the day to day development of peace and normalisation in Northern Ireland. Our evidence also demonstrates the extraordinarily wide range of intractable issues which those striving to confront the past with the future firmly in mind must grapple if progress in inter-community healing is to be maintained. (Paragraph 11)
4. There are no easy solutions to the problems which remain. It is our view, however, that the people of Northern Ireland must continue to seek from their political leaders the conditions in which peace can flourish, and that while this pressure exists there is every reason to be optimistic about the future. We urge the government, and all members of civil society in Northern Ireland, to ensure that no opportunity to heal the grievous wounds inflicted by over thirty years of conflict is lost, and to strive for a future that is vibrant and optimistic and, above all, peaceful and tolerant. (Paragraph 12)
5. A positive political context is required in order to bolster the confidence of local communities and individuals in seeking ways of reaching out to each other. (Paragraph 14)
6. The importance of the overall political context to every aspect of normalisation in Northern Ireland places a great responsibility upon the shoulders of the political parties, and in particular the leaders of those parties, and of the governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, to reflect fully the desire of ordinary people in Northern Ireland for permanent peace and a normal political process. We are not convinced that the parties are devoting anything approaching sufficient effort to this vital task. To our disappointment, most did not contribute any written submission to this inquiry, and we think this was reprehensible. We cannot stress with sufficient force the importance of the contribution of the political leaders in Northern Ireland to the creation of the overall framework of confidence necessary for societal and individual healing. (Paragraph 15)

7. We believe firmly that without the active participation of those who consider themselves to be the victims of the ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland, the processes of inter and intra community healing cannot succeed. (Paragraph 20)
8. The role of ‘victims and survivors’, and their individual experience of ‘victim –hood’, properly extends throughout society and into every aspect of life in Northern Ireland informing and transforming life there at all levels. This is a process which we heard is going on at present without fanfare or formality and is one which must continue. The leaders of civil society, the political parties, the churches, and the governments must respect that process, and encourage each and every one whose life has been affected adversely by violence to use his and her experience to the fullest in ensuring that Northern Ireland will never again have to endure the terrible suffering of the past generations. This experience will surely provide the most compelling example to the rest of society. (Paragraph 21)
9. It is unfortunately abundantly clear that paramilitary violence and intimidation have not ceased, and that certain communities, for example, those in ‘border’ areas remain under very considerable pressure. The authorities and the Police Service of Northern Ireland must consider the level of support currently afforded to all vulnerable communities and ensure that it is sufficient. (Paragraph 24)
10. The police and those who serve the judicial process in Northern Ireland must work very hard indeed to re-establish the trust of ordinary people, and this is not likely to be an easy task. We expect to see very substantial improvements in the way the police communicate with victims and the families of victims of crime. This would increase the sense of trust in the police felt by the community. (Paragraph 26)
11. While we agree that the ‘few’ should not be able to hold up progress for the ‘many’ in seeking a truth recovery process, where large sections of the population withhold co-operation from such a process the outcome is likely to be circumscribed and its value reduced correspondingly. In addition, many uncertainties remain to be resolved over the way in which such a process would work alongside the normal judicial process. Finally, it is clear that many in Northern Ireland remain unconvinced that the campaign of violence is truly at an end. (Paragraph 28)
12. We accept the view of those who have told us of the importance of an ‘official’ version of history and truth which might be a key feature of any truth recovery commission. But the Northern Ireland communities must be fully ready and able to accept and share that official version of historical truth, and it is our view, based on the evidence we have been given, that this stage has yet to be reached. In these circumstances, and with considerable regret, it seems to us appropriate to wait until the probability of success for any Northern Ireland-wide truth process is realistically high, rather than press ahead with the likelihood of failure, or partial success at best. (Paragraph 29)
13. We expect the government to keep the possibility of a truth recovery process under constant review, and that it should be alert to, encourage and publicise, imaginative and proven local ways of facilitating truth telling which might have a wider application. We were encouraged that the Secretary of State was in favour of such a

process when the time was right, and that he did not rule out an independent element in setting it up in order to provide confidence to all parts of the community. He is to be commended for this open minded approach. (Paragraph 30)

14. The government is right to be wary of initiating truth processes which do not appear to enjoy firm, cross-community support. At the same time, we hope that in these matters the government will balance caution with imagination and leadership. Northern Ireland has made astonishing progress in the past ten years, and while care must be taken not to place too great a strain on what is a fragile peace, no sensible opportunity must be lost to carry the process of healing forward. (Paragraph 32)
15. The decision of the government to halt consultation on a formal process of truth recovery for the time being does not mean, however, that vigorous parallel action now to promote the improvement of inter-community relations, to assist victims and survivors, and to encourage their contribution to society at all levels and in all possible ways, is not necessary. An official truth recovery process is only one component of 'dealing' with the past. The justification for such activities has never been stronger, and the evidence we have published with this interim report is testament to the broad range of high quality work which is being undertaken currently by a large number of organisations and individuals. (Paragraph 33)
16. The activities of many organisations and individuals at community level throughout Northern Ireland amount, in effect, to a labour of rebuilding society to try and ensure that the problems of the past do not extend to the future in the lives of communities and individuals whom they serve. The lives of many thousands of individuals are affected by the work of these groups, and the evidence we received, and the visits we undertook, strengthened our view that these efforts are absolutely essential to the process of 'dealing' with Northern Ireland's past; indeed, that at present in a very real sense these efforts constitute 'dealing' with the past, and should be recognised collectively as so doing. The details of the work being undertaken by these groups and individuals is set out in the evidence we have gathered and which accompanies this interim report. (Paragraph 39)
17. It is also necessary to be realistic about the length of time that 'healing' society in Northern Ireland is likely to take. It is clear to us that this is not a process which will take months or years, but rather decades. The government, and all those involved, need to ensure that their policies and structures of support for victims and survivors are tailored with this timescale in fully mind. (Paragraph 40)
18. It is vital that the work of groups supporting victims and survivors is supported and developed financially as a priority by the government. High profile inquiries such as that into the 'Bloody Sunday' deaths, and those of others, have their place. But the constant work of supporting victims and victims groups is of incomparable value in providing a tangible way for those most damaged by the past to make a positive contribution on a daily basis to Northern Ireland's future. (Paragraph 44)
19. We note that the government's consultation paper of 1 March contains some proposals to co-ordinate present funding mechanisms for victims and victims groups more effectively. This is welcome, but seems to us a disproportionately modest

response to a vital area. We think a more radical approach is needed, carrying with it the promise of a 'step change' in the level of funding available to victims and survivors. The government must consider, as a matter of urgency, whether the present level of victims' funding truly matches the importance of the work that the victims and victims' groups undertake. It is our present view, based on the evidence we have had, that these are by no means in proper balance, and that more funding is required. (Paragraph 45)

20. No group which is undertaking such valuable work should be in doubt over the continuity of funding. The Minister's view is that the three year plan for victims' groups set out in the consultation document will inform future funding decisions, and that this will be a job for the proposed Victims' and Survivors' Commissioner. However, we are very concerned that there is no precise timescale attached to achieving this planning conclusion, and that even if the government's plans to appoint a Commissioner proceed, that it will be 2006 at least before the present unsatisfactory financial arrangements for victims' groups begin to be tackled. This appears to us a too tardy response. It is the government's responsibility to ensure that uncertainties over the funding for victims' groups are reduced to the minimum as quickly as possible, and it should begin immediately to prepare for implementation of the corporate and financial planning model set out in the consultation document which a Commissioner, if appointed later this year or in 2006, can pick up in due course. (Paragraph 46)
21. Some of the victims in the late 1960s and 1970s when the 'Troubles' were at their height received very small amounts of compensation by comparison with later payments. The government must ensure, so far as is possible, that the level of compensation received by victims of violence throughout the 'Troubles' is demonstrably fair and in particular, that a way is found of enhancing the relatively poor compensation offered to those in the 1970s. We expect the government to consider this point as a matter of priority. (Paragraph 47)
22. That a significant number of the 'disappeared' remain unaccounted for, and their bodies undiscovered; that the families of the 'disappeared' feel obliged to take the opportunity afforded by this inquiry to bring their concerns and frustrations to us, in some cases over three decades since the disappearances took place; that the governments have, to date, failed in their efforts to enable these families to achieve closure for their hurt and, as a result, the families feel, in their own memorable words that " We might as well disappear when it comes to it because we have to keep coming forward and saying we are still here", is very disappointing. We look to the governments for a renewed effort, and to those who have relevant information to come forward without delay. (Paragraph 50)
23. The lives of these families have been blighted by the uncertainty about what exactly has happened to their loved ones. Until those who have information come forward to enable the remains outstanding to be discovered, it will in our view be impossible for Northern Ireland to move forward fully. The governments concerned need to give this issue a much higher priority, and must seek success much harder and more consistently than before. Named Ministers and officials should publicly take individual responsibility for the cases, and there should be regular, fixed meetings to

update the families until a satisfactory outcome is achieved. We expect the UK government to press the governments of the Republic of Ireland and France to agree a similar approach, and for there to be a renewed determination to bring all these cases to a satisfactory conclusion. (Paragraph 51)

24. The difficulties of assuming personal responsibility for the problems that have scarred Northern Ireland are obvious. Equally obvious, from what our witnesses have told us, is the profound power of wholehearted ‘acknowledgment’ and ‘apology’ in re-establishing the mutual respect between the people and communities of Northern Ireland, and beginning to heal the personal agony of individuals, that is the foundation for a truly shared future. The extent of the brutalisation and agony suffered by Northern Ireland over the past decades is so great that there is surely room for all those who have been involved to bear a measure of public witness to their culpability. (Paragraph 60)
25. Not everyone is ready to accept apologies from perpetrators of crimes arising from the conflict, and it is probable that some people, for perfectly understandable reasons, will never be able to do so. It is also important that apologies are couched in ways which do not diminish the deaths, injuries and sacrifices made by the people of Northern Ireland. Apologies by themselves are not likely to transform mutual incomprehension and mistrust. We are convinced, however, that acts of contrition are a key element in the overall construction of a shared future. As always, we look to the government to demonstrate active leadership in seeking to build a positive future for Northern Ireland, and in this spirit we expect it to continue to reflect carefully on how ‘acknowledgement’ and ‘apology’ can play a part in this central process. (Paragraph 61)
26. It is in our view absolutely vital that in sending out the message that the time is not right to launch a broadly based consultation process about Northern Ireland’s past, there is no impression given that the government has somehow stopped listening to the views of people there about how they wish the past to be dealt with. We are sure that this is not what is intended, and the Secretary of State makes clear that the proposal to establish a Victims’ and Survivors’ Commissioner does not mark the end of the process of dealing with the past, or the government’s contribution to it. We hope that the government will take every opportunity both to facilitate the contributions of those who wish to express their views about Northern Ireland’s future, and to affirm that all options to further the processes of communal healing and peaceful co-existence remain open. (Paragraph 65)
27. Views on the government’s consultation about victims’ and survivors’ services are invited by 30 June 2005 and we urge all interested parties to read the document and write to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. We expect the government to publish the result of the consultation and take the results fully into account in making final decisions. (Paragraph 66)
28. In appointing a Commissioner, and finalising a remit for the post, the government will need to keep clearly in mind that there appears to be no demonstrable consensus for such an appointment. While the Secretary of State told us he believed that a majority of victims groups supported the initiative, there is clearly a degree of

scepticism about whether the post is required and will ‘add value’. To dispel some of this scepticism at least, it will be important that the cost of the appointment is modest, the remit is a powerful one which enables the Commissioner to ‘add value’ quickly and demonstrably to the support for victims, that he is able to hold the government and other bodies strictly and publicly accountable, and that the positive impact of the post is measurable and kept under close review. The post should preferably have a statutory foundation. (Paragraph 67)

29. At present there is a Northern Ireland Office Minister with responsibility for victims. We understand that the appointment of a Commissioner will not affect that arrangement, and this is reassuring. It is most important that the appointment should not be seen to imply any reduction in the status of victims and survivors. The responsibilities of the Commissioner and the Minister need to be carefully and clearly distinguished in order that there is no confusion over their mutual responsibilities. (Paragraph 67)
30. We understand that the normal public appointments process will apply to this appointment. Nevertheless, the appointment of the Commissioner must be made with the active involvement of victims and survivors, and relevant groups. Any sense of the government imposing an appointment must be avoided if the aim of making the post-holder a powerful and effective voice for victims is to be achieved. (Paragraph 67)
31. There must be high, but not unreasonably high, expectations for any Commissioner if disappointment is to be avoided. The Minister indicated that the government was “putting a lot of faith” in the post-holder to address a number of difficult issues such as acknowledgement, truth, and justice. To make critical progress on all of these may be asking too much of any single official, however competent. We certainly expect the person appointed to be of the very highest quality, and for the incumbent to make a discernable contribution to the entire range of victims’ issues. We have no doubt that our successor committee will wish to meet the person appointed quickly. Equally, we expect the government to continue to bear its full share of the responsibility for addressing the most intractable problems of communal consensus building. (Paragraph 67)
32. We are surprised that some of the initiatives (many of which appear administratively routine) proposed by the government in its consultation document of 1 March have not been undertaken already in response to the expressed needs of victims. We note that the range of issues identified by the Minister in her consultation in 2003-04 are reflected in those presented in a report on victims in 1998 which suggests to us that progress in addressing these concerns has been slow and patchy, at best. We expect to see the measures which have been proposed, and which receive support in the consultation, pressed forward with the utmost vigour. (Paragraph 67)
33. Overall, we wonder whether something of an opportunity has not been lost to make a ‘step change’ both in the support given to victims and to the wider question of an enhanced role for victims in building the future of Northern Ireland. For example, no consideration appears to have been given to the creation of a ‘victims’ department’ within the Northern Ireland administration which might have had the

effect of invigorating and focussing the approach by government to victims and their role in Northern Ireland society as a whole, or any substantial enhancement of financial provision. (Paragraph 68)

34. There may come a time when a formal, national ‘truth recovery’ process will contribute positively to the normalisation of society in Northern Ireland but, on the basis of the evidence we have received to date, that time has not yet arrived: the peace is as yet too fragile, the scars of the conflict too fresh, the co-operation of parts of Northern Ireland’s population is not assured, the political conditions are not yet sufficiently settled, the conflict in the estimation of many people is not yet finally over. Were such a process to be put in train now, it is our view that this might have the effect of exacerbating community tensions. (Paragraph 69)
35. It is far from our intention to place any additional pressures upon those who have suffered most from the ‘Troubles’. It is our hope, rather, that the government will do everything possible to enable and empower those who have been touched uniquely by the conflict in order that they may contribute centrally to the wider process of building a normal society for Northern Ireland, should they so wish. (Paragraph 73)
36. While much of the evidence we heard and read was harrowing, our final impression is one of enormous optimism. There is evidently a keen hunger for peace and the re-creation of mutual respect between the communities, coupled to an ingenuity and imagination on the part of many in seeking a meaning for the future of life in Northern Ireland from the terror, pain and seeming despair of the past. These admirable characteristics are exemplified magnificently in the lives and experiences of many of those who we have been privileged to hear from over the past eight weeks. We commend this signal bravery to the government, churches, political parties, and other leaders of civil society as a spur to their own efforts to forge a society for Northern Ireland based firmly on peace and tolerance. (Paragraph 74)

Formal minutes

Wednesday 6 April 2005

Members present:

Mr Michael Mates, in the Chair

Mr Roy Beggs

Mr Tony Clarke

Mr Stephen Hepburn

Reverend Martin Smyth

Mr Hugo Swire

Mr Mark Tami

Mr Bill Tynan

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report (Ways of Dealing with Northern Ireland's Past: Interim Report - Survivors and Victims), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 74 read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Tenth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That the provisions of Standing Order No. 134 (Select Committees (reports)) be applied to the Report.—(*The Chairman.*)

Ordered, That the Appendices to the Report be reported to the House.—(*The Chairman.*)

[Adjourned till a date and time to be announced by the Chairman

Witnesses

Wednesday 2 February 2005

	<i>Page</i>
Mr Tom Roberts and Mr William Smyth, Ex-Prisoners Interpretative Centre	Ev 5
Ms Jo Dover, Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Trust	Ev 20

Wednesday 9 February 2005

Ms Avila Kilmurray, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland , and Dr Duncan Morrow, Community Relations Council Northern Ireland	Ev 36
Mr Mark Thompson, Mr John Loughran and Ms Clara Reilly, Relatives for Justice , Mr Tom Holland, Ardoyne Commemoration Project , Mr Mike Ritchie, Coiste n-Iarchimi , and Ms Bernice Swift, Firinne	Ev 47

Monday 21 February 2005

Mrs Janet Hunter, Families Achieving Change Together	Ev 63
Wave Trauma Centre : Mrs Sandra Peake and a Panel of Witnesses (1)	Ev 72
Mr Paul O'Connor, Ms Stephanie English, and Mr Alan Brecknell, Pat Finucane Centre	Ev 86
Mr John Clarke and Mr Edward Godfrey, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister , and Ms Joy Pedden, Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety	Ev 96

Tuesday 22 February 2005

Mrs Celia Gourley OBE, Mrs Barbara Deane OBE and Mrs Maureen Mitchell	Ev 103
Mrs Marion Weir, Rural Community Network , The Tullyvallen Community Association , and Mrs Esther Andrews, Friends of Inver Women's Group	Ev 108
Marie Terese O'Hagan and a Panel of Witnesses (2)	Ev 112
Mr Trevor Ringland and Dr Chris Gibson OBE, One Small Step Campaign	Ev 118

Wednesday 23 February 2005

Mrs Ann Boal, Disabled Police Officers' Association Northern Ireland , Reverend Andrew Rawding, Northern Ireland Veterans Association , Mrs Gillian Grigg and Mrs Rosalind Dillon-Lee, War Widows' Association of Great Britain , and Commodore Toby Elliot, Combat Stress	Ev 131
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Monday 28 February 2005

Professor Brice Dickson and Dr Nazia Latif, **Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission**, and Professor Tom Hadden and Ms Louise Mallinder, **Queen's University, Human Rights Centre** Ev 166

Mr Michael Gallagher and Mr William Jameson, **Omagh Support and Self Help Group**, and Mr William Frazer and Mr William Wilkinson, **Families Acting for Innocent Relatives** Ev 185

Mr Michael Potter, **Training for Women Network**, Professor Roy McClelland and Mr Oliver Wilkinson, **Healing Through Remembering**, Mr Robin Wilson, **Democratic Dialogue**, and **Mr Brandon Hamber** Ev 206

Wednesday 2 March 2005

Mr Colin Parry Ev 215

Dr Marie Smyth Ev 222

Mr Andrew Robinson, **The Haven Project** Ev 231

Wednesday 9 March 2005

Rt Hon Paul Murphy MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Angela Smith MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, and Mr Mark Sweeney, **Northern Ireland Office**, and Mr John Clarke, **Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister** Ev 242

List of written evidence

	<i>Page</i>
1 EPIC	Ev 1
2 The Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Trust	Ev 12
3 The Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Trust, supplementary memorandum	Ev 28
4 Community Foundation for Northern Ireland	Ev 31
5 Community Relations Council	Ev 33
6 Eolas Project Group	Ev 43
7 Relatives for Justice and New Lodge Six: Time for Truth Campaign	Ev 44
8 Ardoyne Commemoration Project	Ev 46
9 Firinne	Ev 47
10 Families Achieving Change Together	Ev 62
11 Families Achieving Change Together, supplementary memorandum	Ev 62
12 WAVE Trauma Centre and Families of the Disappeared	Ev 68
13 Pat Finucane Centre	Ev 80
14 Mrs Celia Gourley OBE	Ev 100
15 Mrs Barbara Deane OBE	Ev 100
16 Rural Community Network	Ev 107
17 Trevor Ringland, One Small Step Campaign	Ev 118
18 Disabled Police Officers' Association Northern Ireland	Ev 123
19 Northern Ireland Veterans' Association	Ev 127
20 Combat Stress	Ev 131
21 Mrs Rosalind Dillon-Lee	Ev 142
22 War Widows Association of Great Britain	Ev 142
23 Combat Stress, supplementary memorandum	Ev 142
24 Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Ev 144
25 Professor Tom Hadden	Ev 164
26 Omagh Support and Self Help Group	Ev 172
27 Omagh Support and Self Help Group, supplementary memorandum	Ev 172
28 Families Acting for Innocent Relatives	Ev 173
29 Families Acting for Innocent Relatives , supplementary memorandum	Ev 174
30 Training for Women Network	Ev 194
31 Training for Women Network, supplementary memorandum	Ev 196
32 Healing Through Remembering Project	Ev 197
33 Democratic Dialogue	Ev 202
34 Mr Brandon Hamber	Ev 202
35 Mr Colin Parry	Ev 214
36 Dr Marie Smyth	Ev 218
37 Haven Project	Ev 228
38 Northern Ireland Office	Ev 235
39 Mr David Bolton	Ev 255
40 Corrymeela Community	Ev 258
41 Committee on the Administration of Justice	Ev 259

42	Albie Sachs, Judge of the Constitutional Court of South Africa	Ev 261
43	Dr Patrick Lundy, University of Ulster, Jordanstown and Dr Mark McGovern, Edge Hill College of HE, Ormskirk	Ev 264
44	Guild of Uriel	Ev 268
45	International Centre for Transitional Justice	Ev 268
46	Professor Bill Rolston, Sociology Department, University of Ulster	Ev 269
47	Methodist Church in Ireland, Council on Social Responsibility	Ev 271
48	Senator Maurice Hayes	Ev 280
49	Sinn Féin	Ev 281
50	Columbia Community of Prayer and Reconciliation	Ev 284
51	Mr Oscar Daly, Consultant Psychiatrist	Ev 285
52	Towards Understanding and Healing	Ev 285
53	University of Ulster, INCORE (International Conflict Research)	Ev 289
54	British Irish Rights Watch	Ev 291
55	Restorative Action Following the Troubles	Ev 292
56	Professor David Fitzpatrick and Jane Leonard	Ev 293
57	Mr Ian McBride	Ev 299
58	The Shared City Project	Ev 299
59	Combat Poverty and Area Development Management Ltd	Ev 300
60	Jacqueline Monahan, Transitional Justice Institute	Ev 302
61	Mr Brian Lennon , SJ, Community Dialogue	Ev 303
62	Mr Adrian Guelke	Ev 305
63	Sir George Quigley	Ev 309
64	Mr Clem McCartney	Ev 311
65	Rev. David Clements	Ev 314
66	Mr Harold Stewart-Stephenson	Ev 314
67	Southern Health and Social Services Board, Trauma Advisory Panel	Ev 315
68	Maranatha Community	Ev 317
69	Mr Bernard J, Mulholland	Ev 320
70	Dr Zac Nsenga, Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda	Ev 320
71	Peace People Executive	Ev 323
72	Falls Community Council	Ev 325
73	Dr Corinna Hauswedell, Bonn International Centre for Conversion	Ev 326
74	Belfast Interface Project	Ev 330
75	Western Health and Social Services, Trauma Advisory Panel	Ev 330
76	Priscilla Hayner, International Centre for Transitional Justice, New York	Ev 331
77	The Most Reverend Séan Brady, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland	Ev 335
78	Centre for Contemporary Christianity in Ireland	Ev 338
79	Families of the Disappeared	Ev 343
80	Northern Ireland Memorial Fund	Ev 344
81	Police Federation of Northern Ireland	Ev 350
82	Shankill Stress and Trauma Group	Ev 352
83	Mr Hugh S. Rowan	Ev 357
84	Ms Aileen Quinton	Ev 359

List of unprinted written evidence

Additional papers have been received from the following and have been reported to the House but to save printing costs they have not been printed and copies have been placed in the Record Office, House of Lords and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to the Record Office, House of Lords, London SW1. (Tel 020 7219 3074). Hours of inspection are from 9:30am to 5:00pm on Mondays to Fridays.

1. Armagh Confederation of Voluntary Groups: Civicus World Assembly Gabarone, Botswana – 21 to 25 March 2004
2. ICEVA Limited: Letter on Cold Case Review Service
3. Training for Women Network:
 - In Their Own Words – a research report into the victims sector in Northern Ireland
 - Women, Civil Society and Peacebuilding
4. Eolas Project: Consultation paper on Truth and Justice
5. NIACRO: All Truth is Bitter – Report on a visit by Doctor Alex Boraine, Deputy Chairman of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to Northern Ireland
6. Democratic Dialogue: Future Policies for the Past
7. Omagh Support and Self Help Group: Strategic Plan 2004-2007
8. Barnardo's: Letter and notes on 'Nova' service
9. Trauma Advisory Panel: Terms of Reference
10. Families Acting for Innocent Relatives:
 - A Human Rights Agenda
 - Position paper on the future and structure of the victims sector
 - Human Rights to Remedy Inhuman Wrongs
 - Press Cuttings
11. MAST Kilkeel: E-mail
12. Ms Bridget Hughes: Letter
13. Coiste n-Iarchimi:
 - A museum at Long Kesh or the Maze?
 - Annual Report 2003-04
 - Coiste.comm, Volume 6, Issue 4
14. Ms Stephanie English: Letter to Angela Smith MP, Minister for Victims
15. Elham Atashi: Reconciliation in Northern Ireland – An Assessment
16. Ulster Prisoners Aid: Truth and Justice Conference 2 to 3 October 2004
17. Ms Ann Maguire: Letter
18. Ms Betty Leonard: Letter
19. Ms Kathleen Murray: Letter

Reports from the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee since 2001

The following reports have been produced by the Committee since the start of the 2001 Parliament.

Session 2004–05

First Report	Electoral Registration in Northern Ireland	HC 131
Second Report	The Parades Commission and Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998	HC 172-I
Third Report	Northern Ireland Departments' 2002-03 Resource Accounts	HC 173
Fourth Report	The work of the Committee in 2004	HC 262
Fifth Report	The Functions of the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland	HC 344
Sixth Report	Waste Management Strategy in Northern Ireland	HC 349-I
Seventh Report	The Functions of the Northern Ireland Policing Board	HC 108
Eighth Report	Air Transport in Northern Ireland	HC 53-I
Ninth Report	The Challenge of Diversity: Hate Crime in Northern Ireland	HC 548-I
Tenth Report	Ways of Dealing with Northern Ireland's Past. Interim Report: Victims and Survivors	HC 303-I
First Special Report	Social Housing Provision in Northern Ireland: Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report of Session 2003-04	HC 225
Second Special Report	Electoral Registration in Northern Ireland: Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2004-05	HC 448
Third Special Report	Northern Ireland Departments' 2002-03 Resource Accounts: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2004-05	HC 549
Fourth Special Report	Waste Management Strategy in Northern Ireland: Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report of Session 2004-05	HC 550

Session 2003–04

First Report	The Committee's work in 2003	HC 146
Second Report	The separation of paramilitary prisoners at HMP Maghaberry	HC 302
Third Report	Introduction of the Aggregates Levy in Northern Ireland: one year on	HC 395
Fourth Report	The Compensation Agency	HC 271
Fifth Report	'Hate Crime': The Draft Criminal Justice Northern Ireland Order 2004	HC 615
Sixth Report	Social Housing Provision in Northern Ireland	HC 493-I

First Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Eighth Report on The Illegal Drugs Trade and Drug Culture in Northern Ireland, Session 2002–2003	HC 180
Second Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's First Report on the Work of the Committee in 2003	HC 510
Third Special Report	The Separation of Paramilitary Prisoners at HMP Maghaberry: Government's Response to the Committee's Second Report of Session 2003–04	HC 583
Fourth Special Report	Introduction of the Aggregates Levy in Northern Ireland: one year on The Government's Response	HC 666
Fifth Special Report	'Hate Crime' the Draft Criminal Justice Northern Ireland Order 2004 Government Response	HC 954
Sixth Special Report	The Compensation Agency Government Response	HC 955

Session 2002–03

First Report	The Impact in Northern Ireland of Cross–Border Road Fuel Price Differentials: Three years on	HC 105–I
Second Report	Annual Report 2002	HC 271
Third Report	The Police (Northern Ireland) Bill	HC 233
Fourth Report	The Control of Firearms in Northern Ireland and the draft Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2002	HC 67–I
Fifth Report	Forensic Science Northern Ireland	HC 204
Sixth Report	The Illegal Drugs Trade and Drug Culture in Northern Ireland: Interim Report on Cannabis	HC 353–I
Seventh Report	Peace II	HC 653–I
Eighth Report	The Illegal Drugs Trade and Drug Culture in Northern Ireland	HC 1217–I
First Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's First Report: The Impact in Northern Ireland of Cross–Border Road Fuel Price Differentials: Three Years On	HC 412
Second Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Third Report: The Police (Northern Ireland) Bill	HC 555
Third Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Second Report: Annual Report 2002	HC 583
Fourth Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report on the Control of Firearms in Northern Ireland and the Proposed Draft Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, HC 67–I, Session 2002–03	HC 677
Fifth Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report on Forensic Science Northern Ireland	HC 722
Sixth Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report on the Illegal Drugs Trade and Drug Culture in Northern Ireland: Interim Report on Cannabis	HC 935
Seventh Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Seventh Report on Peace II	HC 1077

Session 2001–02

First Report	Introduction of the Aggregates Levy in Northern Ireland	HC 333
Second Report	The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland: Interim Report on the Proceeds of Crime Bill	HC 628
Third Report	Introduction of the Aggregates Levy in Northern Ireland: The Government's Response	HC 713
Fourth Report	The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland. Volume II of this Report (HC 987–II) includes the Government Response to the Second Report, Session 2001–02, The Financing of Terrorism in Northern Ireland: Interim Report on the Proceeds of Crime Bill, HC 628	HC 978–I
First Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report, Miscellaneous Financial Matters, Session 2000–01, and the Government Response to the Committee's Third Report, The Northern Ireland Office 2000 Departmental Report, Session 1999–2000	HC 332
Second Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report, Legal Aid In Northern Ireland, Session 2000–01	HC 400
Third Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Second Report, The Parades Commission, Session 2000–01	HC 401
Fourth Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Third Report, Relocation Following Paramilitary Intimidation, Session 2000–01	HC 461
Fifth Special Report	Government Response to the Committee's Third Report, Introduction of the Aggregates Levy in Northern Ireland, Session 2001–02	HC 1118