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Notorious men whose families would benefit

By David Gordon
Saturday, 24 January 2009

RELATIVES of some of Northern Ireland's most notorious paramilitaries — from Shankill Butchers to a Shankill bomber — will be in line for £12,000 payouts if controversial plans tabled yesterday are accepted.

The Consultative Group on the Past wants public money to go to the families of all those killed in the Troubles, including members of terror groups.

That would open the way for funding applications from relatives of such individuals as:

- Thomas Begley, the IRA man killed planting the bomb which claimed the lives of nine Protestants on the Shankill Road in October 1993.
- Lenny Murphy, the leader of the Shankill Butchers, a UVF gang responsible for a string of sectarian killings in the 1970s. Murphy was shot dead in 1982 by the IRA.
- Dominic McGlinchey, INLA leader shot dead in Drogheda in 1994.
- John Gregg, south east Antrim UDA leader murdered in 2003 as part of a loyalist feud.
- Brothers Gerard and Martin Harte, shot dead with fellow IRA man Brian Mullin by the SAS in 1988. Relatives of the Hartes would presumably receive a total of £24,000 under the Consultative Group's proposals.
- UVF men Harris Boyle and Wesley Somerville, killed by their own bomb during the attack that claimed the lives of three members of the Miami Showband in 1975.

The Consultative Group envisages the same payments going to relatives of victims and attackers.

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Northern Ireland Troubles Gallery



IRA checkpoint



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Robin Percival is absolutely correct to say that, " there can be no hierarchy of victims but an acceptance that all have suffered grievously in the war." However this acceptance doesn't require financial reward for any perpetrator whether security forces, paramilitary or a single individual. There should be no hierarchy of victims because a mother's suffering is a mother's suffering no matter who or what organisation caused this suffering. However to provide financial reward to the families of any or all participants in the conflict will only exacerbate this suffering rather than diminish it.

Posted by Phil | 26.01.09, 13:05 GMT

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This is terrible How can these Men be classed as victims why not just call Gadaffi a victim. If this wasn't so offensive to real victims like me it would be laughable.

Posted by Andrea | 25.01.09, 14:00 GMT

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Your list is highly selective, of course. What about members of the British security forces (BA, UDR, RUC etc) who killed innocent civilians or colluded with Loyalist paramilitaries and who were themselves subsequently killed?. I agree with Eames/Bradley: there can be no hierarchy of victims but an acceptance that all have suffered grievously in the war. It wasn't just paramilitaries who committed atrocities.

Posted by Robin Percival | 25.01.09, 13:04 GMT

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Time for Eames and Bradley to go, if they are that daft.

Posted by canuck | 24.01.09, 18:14 GMT

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