

Monday 9 February 2009

**NORTHERN IRELANDS LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY**

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**DUP NEWS****Latest News:****Dodds sets the record straight on victims**

DUP Deputy Leader and North Belfast MP Nigel Dodds has set the record straight after claims made by the Ulster Unionist Party that the DUP are somehow to blame for the current immoral definition of a victim. Mr Dodds has pointed out that the current definition was first used in 2001 from a Department under UUP control and was included in a document signed off and approved by an Ulster Unionist Minister. The DUP's Nigel Dodds said,

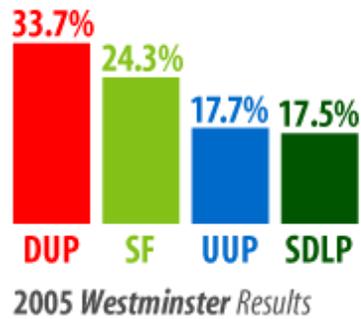


*"The Ulster Unionist Party has no shame. In the past week they have engaged in revisionism about their past policies, and attempted to score political points at the expense of innocent victims. While the DUP has engaged with the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State to ensure the obnoxious proposals coming forward from the Eames Bradley Group are binned, the UUP has spent all their time trying to re-write their past failings.*

*It is an absolute falsehood to blame the DUP for the current immoral definition of a victim. Regardless of how many UUP spokesmen try to claim otherwise the fact remains that the definition was first used in Stormont under the UUP's watch!*

*The Victims Strategy went out to consultation in 2001 from a Department under Ulster*

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**Unionist control and used the following definition;**

**'The surviving physically and psychologically injured of violent, conflict related incidents and those close relatives or partners who care for them, along with those close relatives or partners who mourn their dead.'**

**The Ulster Unionist Minister in that Department stated in the foreword of the Victims Strategy Reshape Rebuild Achieve that;**

**"The publication of this document is a key step forward in that process and we are delighted to endorse its content."**

<http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/victimsbrochure-2.pdf>

**The facts couldn't be any clearer. The Ulster Unionist representatives who try to mislead the electorate on this point should hang their heads in shame!**

**Indeed, they have a very short memory as it was the UUP who flung open the prison gates and allowed every terrorist prisoner to walk free irrespective how many innocent people they murdered or maimed. The one common theme amongst all victims is that they have a desire for justice and it was the Ulster Unionists who deprived thousands of families of justice through their support for the Belfast Agreement's prisoner release scheme.**

**The innocent victims of Northern Ireland were rightly outraged by the proposals brought forward by the Consultative Group on the Past. There can be no blurring of the line between the terrorist and terrorised. To suggest that "The Disappeared" can be treated in the same way as those who conducted a murderous campaign is wrong and illogical. If we take this approach the robber is as much a victim as the robbed and the drunk driver is as much a victim as the innocent mother and child that they kill.**

**The Ulster Unionist Party should accept that it failed to deliver for the needs of innocent victims when it was in government. The DUP has delivered for innocent victims through £36 million of financial support and Commission to act as an advocate for innocent victims. Sir Reg should set an example in his Party by trying to advance issues for victims rather than simply trying to score cheap points.**

**The DUP is committed to amending the current definition of a victim to ensure that the terrorist is not treated the same as the innocent victim. This is not a unionist versus nationalist debate it is right versus wrong debate!"**

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