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BRADLEY - TIME TO END THE SUFFERING OF THE FAMILIES OF THE DISAPPEARED

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SDLP Newry and Armagh Assembly Member Dominic Bradley has called on those information on the whereabouts of the Disappeared to come forward and end the suffering of the families.

Mr Bradley, who has secured an Assembly debate on the subject tomorrow (Mon) said the families of the Disappeared are not asking for justice or retribution but only to bury their loved ones with dignity.

He said: “Throughout the history of the troubles many individuals have been killed and many families and communities have struggled with the aftermath. The overwhelming majority of families have had the consolation of waking and burying their dead in accordance with the rites of the faith in which they were raised.

“The families of the Disappeared who have not yet had the remains of their loved ones returned to them have not had even that possibility open to them. They have been left, in many cases for decades, asking the why and wherefore of their loved ones’ disappearance, to wonder about their fate, to arrive at their own conclusions, and to await the recovery of their remains.

“The rest of us who have experienced deep sorrow at the death of a loved one can never imagine the anguish which the families of the Disappeared have had to endure over all these years. In our own sad situations we have been enwrapped in the support and concern of our communities but in some areas the community from which people have disappeared has been silenced.

“Surely that is not too much to ask in a civilised, Christian country that people be afforded the right to bury their dead. And those who quite rightly demand justice, equality, human rights, and the truth about the past must ensure that they too afford the same rights to others who yearn for them.

“The Commission for the Disappeared has been set up for 10 years now – in that time Northern Ireland has moved on to such an extent that there can be no reason for anyone with information not to come forward. It is important that this message is conveyed as widely as possible.”

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

SDLP Newry and Armagh MLA Dominic Bradley will put a motion on the Disappeared to the Assembly on Monday 3rd November.

There will be a media briefing at 12:30 in the Great Hall, Parliament Buildings. Representatives of the families of the Disappeared and victims’ groups will take part.

The motion is scheduled for 1:45PM. It reads:

“That this Assembly recognises the suffering of families of the disappeared; believes that there has not been full disclosure on this issue; and calls on any individual or organisation with information which may lead to the remains of the disappeared being returned to their loved ones for dignified burial, to bring forward that information without any further delay.”

02-11-08

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