

## News and Articles

### UUP gives cautious welcome to 'Past' Group and responds to Hain's comments on Costs and Nature of Inquiries to Date

E-mail to a friend *June 22nd, 2007 Derek Hussey*



UUP spokesman on Victims Issues Derek Hussey today gave a cautious welcome to the establishment of a government consultative group tasked with finding an appropriate way of dealing with victims issues and 'the past'.

In a statement Mr Hussey said,

"The UUP welcomes any input into victims issues and how to deal with the past but we reiterate our opposition to the establishment of a truth commission.

Bertha McDougall has already outlined a positive and comprehensive victims' agenda that I believe should form the backbone of any recommendations. I am mindful that while this debate continues, for many, pain and hurt continues on as a very real aspect of daily life. It is imperative that resolution happens sooner rather than later. That is why I am concerned that this group are not due to report until next summer.

There is no reason why, for example, the issue of core funding to victims groups cannot be addressed now within the OFMDFM wherein lies the responsibility for the Victims Unit. Undoubtedly the UUP have concerns in regard to some of Bertha McDougall's recommendations! However those issues that are common should be advanced. To give confidence to the Victims sector that they are not abandoned they need to see work in progress rather than further prevarication.

With the McDougall framework already there, the edges of the jigsaw puzzle are already in place. This group can and should test public opinion to see where the other pieces fit.

I am however concerned that the Secretary of State acted unilaterally in the appointment of this group without consulting OFMDFM wherein the Victims Unit lies."

Referring to the Secretary of State's comments about the cost of the Saville Inquiry and how there had to be a better way of investigating the past Mr Hussey added,

"I share Mr Hain's concern at the nature and expense of inquiries such as Saville, however he cannot have it both ways. Saville was set up by his government. Let us hope that the Historical Enquiries Team - who are doing valuable work - coupled with the new group established today, will find a way sensible and pragmatic solution away from the current approach which has failed to find a common language that genuine victims can relate to."

Entry Filed under: [A Fair and Inclusive Society, Supporting Families & Older Citizens](#)

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**Ulster Unionist Party, Cunningham House, 429 Holywood Road, Belfast BT4 2LN.**  
**Tel:** 028 9076 5500 | **Fax:** 028 9076 9419 | **Email:** [uup@uup.org](mailto:uup@uup.org)