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Victims' Commissioners

MONDAY  
 12/05/2008  
 14:34:13

### Warning over Victims' Commission

The Victims' Commission will be plagued by division and virtual apartheid on key decisions, it was claimed today.

Vetoes exercised by the four members will undermine coherent work, David Ford told the Assembly.

The party leader's warning came during a debate on the Victims and Survivors' Bill at Stormont.

"We believe that is sending out entirely the wrong message of a divisive and apartheid system to operate within the commission rather than a single united and coherent viewpoint," he said.

Ministers from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister have expressed confidence in the new commission and its flexibility to address changing challenges.

The bill establishing a champion for those affected by the conflict has been withdrawn at the last moment twice following disagreement between Sinn Fein and the DUP.

They disagreed over an Alliance proposal for a chief commissioner to lead the body.




Assembly members voted last week to give the first and deputy first ministers power to appoint a chief commissioner in the future.

MLAs also backed a plan which will only allow the commission to employ someone with a criminal conviction if the first and deputy first ministers give their prior approval.

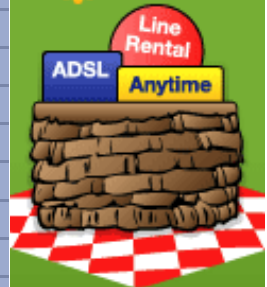

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**DETAILS:** France / Lebanon 95mins (PG)

**RATING:** ★★★★★

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