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Local & National

Decade on and still no Saville report

Thursday, April 03, 2008

Ten years to the day after Lord Saville opened his investigation into Bloody Sunday, families today remained in the dark as to when the report would be published.

A spokeswoman for the inquiry - which probed the deaths of 13 men in the Bogside on January 30, 1972 and another man who died later - told the Telegraph that the report was "not imminent".

On the tenth anniversary of the inquiry's start, with unionists again attacking the mounting costs, the families said they were still waiting for answers.

A solicitor for one the families, Greg McCartney, said he hoped the report would be presented some time later this year.

Relatives say that, having waited for 36 years, they are prepared to give Lord Saville time.

Liam Wray, whose brother Jim died in the shooting, said: "Ten years is a long time. I didn't expect it to take that long. Saying that, the search for truth has been going on a lot longer."

Lord Saville has overseen the longest-running and most expensive investigation of its kind in British legal history, at a cost - so far - of more than £174m.

East Londonderry MP Gregory Campbell said: "The cost of the tribunal would be the biggest factor in most people's minds.

"It has been some time since the tribunal sat and as I understand it is still costing half a million per month with the travel involved for the tribunal members to meet up and discuss the final draft of the report.

"I think it may have cost as much as £182m so far.

"By far and away this is the most expensive public inquiry in UK history and 10 years on there is still no report.

"I think that the least worst option would be to publish it and let us see what revisionism has taken place," the MP added.

"What I did see at the tribunal was that there was no evidence given on the events running up to Bloody Sunday, just the events of the day.

"The £180m that has been spent could have been better spent in a much more productive way in Northern Ireland and not just in Londonderry."

The attacks on costs have angered nationalists. Foyle MP Mark Durkan recently hit out at opponents of the costs of the inquiry, saying: " These were the cheerleaders of the judicial challenges, relocations and delays to the tribunal that contributed to those costs."

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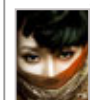
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