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Latest news

**Bereaved families demand truth not money**

South Belfast News 28th of January 2009

By Scott Jamison

The widow of a South Belfast man shot dead by the UFF has hit out at proposals to give £12,000 to the families of victims of the Troubles.

Catherine Gormley's husband Charles McGrillen was killed by a loyalist gunman on March 15, 1988. The 25-year-old from Hatfield Street was shot at the Dunnes Store on the Annadale Embankment where he worked.

Catherine described the proposals as "giving you a present with one hand and knocking your teeth out with the other".

The proposals are expected to be announced today (Wednesday) by the Consultative Group on the Past, chaired by Lord Robin Eames and Denis Bradley.

"To this day, I still haven't been told what happened to Charles. I would rather have the truth about what happened to him than any money," said Catherine.

"Whoever killed him didn't answer for it. I would like someone brought to justice instead of compensation. The bereaved families have suffered a lot of heartache and hurt which can't be just washed under the carpet with a few pounds.

"What price do you put on a life? Some people might think the money will just make things okay, but it doesn't really solve anything."

Catherine also criticised the proposal that would see families of victims receive the same amount regardless of whether their relative was a member of a paramilitary group, security forces or a civilian.

"The person that murdered him could have been killed themselves and then their family can put their hand out and get the same as me.

"Some of the people who were involved in his murder probably now have good jobs and get to see their family every day. Charles didn't even get to see his daughter grow up. No money can change that."

Ormeau man Mark Sykes, who survived the gun attack on Sean Graham's bookmakers on the Ormeau Road in February 1992 that saw his teenage brother-in-law Peter Magee killed along with four others, said the issue should not be about money.

"People want to find out the truth about how and why their loved ones were murdered. Instead there is a price being put on peoples' lives.

"Peter was 18 when he died. For his mother to receive £12,000 would be the equivalent of about 53p a day. Twelve thousand pounds won't bring him back and neither would a million pounds."

He said too much focus had been put on the issue of compensation.

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**Nominations now open for 2009 40 Under 40**

American congressman turned university chancellor, Marty Meehan, will be the guest speaker at this year's Belfast Media Group Belfast Top 40 Under 40 in association with Sainsbury's. Nominations are now open for this year's Sainsbury's sponsored Top 40 Under 40.



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"I think it is a masterstroke on behalf of this group. The news has broke a week in advance in order to clear the air, as they knew it would be controversial.

"We should be focusing on the rest of the document but instead it's all getting lost in the hype around the money.

"I think it's a like a carrot being dangled in front of the families. They are going to get the money, but the stick is they are never going to find out the truth about what happened to their relatives."



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