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Tuesday, March 31, 2009

Bradley, Eames back payment of £12,000 to victims in North

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RENAGH HOLOHAN

LORD EAMES and Denis Bradley have strongly advocated that their suggested recognition payment of £12,000 be paid to the victims of the Troubles in the North just as the sum of €15,000 was paid to 300 victims in the Republic.

While they recognised there was no agreement on what a victim was, Mr Bradley said it would be sinful to give a payment in Donegal but not across the road in Northern Ireland. It was part of the healing process. "It is best and better to do it and do it soon."

Loyalists had no difficulty with the payments; it was middle-class unionism that did.

The co-chairs of the Consultative Group on the Past said yesterday's address to the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly was their last appearance together as the group no longer existed.

Their report with 30 recommendations, including the establishment of a legacy commission, had been given to the Northern Secretary of State and had been shared initially with the Dublin Government. It was now under consideration and implementation would require legislation.

Mr Bradley said that if an estimated £300 million was not spent now implementing their report, it would cost at least £1 billion to allow what was already happening to continue.

If the Historical Enquiries Team was not relieved of the burden of examining each file, it could be working in the North for the next 15 years.

He said there appeared to be an increase in the arguments about the "Ulsterisation" of the problem in that the security forces in the North were not pleased with what they detected was a withdrawal of responsibility by the security services in Britain.

Mr Bradley said there was no landscape outside their report which addressed with integrity what could be done for the bereaved of Omagh. He did not believe any inquiry would take place into the Finucane case. He believed the issue would remain alive and well for up to 20 years.

This article appears in the print edition of the Irish Times

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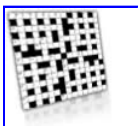
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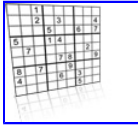
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