



Mon, Mar 26, 2007

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## Rosemary Nelson inquiry has cost £12m

A delayed inquiry into Catholic solicitor Rosemary Nelson's murder has cost nearly £12 million, Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Hain revealed today.

And the bill for the Bloody Sunday tribunal in Derry is also continuing to rise — now topping £176 million.

Mr Hain disclosed the level of spending as he confirmed another £390,000 went on a critical three-day political talks session in St Andrews, Scotland.

But it was the financial resources which have already gone into the attempt to establish the truth around Mrs Nelson's killing which most outraged unionist critics.

The lawyer and mother-of-three died in a car bombing outside her home in Lurgan, Co Armagh in March 1999.

Even though loyalist paramilitaries planted the device, allegations of security force collusion were strong enough for retired Canadian Judge Peter Cory to recommend an inquiry into her assassination and

three other controversial murders in Northern Ireland.

Yet full hearings in the Nelson case, at first due to begin in Spring 2006 and then again in January, have been delayed due to huge workloads.

With September pencilled in as the next possible date for public evidence sessions to get under way, a Democratic Unionist MP called for the Government to pull the plug.

Mr Hain disclosed the level of spending in response to a parliamentary question.

With Lord Saville still to publish a report on his tribunal into Bloody Sunday, when 14 civilians were killed after paratroopers opened fire following a civil rights march in Derry in January 1972, Mr Hain confirmed its overall costs had reached £176.2 million.

And there was a £390,000 bill for the all-party political talks in Scotland last October, which led to the St Andrews Agreement blueprint for restoring a power-sharing administration in Belfast.

Those costs are to be jointly shared with the Irish Government, Mr Hain added.

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3-10 °C

TOMORROW



3-10 °C

MONDAY



4-10 °C

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