

Wednesday 14 May 2008

NORTHERN IRELANDS LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY



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DUP NEWS

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ASSEMBLY BACKS COMMISSION

In a joint statement, DUP members of the Committee for Office and First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Jimmy Spratt, Jim Shannon, Jim Wells and Stephen Moutray MLA said:

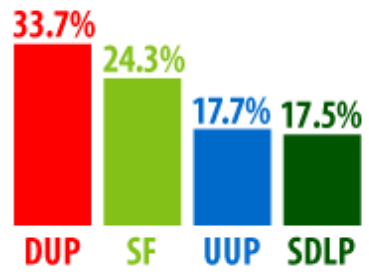
"It is a welcome move by the Assembly to support the establishment of the Victims Commission. All that remains now is for Royal Assent to be granted and the Commission will be in a position to deliver on behalf of the victims of Northern Ireland. As a party we have been working towards the delivery of a fair deal for Northern Ireland's innocent victims.

Our commitment to victims is reflected in the fact that Peter Robinson, the Finance Minister recently doubled the budgetary allocation to the victims sector to £36million. Furthermore, it was the DUP that actually advanced the idea of a Victims Commission to provide an independent advocate for the victims who were so cruelly ignored during the Trimble era.

There are several elements of the Victims Bill, which the DUP has been pushing for, that have been included in the final legislation. Firstly, a Chief Commissioner can be appointed - this will give the organisation a more organised and coordinated approach. Also, the decisions taken by the Commission do not have to be unanimous - this will avoid deadlock and enable the work of the body to progress and significantly, the DUP has ensured no-one with a criminal conviction will be appointed

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to employment with the commission.

After years of being ignored, the DUP is delivering for the victims of the violence here. We continue to strive to ensure that the victims receive their fair and due recognition and will not be deflected from that important work."

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