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SILENT TOO LONG

On Sunday 23rd August 1981 a meeting was held for the relatives of anyone that was murdered by the UDA, UVF, RED HAND COMMANDOES, RUC, UDR, BRITISH ARMY. The meeting was attended by about 80 families from all over Belfast and it was decided that something should be done to highlight these deaths and to seek justice for the relatives.

The British Government and the Unionist Politicians constantly refer to the "2000 deaths caused by IRA terror". These remarks when made are unchallenged by television and newspaper reporters and by Westminster Politicians. The truth is that 617 civilians (mostly Catholic) have been killed by loyalist paramilitaries while another 34 people have been killed by loyalist in the early riots in 1969. Another 13 loyalist were killed by the security forces and 25 were blown up by their own bombs. The security forces have killed 116 civilians and 79 members of the IRA/INLA. In addition to this 13 members of the security forces have been killed by loyalist paramilitaries.

The relatives of those murdered by the loyalists and the security forces felt very bitter because the government and the unionist were ignoring the deaths of their loved ones. The organisation responsible for most of the civilian assassinations (UDA) is still treated as a legal body by the British Government and can organise openly.

It was decided at the meeting to form the organisation "Silent Too Long" in order to tell the truth about these deaths. It was inevitable that in doing this the group would have to have a policy document drawn up. It was stressed that the group would be for the relatives only of the innocent victims of the above organisations. The group would not be aligned with any political party or organisation, though it would be seeking support from influential people and organisations.

A further meeting was held in Derry City on Saturday 26th September at which a branch of "Silent Too Long", was formed. Future meetings are planned for Armagh, Tyrone and other parts of the six counties. Over 200 families have contacted "Silent Too Long" since its formation.

The Groups aims are:

To create unity and support amongst relatives who have suffered at the hands of loyalists and security forces and who want to tell their side of it. Also to show that the 2,000 plus people killed in the troubles were not all killed by the IRA as stated by the British Government.

To have the UDA banned. This force has openly boasted of their involvement in the murder of innocent Catholics.

To show that the security forces have murdered people with immunity from the law.

To show that there has been dual membership and collusion between members of loyalist paramilitary groups and the security forces.

The last two points can be backed up with hard evidence.

"Silent Too Long" will be writing to all Governments throughout the world. We hope to send relatives to different countries to tell of their suffering. We will be compiling a dossier of everyone murdered by these groups. We hope to have this published in book form at some stage.