

Lose Weight

Achieve your health goals with
The Times Health Club

TIMES ONLINE



“In the public sector absenteeism is endemic” Melanie Reid

News Comment Business Sport Life & Style Arts & Entertainment Our Papers Audio / Video Classifieds

UK News World News Politics Environment Weather Tech & Web News Related Reports Top

Sponsored by Live Search

[SHOP My Profile](#) [Sitemap](#)

Where am I? Home News **UK News**

From [The Times](#) January 9, 2008

Unionist anger at calls to rewrite history and call the Troubles a war

David Sharrock, Ireland Correspondent

A government statement that it was engaged in a war in Northern Ireland is one of several ideas being considered by the body established to find a solution to dealing with the legacy of the Province's murderous past.

Giving amnesties to people who committed murder is another option, but both suggestions were condemned yesterday by Unionist politicians and some victims of the Troubles.

The ideas emerged when the Consultative Group on the Past, an independent government-funded group set up last year and co-chaired by Lord Eames, the former Primate of Ireland, and Denis Bradley, a former Catholic priest, held its first public meeting.

The group is due to deliver its report in the summer, but it is unlikely that the Government would accept a recommendation to recognise the Northern Ireland conflict formally as a war – a definition for which Sinn Fein and its military wing the Provisional IRA have always argued. Such a step would overturn nearly 40 years of argument that the security forces were maintaining law and order.

Problems remain in dealing with the past, as was illustrated yesterday when Sir Hugh Orde, the Chief Constable of the Police Service of

Explore UK News

- Crime News
- Education News
- Health News
- Science News

Times Recommends

- McCanns 'to turn story into movie'
- Revolutionary new cataract treatment
- Plinth offers everyone 60 minutes of fame

Westminster blog

Comment Central



The Bradley Effect

Is this the reason for Obama's surprise loss?

- Daniel Finkelstein's blog

Northern Ireland (PSNI), said that a tipping point may soon be reached over the resources that can be allocated to looking into unsolved murders. Sir Hugh told members of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive Review Committee: "Our views generally on dealing with the past are well known. I would not want to express a specific view in relation to was it a war or wasn't it. Will an amnesty necessarily help?"

"I think that is the key role for Eames/Bradley. Is there any consensus around any of this which allows us to move forward? I suspect probably there isn't. I don't think the piecemeal approach to the past will deliver sufficient closure to allow Northern Ireland to move on." He added: "The latest ruling from Strasbourg around coroner inquests suggests we are going to have 44 to 46 additional inquests. It is relevant because I am taking more and more people from dealing with day-to-day problems to service public inquiries and coroners' inquests. So my real experts in criminal investigation and intelligence are now spending 99 per cent of their time servicing inquiries into matters that went back 5, 10, 15, 20 years. At some stage we will reach the tipping point, I fear, where I will have to make a very hard decision about how much more I can put into looking backwards."

Willie Frazer, who campaigns on behalf of victims' families, angrily rejected suggestions that the Government should acknowledge that it was engaged in a war with paramilitary groups.

"If there was a war it justifies the murder of our loved ones," he said. "It was not a war, it was a terrorist campaign."

Ian Paisley Jr, a junior minister with the Democratic Unionists, said: "If there was a war fought under the ordinary rules of engagement, they would have a case. Law and order would be turned on its head – it would be sickening and that's why it should be rejected."

Stephen Farry, of the Alliance Party, said: "Other mechanisms can be created to encourage paramilitaries to come forward without granting their wish for a rewrite of history."

However, Mitchel McLaughlin, of Sinn Fein, said: "There is no hierarchy of victims – everyone is suffering."

The consultative group is also considering making the PSNI's Historic Inquiries Team, which is reexamining more than 3,000 murders committed between 1968 and 1998, an independent body with a widened remit to cover the Republic of Ireland.

It is also considering if murderers could be encouraged to own up to their crimes in return for an amnesty as part of a truth recovery process.

It is understood that the consultative body has not found much support for a South African-style Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Red Box

Sam Coates on politics, spin and the latest from Westminster

Sources said that feedback indicated that many victims were tired of public inquiries and tribunals into a number of controversial killings.

Combat law

— A military conflict between two states or, in the case of civil war, between different groups within a state. International war is subject to international law

— Wars can be either unlawful or lawful. There have been a series of treaties since the 18th century that cover the conduct of war; they are largely designed to prevent “unnecessary suffering” or action that has no military advantage

— Today the main source of international law on war or the use of force is the United Nations Charter, notably Article 2 (4)

Source: Cambridge Encyclopaedia

Have your say

* Your View

* Name

* Email

* Town / City

Country / State

* Required Field

Remember
me

 [Terms and conditions](#)

- Print Email Post to del.icio.us Post to newsvine Post to Yahoo! Post to Digg

Also in UK News

- Apple forced to drop iTunes prices in UK
- Civil servant cleared as secrets case dropped
- Gerry McCann denies plans for Madeleine movie

Also in News

- Naples rubbish: Prodi turns to former police chief to clear things up
- Analysis: screening is not a universal panacea
- Brown promises more patient power in vision for NHS of the future

US elections



White House 2008

Full coverage of the race for the US presidency

Comment



“Winconsin-style schemes for the unemployed will only work if tailored to suit the local circumstances” [More...](#)

Magnus Linklater

- Post a comment

The Bugle



Satirical podcast

"The NHS is 60 this year. Just five years from its inevitable forced retirement"



Daily word game

Test your knowledge of today's news and events with our new Crickler puzzle



The Sunday Times Parent Power

The definitive guide to the best state and independent schools in Britain

The inquests



Diana and Dodi

All the news, video and pictures from the Royal Courts of Justice

Today

- ▶ ● Hillary Clinton wins New Hampshire, defying...
 - ▶ ● Video of Iran 'attack' on three...
- ▶ ● Analysis: how New Hampshire fooled everyone,...
 - ▶ ● Dress for your age

Today

- ▶ ● For sale: West's deadly nuclear secrets
 - ▶ ● Mamma's boys
- ▶ ● Hillary Clinton wins New Hampshire, defying...
 - ▶ ● Video of Iran 'attack' on three...

Today

- ▶ ○ How a backseat driver could bring terror to...
 - ▶ ○ The hidden secrets of I Am Legend
- ▶ ○ Head's main course: learn to mind your...
 - ▶ ○ How The Times turned Gormley's vision...

Focus Zone



Britain's Best Kept Secrets

John Cleare chooses secret spots across the UK that offer amazing landscape views

- ▶ ● Love Lager
- ▶ ● Celebrate Sydney's Summer
- ▶ ● Entrepreneurs
- ▶ ● Business Podcast
- ▶ ● Wine & Dine
- ▶ ● The Grade
- ▶ ● Your World
- ▶ ● New Horizons
- ▶ ● Fink Tank
- ▶ ● Football Business
- ▶ ● Travel

QUICKLINKS

Su Doku



Now Interactive

Love Sudoku? Play our brand new interactive game: with added functionality and daily prizes

Career/Jobs



Forget burnout, boreout is the new office disease

Are you irritable when you return from work? Drained of emotion? You could be suffering from boreout

Podcasts



The Bugle Podcast - After Iowa, only 302 days left to go

John Oliver and Andy Zaltzman ponder how the American election can be so long

Driving



BMW X5

Living in the city and buying an off-roader is like permanently wearing a condom for the one day a month you might get lucky, says Clarkson

Travel



52 great weekends for 2008

What are you up to at the weekend? And the one after? Chris Haslam has it all figured out for the whole of 2008

- Book a holiday

Photo Galleries



Pictures: Image of the Day gallery

A selection of photographic highlights from the last fortnight as featured in T2

[Su Doku](#)
[Travel](#)

[Driving](#)
[Podcasts](#)

[Career & Jobs](#)
[Photo Galleries](#)

Services

[Business](#) [Times](#)
[City Guides](#) [TV News](#)

- Free
- Dating
- Finance
- Free
- Brochures
- Credit
- IFA Search
- Report

Business City Guides

Overseas contacts and local business information



He's in, are you?

The Power 100



Times Bazaar

Travel, Food & Wine, Home & Garden, Gifts, Tickets



Classifieds

Cars

Aston Martin V8 Vantage

2006/56
£75,000
Ireland

Mercedes-Benz E320 CDI

2003/53
£17,995
South East England

Rolls-Royce Phantom LHD

2004/04
£135,000 + VAT
South East England

Car Insurance

Great car insurance deals online

Search for more cars and

bikes

Jobs

Assistant Commercial Director

Competitive
Partnerships for Schools
Regionally and London

Corporate Resources Director

Competitive
Partnerships for Schools
London

International Trade Director

£ 47,855 - £59,935 + benefits
Berr
Cambridge

General Manager – New Media Advertising Sales

Circa £120 OTE
BT Phonebook
UK

• Search more Jobs

Properties

High Beech, London E4

Beautiful 4 bedroom, 3 recep
property
Guide Price £725,000

Looking for a new Home?

Visit Times Online Properties
for Homes for Sale or Rent in
association with
PropertyFinder.com

Leicester LE3

Residential development site
with planning permission
£1,500,000

Home insurance

Great deals online

 Search for more properties

Holidays

**Australia - World Heritage
Listed Experience**

Award winning Kingfisher Bay
Resort, Fraser Island

To win a prize worth more than
£400 just register

**Spirit of New Zealand -
Exclusive £150 OFF per
couple**

19 Day Escorted tour of New
Zealand, including flights with
Qantas

From £2435pp

**Ramblers Worldwide
Holidays**

Over 200 totally amazing
guided walks. Small groups,
singles welcome!

POA

Travel Insurance

Great travel insurance deals
online

*

 Search for more holidays

Search Ad Reference:

Where am I? [Home](#) [News](#) **UK News**

[Contact us](#) | [Back to top](#)

[News](#) [Comment](#) [Business](#) [Sport](#) [Life & Style](#) [Arts & Entertainment](#)

Sponsored by  **Live Search**

[Contact our advertising team](#) for advertising and sponsorship in Times Online, The Times and The Sunday Times.

© Copyright 2008 Times Newspapers Ltd.

This service is provided on Times Newspapers' [standard Terms and Conditions](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#). To inquire about a licence to reproduce material from Times Online, The Times or The Sunday Times, click [here](#). This website is published by a member of the News International Group. News International Limited, 1 Virginia St, London E98 1XY, is the holding company for the News International group and is registered in England No 81701. VAT number GB 243 8054 69.