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PAISLEY MEETS SPEAKER OVER FARRELL MEMORIAL EVENT

The Leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, Dr. Ian Paisley has today led a delegation of senior DUP figures to meet the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, William Hay in order to discuss the proposed Mairead Farrell commemoration event being sponsored by Sinn Fein MLA Jennifer McCann. The delegation included Iris Robinson MP MLA, David Simpson MP MLA and William McCrea MP MLA. Speaking after the meeting, Dr. Paisley said:



"As the home of our Assembly, Parliament Buildings is a shared space. Events commemorating the lives of dead IRA criminals who were intercepted by the forces of law and order on their way to kill innocent people have no place in Parliament Buildings. We had a useful and frank meeting with the Speaker and my colleagues and I expressed in very forthright terms our opinion that this disgraceful proposal should not be given the go-ahead.

One thing that arose from the meeting is the problems with the current arrangements for booking facilities in Parliament Buildings, such as the Long Gallery. It is clear that

ELECTION RESULTS:



when application forms are being lodged for the use of facilities, some people are not being entirely forthright about the nature of the events they are planning. This event for example was billed as having something to do with International Women's Day which is clearly not the case.

My colleagues and I made it clear to the Speaker that in future Assembly officials must scrutinise more closely what is said on application forms and if necessary question the applicant as to the nature of their event. I have been assured that the Speaker is prepared to consider what other mechanisms can be put in place to ensure issues like this do not occur in future.

The DUP will oppose any commemoration for murderers in Stormont and will use all of our influence to prevent this event from taking place. I am confident that we are bringing closure to this issue.

As First Minister I would urge maturity amongst MLAs as to how they deal with these issues."

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