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Tackling legacy of Troubles to be discussed

The group considering how to deal with the legacy of the Troubles will today reveal their plans to British and Irish politicians behind closed doors.

The leaders of the Consultative Group on the Past, Denis Bradley and Lord Eames, will today deliver a private briefing to members of the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly, meeting in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Assembly co-chair Peter Hain said the body will listen to the presentation by the group and later ask questions to allay politicians' concerns.

A major report, which is expected to recommend a South Africa-style Truth Commission, is due to be published in coming weeks.

It is understood that a five-year Truth Commission proposed by the group may be led by an investigative unit tasked with securing prosecutions.

Organisations such as the IRA, loyalist groups and security forces may be able to appoint representatives to the commission to provide information on incidents their respective groups were involved in.

Members of the Ulster Unionist party and the Democratic Unionist Party yesterday took up their seats at the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly for the first time after an 18-year boycott.

The body was formally established in 1990 as a link between Westminster and Dublin, with 25 British and 25 Irish members drawn from the upper and lower houses of both parliaments.

In recent years the body has been extended to include representatives from the Welsh Assembly, the Scottish Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Isle of Man and Channel Islands.

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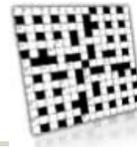
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