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NORTHERN IRELANDS LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY



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DUP NEWS

Latest News:

Simpson - DUP has taken a consistent line over Victims' issue

Following comments by Jarlath Burns, one of the Eames Bradley Report authors that some unionist politicians had been duplicitous in their approach to the Report the DUP's David Simpson reiterated that the DUP has a very consistent policy that there can be no blurring of the lines between terrorists and innocent victims. Speaking ahead of a DUP debate on the Eames Bradley Report in the Assembly Mr Simpson said,



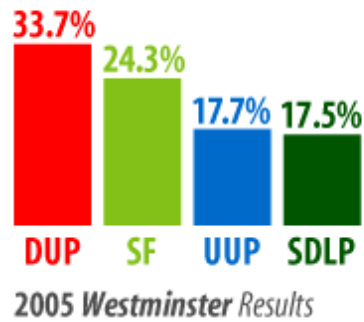
"The people of Northern Ireland have been outraged by the Eames Bradley Report which has at its centre an objective to treat everyone who was killed in the Troubles the same. The DUP has been absolutely consistent in its view that there can be no blurring of the line between the terrorist and the terrorised.

There is certainly no duplicity on the part of the Democratic Unionist Party. The Shankill butchers cannot be placed on the same level as their innocent victims nor can the Shankill bomber be placed on the same level as those whom he killed. That has always been our position.

The DUP has met with the Secretary of State to outline our opposition to these

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obnoxious proposals and my colleague Nigel Dodds has also outlined our disgust to the Prime Minister in the House of Commons.

Lord Morrow and I have tabled a motion in the Assembly which calls on MLAs to condemn the Eames Bradley proposals which equate terrorists with innocent victims. I trust that MLAs will use tomorrow's motion to send a very strong signal to the Government that these proposals must be binned so that further insult is not caused to innocent victims such as those who suffered in my own border constituency.

Sometimes in politics there are issues which can be seen in shades of grey and I have been in politics long enough to acknowledge that there are times when nuance is called for. This is not one of those occasions. This is not a unionist versus nationalist debate it is a right versus wrong debate. This is a stark, black-and-white issue as far as the people whom I represent are concerned.

There are some times when so-called open-mindedness and the much-valued preparedness to "think outside the box" to quote that oft-repeated cliché, can lead individuals to countenance something that is utterly wrong. This is one of those occasions. Whilst I do not doubt the intellectual integrity of the members of the Consultative Group on the Past, I fear that a sort of group-think mentality has set in.

Cosseted away from the social mores and moral sensitivities of the people of Northern Ireland they seem to have persuaded each other that proposals aimed at elevating murderers, bombers, gun-men and other criminals to the status of innocent victims is in some way a noble course of action to pursue. On that score they are very, very wrong and have made a gross miscalculation, one which I fear has undermined the totality of their work."

The text of the motion tabled by David Simpson MP MLA and Lord Morrow MLA is as follow:

"That this Assembly recognises the importance of meeting the needs of victims; and condemns proposals from the Consultative Group on the Past which equate perpetrators of violence with innocent victims."

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