



**EXCLUSIONS:** Nichola Bradley, whose aunt, uncle and cousins were killed during the Troubles, protests outside Stormont last month with relatives of other victims of the Troubles

# Our peace has been shamefully neglectful of those who suffered most

**F**EEL privileged to have been trusted with the stories of those impacted by the ongoing delay over the victims' pension, along with those excluded from that redress scheme. The Troubles pension has been estimated to cost between \$100 million and \$800m depending on whose calculations you're working off.

Where that money is coming from remains unresolved, as Westminster says Stormont has to foot the bill and our local executive rightly point out that this is impossible given present budget constraints.

Looking at that in greater depth I've been talking to people, many of whom will be excluded completely from the scheme. Not because they were injured by their own actions and not because they were convicted of any offence either before or after their injury.

Those issues have already been dealt with by Westminster legislation and more recently a High Court ruling.

A High Court judge ruled in the case taken by Jennifer McNern that the Executive Office was deliberately stymieing the commencement of pension payouts in order to pressurise the government into funding it and, in Deputy First Minister Michelle O'Neill's case, getting the eligibility criteria changed.

Those who served a prison sentence of 30 months or longer will have to go in front of a judge-led panel and make a case to be awarded the pension.

The pension scheme was originally only intended for those who suffered severe and life-changing physical injuries.

Those who lost limbs or their sight, or who suffered injuries that have left them in a lifetime of pain and are the very visual casualties of our conflict.

We can see their injuries and that makes understanding their suffering easier to empathise with.

They need and deserve their pension, and that should happen at the next available opportunity as was ruled in the High Court last month in the scathing judgment by Mr Justice McAlinden.

The primary legislation passed in

Allison  
MORRIS



Westminster ruled out anyone whose injuries were caused by their own actions, therefore removing the handful of 'hard cases' - that is not going to change and now only serves as a distraction.

However, the criteria was changed by Westminster to include PTSD, which will open the scheme up to many more people than originally intended, including first responders and members of the police and army who attended scenes. But it excludes 'secondary victims', meaning those who didn't witness the event that claimed the lives of their loved one.

The mainly female bereaved victims who were not at the scene at the time.

We can't see the psychological injuries they suffered, their burning scars are hidden inside and remain a barrier to healing our society as generational trauma is passed down to the next generation.

For the widows, the children, the mothers who suffered life-changing and life-debilitating

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trauma their fight goes on.

And so once again we have victim being pitted against victim, trauma measured in terms of who was at the scene and who wasn't.

The Consultative Group on the Past, also known as the Eames/Bradley report, dealt with the issue of the bereaved in 2007 in a comprehensive look at legacy that fell at the first hurdle.

The report proposed the nearest relative of someone who died as a result of the conflict should receive a one-off ex-gratia recognition payment of £12,000.

While that doesn't recognise the suffering of families with multiple siblings it does accept that the bereaved deserve recognition.

There are groups such as Relatives for Justice who are raising this issue but in the main it has been lost among the recent rhetoric over who is and isn't deemed worthy.

Last weekend, while I was in a supermarket shopping, I received a call from a person who lost a brother in the most horrendous circumstances.

As I walked around the shop on a Saturday afternoon, we talked and talked some more, about the impact on their family's life, the devastation of constantly reliving the murder of a much cherished loved one and the failure politically to properly heal this place after a conflict that has damaged so many of us internally, irreparably.

It was a conversation I've had many times, with many people, but my location, doing

an everyday task while a person on the other side of the phone struggled so badly with their everyday life somehow hammered home how neglectful our 'peace' has been of victims and survivors.

All they wanted was that I help tell their brother's story, so that people will remember his name and know he loved and was loved and that there be official recognition that his death was wrong. It doesn't sound like much, does it? Official acceptance that wrong was done and that people suffered as a result.

A sorry, an acknowledgement, a token gesture. Is that not something that we can all agree on?

## ON THIS DAY

SEPTEMBER 03 1920

### Protestant Home Ruler Sued Carson

WITH deep regret we announce the death of Major William H Davey, MA, BL, OBE, which took place at his residence, 48 Bawnmore Road, Belfast.

Deceased (aged 40) was one of the best known Ulster Liberals and was formerly editor of the *Ulster Guardian*. He was the son of Mr Robert Davey, Greenholm, Carrickfergus and educated at QUB. Subsequently, he was called to the Bar and was a member of the North East Circuit. In 1915 he joined the army, serving with the Tyneside Irish.

Major Davey was a staunch Liberal Home Ruler. At the 1918 general election he was selected as Nationalist candidate for Derry but withdrew [under the Green Pact] and was invited to contest Duncairn against Sir Edward Carson. Following the contest he instituted proceedings for libel against Sir Edward, asserting that the latter described him as a Sinn Féiner. A settlement was reached on Sir Edward Carson apologising in court before the action proceedings opened.

### Army Response to Evictions

MAJOR General EGT Bainbridge, Competent Military Authority, has issued the following: 'It has been brought to my notice that during the past few days many peaceable citizens living in districts of the county and city of Belfast, inhabited for the most part by persons of a different religious persuasion to themselves, have been summarily ordered to leave the district within 24 hours under pain of having their houses and furniture destroyed should they fail to comply. In many cases these threats have been carried out. This barbarous conduct must cease.'

The major general went on to ask any person receiving such a warning to contact Victoria Barracks, Belfast.

### Family of DI Swanzy Regret Reprisals

THE mother and sister of the late District Inspector Swanzy acknowledge the loving sympathy they have received since his murder.

'At the same time they are grieved beyond measure at the destruction and loss which has befallen Lisburn, originating, as they fully appreciate and understand, from the horror at the deed which has brought desolation to their lives. They wish to say how truly sorry they are that any person should have suffered any sorrow or loss on account of him.'

### Brutal Gilford Murder

YESTERDAY about eleven o'clock a shocking tragedy was perpetrated at Knocknagor, Tullyish Rectory, a short distance from Banbridge when Mr William McDowell, motorcar proprietor of Gilford, was brutally murdered.

It appears that William McConville, cashier at Gilford Mill, as was customary, motored with Mr McDowell to the Northern Bank and drew out the necessary cash to pay Mill employees. They had reached Knocknagor School when the murder and robbery occurred.

EDITED BY ÉAMON PHOENIX  
e.phoenix@irishnews.com