

Northern Ireland may set up Truth Commission

By Tom Peterkin
Ireland Correspondent

THE Government has announced a group to establish if Northern Ireland should have a South African-style Truth Commission to help the province come to terms with its violent past.

The group will be led by Lord Eames, the former head of the Anglican Church in Ireland, and Denis Bradley, a former Catholic priest and community mediator.

The move announced by Peter Hain, the Northern Ireland Secretary, comes amid mounting concerns about the spiralling costs of inquiries set up to investigate controversial deaths during the Troubles.

By far the most contentious is the £180 million Saville Inquiry into the Bloody Sunday shootings, which has yet to report nine years after it was set up.

Yesterday Mr Hain admitted that the cost of the investigation into the deaths of 13 civilians shot dead by the Army in Londonderry in 1972 was "staggering".

Mr Hain said: "There has to be a better way of looking at Northern Ireland's past than public inquiries."

Mr Hain said he still believed that setting up the investigation was the right thing to do at the time. But his comments are the nearest a serving Cabinet minister has come to suggesting that it has been a waste of money.

Other inquiries costing an estimated £17.5 million have been set up to investigate allegations of state collusion.

They are examining the murder of Billy Wright, the loyalist paramilitary killed by republicans, Rosemary Nelson, a Catholic lawyer killed by a loyalist car bomb, and Robert Hamill, who was beaten to death by a loyalist mob. Another inquiry, into the murder of the Catholic solicitor

Pat Finucane by the Ulster Defence Association, has yet to open.

The Superintendents' Association welcomed the development, but called for the collusion inquiries to be suspended in the meantime.

Chief Superintendent Stephen Grange said: "We do however harbour a significant concern that the work of the consultative group, which isn't due to formally report until the summer of 2008, may be made more difficult by the ongoing public inquiries, none of which have concluded and which have already cost, by any standards, huge sums of public money.

"We feel therefore that in pausing for reflection and identifying the best way forward, there exists some scope for these inquiries to be suspended."

Investigating the past takes up a huge amount of police time and resources. The Police Service of Northern Ireland's Historical Enquiries Team, which is re-examining 3,000 Troubles-related deaths, takes millions from the police budget.

Lord Eames and Mr Bradley will report back next summer with their conclusions. One option is a Truth Commission, similar to the one set up in South Africa to investigate crimes committed during the apartheid regime.

They have been appointed to co-chair a small independent consultative group, whose members are: Rev Lesley Carroll, a Belfast Presbyterian minister; Jarleth Burns, a prominent member of the Gaelic Athletic Association; Willie John McBride, former British Lions captain; James Mackey, a visiting professor in Philosophy at Trinity College, Dublin; Elaine Moore, a prison alcohol and drugs counsellor and David Porter, director of the Centre for Contemporary Christianity in Ireland.



The Popular Liberation Army of Westmorland believes that holiday home owners are 'leech-like scum' that have put properties out of the reach of locals

Lake District faces war on second homes

By Nigel Bunyan

A SELF-STYLED "popular liberation army" has pledged to attack holiday homes in the Lake District in protest at "leech-like scum" whom they claim have pushed property prices so high that local people can no longer afford to live in the area.

Cumbria Police are taking the threats so seriously that they have advised householders to be vigilant.

Forensic experts are analysing a typed letter in which the

self-styled Popular Liberation Army of Westmorland (PLAW) makes a series of threats and declares its allegiance with other disaffected groups in Wales and Cornwall.

Detectives are checking the organisation's claim that its members have already set fire to one holiday home.

The PLAW's emergence coincides with recent threats against celebrity chefs Rick Stein and Jamie Oliver.

Both have been targeted by the Cornwall National Liberation Army, seemingly in "retal-

iation" for the effects their restaurants may have had on house prices.

The PLAW letter, entitled *Let It Be Known*, reads:

"The Popular Liberation Army of Westmorland hereby pledges that we will one day see an end to the occupation of Westmorland by incomers,

holiday home owners and the encroaching leech-like scum of that ilk.

"We are at present 25 people born and bred in Westmorland and who are unable to buy property in the land of our birth".

The letter refers to an alleged arson attack on a holiday home two years ago, as

well as "various acts" of criminal damage throughout the Westmorland area.

It concludes by claiming that it is being supported by extremists abroad.

"With funding from America and special training we are able to start our own battle."

Cumbria Police said: "We take all threats of this nature seriously.

"We would ask all holiday home owners to be extra vigilant and if they see anything suspicious to report it to the police immediately".

YOUR VIEW
Are 'liberation armies' thugs or campaigners?
telegraph.co.uk/news

Jamie Oliver dismisses threats from Cornish 'liberation army'

By Telegraph Reporter

JAMIE Oliver shrugged off threats from the Cornish National Liberation Army (CNLA), which accused the celebrity chef of causing "the inflation of house and other living costs at Cornish expense".

The CNLA also said that Rick Stein,

who has restaurants in Padstow, "would feel the rosy glow" from the heat of fires.

Speaking at the Fifteen restaurant near Newquay, Mr Oliver said: "Trying to knock off a couple of celebrity chefs is probably not the most poignant answer, even to a terrorist. They need to do a bit of homework.

"When anything prospers, the first thing that reacts is house pricing - that is reflected across the country.

"If there is an affordable housing problem, that is the Government's problem."

Malcolm Bell, chief executive of South West Tourism, said that it was "rather bizarre" to attack Jamie

Oliver because Fifteen, which opened last year, and the charity behind it was about helping young people in Cornwall and using local produce.

Devon and Cornwall Police are investigating the threats made by the CNLA against the chefs, which were made in an email to businesses and newspapers.

Obituaries develop an online life of their own

DAILY TELEGRAPH readers have continued to inspire and amuse by writing their own obituaries on My Telegraph, our blogging website.

After we published some of the best extracts in yesterday's paper, the obituaries have kept on coming.

Here are some examples:

Aif Reece, who has died aged 105 rescuing a family of puppies from a burning building, will be remembered for his four Nobel prizes and his key role in bringing about a truly just society.

"It only really got going when I turned 75," he said on his death bed. "Before that it was all golf and crosswords."

Mr Reece is survived by four children, 16 grandchildren, 45 great-grandchildren and his wife Suki, 24.

Aegis was born in 1981 somewhere in the remote depths of Eastern England.

Displaying creative talent from an early age, he was soon enrolled in school choirs; his first experience of singing, and one that was to put him off such creative pursuits until a later age.

Often commended for his fiction and non-fiction in English classes, he soon became far too embarrassed to write publicly after many of his stories were enforced upon his classmates by over-enthusiastic teachers.

After several jobs, Aegis became involved in music by singing in a friend's band at a gig whilst intoxicated. This drunken caterwauling became a trademark of his vocal style, and continued right up until his death.

Death of a poet: Although Marya's prose was deathless, her poems did not enter the Halls of the Immortals. She was born in obscurity, lived in obscurity, yet died in a blaze of publicity as she and her blogs went up in smoke. A blazing talent, indeed.

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