

Dear Mr McManus,

We write in relation to your call for evidence on the Functioning of Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill and specifically the provisions of 1 (6) of the proposed Bill.

Innocent victims and survivors of terrorism find it very traumatic to see ex-terrorists in positions of power as elected representatives, with their history of convictions or involvement in sustained terrorist campaigns that directly resulted in the murder of these innocent victims' loved ones or which caused the life changing injuries they have to live with.

To further deeply insult them, individuals with similar terrorists backgrounds were insensitively (to put it mildly) employed and paid through public funds to be Special Advisers to Government. Any rational and law abiding society would question the morality of such practice, not to mention how such individuals are qualified to hold such positions.

This practice was meant to have ceased with the introduction of Ann's Law in July 2013. However with continued total disregard for the law, political parties that supported these terrorist groupings have circumnavigated legislation to retain these ex-terrorists in positions of power in the operation of government. Although paid by party funds they acted as so-called "Super Spads" outside the official system. It emerged at the RHI Inquiry that these "Super Spads" were elevated to positions of greater power, having control and managing the special advisers who had been appointed.

Innocent Victims United supports the provision of the Bill to prevent this obvious malpractice and we expect support for our stance to be forthcoming from all political parties and elected representatives who claim to have stood against the campaign of violence otherwise referred to as; 'The Troubles.'

**NOTE:**

Innocent Victims United is an umbrella organisation formed in 2012 which has 23 member groups from across Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and Great Britain with a combined membership of over 11,500 individual victims and survivors.

IVU is clear that in the context of 'The Northern Ireland Troubles' that there was no justification for the use of criminal violence in the pursuance of or defence of a political objective, whomever the perpetrators were.

Spokesman for Innocent Victims United