



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

**Reference Code:** 2021/97/34

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Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

26 July 1995

Mr. Seamus McKendry  
Families of the Disappeared



Dear Mr. McKendry,

The Taoiseach, Mr. John Bruton, T.D., has asked me to thank you for your recent letter and enclosure.

The Taoiseach has asked me to say that he is conscious of the suffering endured by the families of the disappeared. This is a tragedy that has continued for too long and he supports your campaign to allow the burial of your loved ones with dignity - indeed, the Taoiseach has already raised this issue with Sinn Fein.

Regarding your request for a meeting, the Taoiseach would be pleased to meet your Group to discuss your concerns. Please contact Ms. Kathleen McDermott, Appointments Secretary, to arrange a suitable date and time for this meeting. (Tel. 6789385).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Kathleen McDermott', written over a horizontal line.

Private Secretary  
to the Taoiseach

Oifig an Taoisigh, Tithe an Rialtais, Baile Átha Cliath 2.  
Office of the Taoiseach, Government Buildings, Dublin 2.

# ROINN AN TAOISIGH

Uimhir.....

*Private Secretary  
Draft annex recommended  
S. Hare*



*Yasmeen!  
For you to  
see prior  
to  
must have  
you have  
indicated  
that you  
will meet  
these people.  
Serge  
25/7*

TO: Simon Hare  
FROM: Bridgeena Nolan

## Re letter from Mr. Seamus McKendry, Co-ordinator of Families of the Disappeared

1. Mr. Seamus McKendry is co-ordinator of Families of the Disappeared, a non party-political organisation whose aim is to recover the bodies of their missing relatives.

He wrote to the Taoiseach asking

- (a) to meet him to discuss their cases
- (b) to call upon Mr. Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein to resolve this tragedy and
- (c) to consider wearing the enclosed ribbon as a public gesture of solidarity with the aims of their campaign

2. The Taoiseach has agreed to meet with the group to discuss their concerns.

3. Draft reply submitted.

*B. Nolan*  
11 July 1995

*Recd 24/11/95*

*Kalalawa,  
To keep Mrs. H  
when request  
comes in.*

*Serge  
26/7*

BF 24/7.

16th June 1995

Families of the Disappeared  
c/o Seamus McKendry



Dear Mr Bruton,

During twenty-five years of conflict in Northern Ireland more than 3,000 people lost their lives. As you are undoubtedly aware in at least twelve cases the families of victims have been denied the right to a Christian funeral and burial.

In the light of recent developments towards a lasting peace, we, the families of the disappeared believe that pressure must be put upon the Republican Movement to release these bodies.

The absence of our loved ones remains denies us the right to mourn with Christian dignity and only serves to compound the anguish and misery we have endured.

Sinn Fein, responding to a number of public pleas, including that of US President Bill Clinton, have acknowledged the aims and validity of our campaign. However, their failure to unearth any significant information suggests the need for more decisive action. We believe it is hypocritical for Sinn Fein to expect the status of a full democratic political party while this issue remains unresolved.

We would urge you to meet the families of the disappeared at your earliest convenience and hear first hand of their distressing circumstances. We also implore you to use your considerable power of office to highlight our plight to your party colleagues and call upon Gerry Adams/Sinn Fein to resolve this immoral tragedy.

To publicise our campaign we have adopted the wearing of a sky-blue ribbon, as a symbol of hope, this will be officially launched at the Linenhall Library, Belfast on Monday 26th June. We ask you to consider wearing the enclosed ribbon as a public gesture of solidarity with the aims of our campaign.

Yours sincerely,

Seamus McKendry.  
Co-ordinator Families of the Disappeared.

The following are amongst the cases our organisation wishes to highlight:

- \* 1972: Recently widowed mother of ten Jean McConville is taken from her Divis home in Belfast and never seen again.
- \* 1974: John McIlroy and Seamus Wright from Andersonstown, Belfast disappear on their way to work.
- \* 1977: Dungannon teenager Columba McVeigh is abducted and murdered by his IRA captors who believed he was an Army agent.
- \* 1977: Undercover soldier Captain Robert Nairac is taken from a South Armagh public house, he is believed to have been killed by the IRA.
- \* 1978: Belfast petty criminals, 18-year-old John McClory and Brian McKinney, 22, are taken from their work. The families now believe they were kidnapped by the IRA and murdered.
- \* 1979: Unemployed painter Gerald Anthony Evans from Crossmaglen disappears on March 27th, one year later neighbour Charlie Armstrong also disappears.

\* Sources suggest there may be as many as twenty individuals who have been disappeared by the paramilitaries.

**FAMILIES OF THE DISAPPEARED** is a non party-political organisation with the sole objective of allowing the relatives of the disappeared to bury their loved ones with Christian dignity.

The enclosed ribbons have been manufactured by several immediate relatives of those cases outlined above.