The stated purpose of the Legacy Bill (‘LB’) is to promote reconciliation for the families of the victims of the Troubles in NI.

Ostensibly sounding like a noble cause, the LB however has two fatal flaws: rather than promote reconciliation, it clashes with the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and the European Human Rights Convention by protecting the perpetrators responsible for atrocities and murder without obtaining any form of closure for the victims’ families.

2 particularly problematic dimensions:

The liberal distribution of specific and general immunity to perpetrators.

Any individual may receive immunity for any actions relating to the Troubles. The only exceptions are for those already charged with the crime for which they are requesting immunity, and those of a sexual nature.

This means that many of the victims' families will never see justice in any form

The LB attempts to make up for this deficiency by requiring perpetrators to give accounts of their involvement in the Troubles to encourage a form of closure for the families.

The LB does not require the individual to provide comprehensive information, it only requires some amount of information that they believe to be true. Consequently perpetrators could provide a small piece of information about an incident and then receive specific or general general immunity. If it comes to light later that the individual provided was incorrect, so long as the court believes the perpetrator was being “honest”, their immunity is upheld.

The LB does not require the information provided to be necessarily released to the public or victims’ families. Thus immunity would be provided liberally to as multiple perpetrators would carry little benefit to victims’ families

Part 3 asserts that new inquiries into Troubles crimes should be restricted.

New inquiries would have to be initiated by a new body, the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR). It would have power to decide if an inquiry should be begun.

It would create a yearly report and a timeline of the events, which does not have to be released to the public.

Any and all currently active inquiries would be immediately closed except for inquiries reaching their conclusion. Victims’ families would have a harder time opening new inquiries, which is already a long and complicated process as seen with the inquiries into Birmingham Bombings.

Many international organizations and governments have noted that Parts 2 and 3 of the Bill go against their philosophies and rules including Amnesty International. The United Nations has urged that the Bill be redrafted, and others point out that the Bill violates the Good Friday Agreement, as well as the European Human Rights Convention.