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John Dallat MLA

24th January 2007

SDLP DALLAT: UNIONISTS BLOCK COLLUSION DEBATE

SDLP Whips John Dallat and PJ Bradley said unionist representatives on the Assembly Business Committee have blocked a proposal for a debate on Special Branch collusion with loyalist murder gangs.

Mr Dallat said: "The unionist parties have failed the first test of operating a democratic parliament by using their numbers to block a matter of immense and immediate concern. Murder gangs rampaged around this country with a licence to kill signed by the police, yet the DUP and UUP think it is more urgent to use the last debate in this Assembly to discuss licences to sell drink.

"Unionists have always turned the blind eye to collusion which just killed Catholics, but the collusion disclosed this week by Police Ombudsman Nuala O'Loan killed their Protestant constituents as well, as Raymond McCord will be reminding them in the forthcoming elections.

"Murder paid for out of our taxes is a matter which should transcend political barriers and it is outrageous that it should be blocked for the most partisan of reasons. Do the unionists seriously believe they can pull a veil over all the dirty doings of the past and ride off on the campaign trail? Don't they realise that they will be looking for votes from communities which are the victims of the killer gangs?"

PJ Bradley said: "In a few weeks time unionists will be campaigning to protect the interest of the community they represent, yet it seemingly means little to them how many of their own people were murdered by state-paid serial killers. Instead of circling their wagons around the killers and their cohorts, they should be endeavouring to expose them and bring them to justice. Sooner or later, they will have to face another democratic forum and account for their failure to demand justice for their own people."

ENDS

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