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Orde challenged over collusion memo

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Sinn Féin Upper Bann representative John O'Dowd has accused the PSNI Chief Constable High Orde of insulting those families who have suffered at the hands of Special Branch collusion with unionist death squads. Mr O'Dowd's remarks came after Mr Orde sent a memo around PSNI members defending former members of the RUC and criticising nationalists and republicans for their reaction to the Ombudsman Report.

Mr O'Dowd said:

"Last weeks report by the Police Ombudsman is the tip of the collusion iceberg. It relates to one small area of North Belfast, one small UVF unit and one section of the Special Branch. I have no doubt that this collusion policy was replicated time and again across the six counties.

"Hugh Orde's memo will cause deep offence to the families of those killed through the British policy of collusion. No amount of spin from Hugh Orde or memos to his colleagues can mask the reality that the Special Branch controlled and manipulated unionist death squads and are implicated in the murders of almost 1000 people. That is a scandal which Mr Orde needs to face up to not try and ignore.

"Sinn Féin are determined that any members of the PSNI who were involved in collusion or its cover-up will be weeded out of the current policing structures. Unlike the SDLP we are not prepared to sit back and allow the colluders and the Human Rights abusers to continue in position as if nothing happened. That is what democratic accountability is all about. Sinn Féin will once again raise these matters with the British Prime Minster Tony Blair in Downing Street talks tomorrow morning. " ENDS

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