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Comments by Deputy Commissioner John Stevens, BBC Radio Ulster, 28 April 1999 (5.15 pm)

re: Finucane Inquiry

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Commentator: The man heading a new investigation into the murder of solicitor, Pat Finucane, insists it will be independent and will involve twenty officers from Police Forces in England. John Stevens, who's the Dputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police says he's aware that Mr Finucane's widow is refusing to help the inquiry but that he hopes his team will gain her confidence. Our chief security correspondent Brian Rowan, asked the Deputy Commissioner how he would be conducting the investigation.

Stevens: The first part of it will be to review and reinvestigate the murder of Pat Finucane. There are also two documents that have been presented, one called Deadly Intelligence and the other by the United Nations Rapporteur. And we'll be looking at the implications of the allegations in relation to those documents as well.

Interviewer: That's the allegation of collusion?

Stevens: That's correct.

Interviewer: In your previous investigations, how much did you concentrate on the Finucane murder given that your investigation unearthed the double agent Brian Nelson?

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Interviewer: The double agent Brian Nelson, as those who went to Court will know, was linked ~~in~~ in certain aspects to Pat Finucane's murder. We looked at that. The second inquiry, so-called Stevens inquiry, was as a result of instructions from the Director of Public Prosecutions and the then Chief Constable of the RUC, Sir Hugh Annesley, talked about his tying up lose ends. And that was solely what that inquiry was about. At no time, at no time, have I investigated the murder of Pat Finucane. That has now changed, as of today.

Interviewer: But was there anything that came to your attention ten years ago which gave you concern about the Finucane murder.

Stevens: Yes.

Interviewer: Can you be anymore precise than that?

Stevens: No.

Interviewer: The Finucane family have already said that they don't have confidence in this investigation. How important is it for you to get them on board, to get them cooperating with your team?

Stevens: Massively important. I've written to Mrs Finucane's solicitor twice. It is very important to have their trust and confidence and I make a plea that they allow me the chance of doing that. What I can say, at this stage, is that Mrs Finucane's evidence will not be crucial at this stage but I anticipate, if we're successful, that her evidence may well be crucial to achieving a prosecution in this case. And I make a plea to her to come along and assist me in the very, very difficult task I've got to do.

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Interviewer: How can you convince people that this is a truly independent investigation? That it's not the police looking at the police?

Stevens: I think look at my track record if you would, what was achieved and what was done ten year ago, six months after Stalker. Give me some credit for that, please. And you're going to have to take my word that we will be independent. We will do our job and those officers who come over from Scotland Yard and Northumbria police are determined to ensure that we do that type of job.

Interviewer: Have you, at this stage, taken possession of any documents? How has the investigation proceeded up to this point?

Stevens: We've already taken possession of documents. I'll also be looking to take possession of some exhibits that had came from the murder scene. You've got to remember that in the last ten years there's been massive advances in forensic science. DNA is just an example of that. Ad we have at our disposal the latest techniques which I hope will bring some kind of conclusion to this case.

Interviewer: What cooperation are you getting? And what cooperation do you expect to get from the RUC?

Stevens: I've had outstanding cooperation from the Chief Constable to date and, if we're going to be successful that cooperation has to continue. When I came into Northern Ireland, nearly ten years ago, I received cooperation. I think the RUC knows John Stevens and I don't think there'll be any problems whatsoever maintaining that cooperation.

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Interviewer: You mentioned earlier in the interview that you will be looking at this issue of collusion. Does the investigation focus solely on the Army or will you be looking at the RUC as well?

Stevens: Both. We'll be looking at every aspect of the security forces. Wherever we have any evidence, or even intelligence, that there is collusion we will be looking at that.

Interviewer: Ten years have passed since the Finucane killing. Can you with any confidence say that you're going to be able to clear this matter up to everyone's satisfaction. Can you bring the killers of Pat Finucane before the Courts and can you put these allegations of collusion to rest?

Stevens: Let's make it absolutely clear, this is a very, very difficult task we have to do. This is a murder that took place ten years ago. No one, no one knows better than I do how difficult that task is. But let me give you my assurance that whatever is necessary will be done. I'm confident that we should get some result but it's going to be very difficult indeed.

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