

An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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Meeting with Magee (Rosemary Nelson) family, Dundalk, 24 June 2000

1. I met with Eunan Magee, Bernadette McQuillan, Caitlín Magee, brother and sisters of Rosemary Nelson, on Saturday last. They were accompanied by a solicitor friend, Colm Owens,

2. Their main message was that the family is losing faith in the Port investigation. It is becoming clearer to them that only an independent judicial inquiry will establish the facts surrounding Rosemary's murder. They asked for a meeting with the Taoiseach to put their point of view.

3. I explained that we had called publicly on several occasions for the truth surrounding all of the circumstances of the murder to be established. However we felt it necessary to continue to give space to Port while a chance remained that the perpetrators of the murder might be brought to justice. On that basis the family accepted that, were the Taoiseach to meet them, he would probably not be in a position to call for a public inquiry.

4. The Magees fear that Port may have come to the conclusion that the investigation will not result in convictions and is possibly considering an exit strategy. They fear that he may eventually blame the failure of the investigation on lack of nationalist cooperation and in particular because a witness from the Smurfit organisation (a brother of Sam Marshall who was murdered after leaving Lurgan police station) will not give a statement. This should not hamper the investigation because Marshall's information has been conveyed through a third party. (The information relates to a fleeting perception of a white car and a driver in a baseball cap parked in the vicinity of the Nelson household the night before the murder).

5. Colm Owens complained that the Port team has never interviewed the residents in the locality. Interviews were carried out originally by the RUC who did not record many of the original statements. Port continues to work out of Lurgan RUC station and still appears blinkered on possible collusion on the part of the RUC.

6. The RUC forced Port's hand in relation to the arrest of Ian Thompson (10 March 2000) on the grounds that he was poised to attempt a murder. Four cars associated with Thompson may provide a connection to Rosemary's murder. Owens feels that it is crucial to establish Thompson's movements while he was a member of the RIR.

7. A member of the Port team called Mrs. Magee (Rosemary Nelson's mother) on Thursday last to say there was nothing further to report and implied that no progress would be made in the next month or two. The Port team is moving

out of Lurgan police station until Drumcree is over. Port continues to have concerns for his own safety . (He was astonished to see that members of the Jameson family of Portadown were repairing the roof of Lurgan RUC station).

8. The Magee family feel that the NIO is not sufficiently sensitive to the need to keep the Magee parents informed. The NIO has been keeping in close touch with Paul Nelson. It is clear that there is a lack of communication between Nelson and the Magees.

9. I undertook to raise the possibility of a call on the Taoiseach and to keep in touch with Paul Nelson on the question.

Gary Ansbro
Anglo-Irish Division
27 June 2000

and Colin Port ?

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