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Local & National

I won't resign, vows Flanagan

Friday, January 25, 2008

By Matthew McCreary

Under-fire former Chief Constable Sir Ronnie Flanagan last night insisted that he will not quit his current job following his apology to the families of the Omagh victims.

Sir Ronnie, who is now Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, said that he did not see what positive outcome could result from his resignation, despite criticism of him from relatives of those killed in the 1998 atrocity.

He said: "I have spoken to people who have been involved in this investigation throughout, people within the police service and people outside the police service. I have asked them over and over again candidly to tell me if there was anything I personally did or did not do that I should have done that would have made a difference to this investigation, and they assure me that that's not the case.

"I have thought hard about this and I don't see what positive outcome there would be from my resignation.

"I haven't come to the conclusion that I shouldn't resign lightly, I have given it a lot of thought and I don't see that it would be a positive outcome, in fact I think it might deflect from the blame that should properly be directed at those who carried out this atrocity."

Speaking on the BBC last night, Sir Ronnie emphasised that investigations into the attack were ongoing, despite the outcome of the trial against Sean Hoey last month.

"I'm not saying there's wonderful hope to be held out to the families of success, but... this is an investigation that is not over just because the trial recently was not successfully followed through," he said.

"I accept responsibility for those shortcomings identified by the judge which happened during my time as Chief Constable."

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith, to whom Sir Ronnie is a senior adviser on policing, said yesterday that she did not believe he should resign.

She said of his current role: "He's doing a very important job."

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