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McCord: policing chief 'pompous'

North Belfast News

By Ciarán Barnes

02/02/2007

The parents of a North Belfast man murdered by UVF informants have walked out of a meeting with Policing Board chairman Desmond Rea. Raymond and Vivienne McCord met Mr Rea on Wednesday at the Clarendon Dock headquarters of the Policing Board.

They were there seeking support for their campaign to jail the paramilitaries who killed, and the police officers who covered up, the murder of Raymond McCord Jnr in November 1997.

But halfway through the meeting the grieving parents got up and left, complaining that Mr Rea was "pompous" and "speaking to them like a schoolmaster".

"He listened to what we were saying but wouldn't tell me straight whether he would support our campaign to have the policemen who covered up young Raymond's murder jailed," said Mr McCord.

"That was bad enough, but when he started defending Dawn Purvis, myself and Vivienne walked out."

Ms Purvis, who was named as the new leader of the PUP following the death of David Ervine, is an independent member of the Policing Board. Her role on the watchdog angers Mr McCord because the PUP offers political advice to the UVF – an organisation, which according to the latest Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) report, is still heavily involved in crime.

"I asked Mr Rea whether he believes Dawn Purvis should be thrown off the Policing Board.

"He started defending her. That was enough for me so my wife and I left," added Mr McCord.

"Mr Rea is prepared to defend a woman who gives political advice to the UVF, an organisation which murdered my son and which is looking to kill me, yet he won't support my campaign to jail the cops who covered up my son's murder.

"I found him to be pompous and arrogant. I was really disappointed with his attitude."

A spokeswoman for the Policing Board said that after listening to what Mr McCord had to say, Mr Rea will bring the issues he raised to the next meeting of the Policing Board.

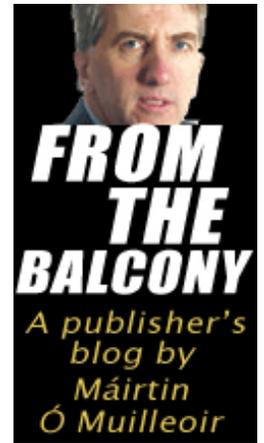
She confirmed Mr McCord raised the issue of the appointment of Dawn Purvis to the Board and was advised that this was a matter for the Secretary of State.

"Mr McCord was unhappy with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman's assessment of Ms Purvis's contribution to the work of the Board since

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appointment and left the meeting," added the spokeswoman.

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