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Unionists laughed at Cllr's collusion motion

Andersonstown News

By Roisin McManus

30/03/2007

A local Sinn Féin councillor has hit out after some unionist councillors laughed out loud as a motion on the Police Ombudsman's report into Special Branch collusion was being read at a meeting of Lisburn City Council.

Cllr Jennifer McCann put the following notice of motion forward: That this Council expresses deep concern at the revelations contained in the report published by Police Ombudsman Nuala O'Loan into the murder of Raymond McCord Jnr highlighting collusion between Special Branch and loyalist paramilitaries and further calls on the British government to acknowledge its role in employing this policy during its "Dirty War" in Ireland."

In January the Police Ombudsman's report said there was collusion between police officers and members of the UVF in North Belfast who carried out up to 16 murders while working as informers. Her investigation was sparked by Raymond McCord Senior whose son, Raymond Junior, was murdered in November 1997.

Following a vote it was decided by 24 votes to four to take the motion to the next meeting of the Corporate Services Committee for discussion. Speaking at Council, Cllr McCann said: "I am very, very disappointed at the way people have reacted. This report has serious implications, people have been murdered and yet there is laughter and silliness... I would like to think that this would be dealt with more seriously."

And, speaking to the Andersonstown News last night she added: "Families who have been directly affected by the policy of collusion are entitled to the truth about why a state agency that is supposed to protect citizens was instrumental in their murder.

"Given the fact that four of the victims mentioned in Nuala O' Loan's report were from the unionist/loyalist community their families must feel very let down by their political representatives who voted against debating the motion," she added.

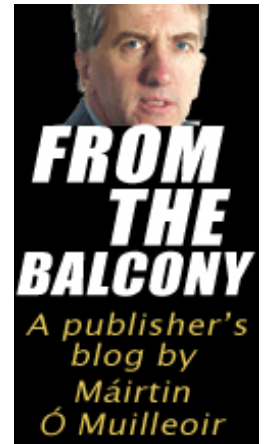
Raymond McCord Senior said he would like to attend the meeting of the Corporate Services Committee when the motion is discussed.

Speaking about the reaction of some unionists to the motion, he said "This attitude is disgraceful. Are they saying that the report is wrong, do they want to brush it under the carpet? I would like to go along and listen to the debate, I am quite willing to attend the next meeting," he added.

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