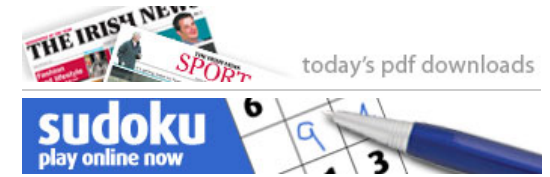


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Murphy refuses to withdraw Quinn allegation

By Rebecca Black

31/01/08

SINN Fein MP Conor Murphy has refused to withdraw an allegation that Paul Quinn was involved in criminality.

Cullyhanna man Paul Quinn (21) died after being attacked and beaten at a shed near Castleblayn-ey, Co Monaghan last October.

Sinn Fein has claimed Mr Quinn's murder was linked to a feud among criminals.

His family has said they will not speak to Sinn Fein until this claim is withdrawn.

Speaking on Radio Ulster yesterday, Mr Murphy, pictured, said he stood over the allegation that Mr Quinn's

death had been linked to criminality.

"I can say that I made my analysis on what happened here honestly on the information which was available to me at the time - I have been consistent in that analysis," he said.

"If others have not been consistent, that is a matter for them.

"I can stand over my analysis at the time and I still believe that to be the case."

Mr Murphy said Mr Quinn had never been charged with any crime but added: "We made an assessment of what the young man was involved with.

"We made a very honest assessment at the time. We are consistent in that assessment.

"I have heard nothing to make me change my mind."

Mr Murphy said it was "a matter of regret" that Mr Quinn's family would not talk to Sinn Fein.

The MP said he felt it was easier to find reasons not to talk to people than to talk to them and that Sinn Fein's offer of dialogue with the Quinn family was still open.

Jim McAllister from the Quinn Support Group said it was "pathetic" that Mr Murphy had not taken a "chance to retract his allegation about Paul".

"It's very easy to blacken the name of a dead man," he said.

An article in yesterday's Irish News incorrectly suggested that Sinn Fein councillor Colman Burns had spoken to Mr Quinn's family.

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