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Quinn family outraged as minister avoids front door

By Bimpe Fatogun

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THE family of murdered south Armagh man Paul Quinn have bitterly criticised their MP Conor Murphy after he failed to meet them yesterday.

Stephen and Breige Quinn made a 120-mile round trip to confront the Sinn Fein roads minister at the Europa Hotel in Belfast, where he was speaking ahead of the official opening of the Westlink.

Accompanied by family and supporters and holding placards bearing photographs of their son, they waited in vain at the main entrance for Mr Murphy to arrive.

Sinn Fein Lord Mayor of Belfast Tom Hartley accepted one of their fliers.

But the family were outraged to discover his colleague had managed to get inside without coming face to face with them.

There is a side entrance to the Europa on Glengall Street.

Yesterday the Department for Regional Development would not confirm how its minister entered and left the building.

"The minister makes his own travel arrangements," a spokeswoman said.

Mrs Quinn said the family had never seen their MP face to face to discuss the murder.

She and her husband said Mr Murphy should have been brave enough to meet them.

"We weren't going to attack him. Why can't he face us? We're not that sort of people."

"We just wanted to stand here and show Paul's face to him," she said.

There have still been no convictions despite nine arrests since the October 2007 killing of the 21-year-old from Cullyhanna.

He was beaten to death by a gang who lured him to a cow shed at Tullycoora, Drumnacrib, Co Monaghan.

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams and the party's Newry and Armagh MP Conor Murphy condemned the murder, calling for information to be passed to police, and described the killers as "criminals".

However, gardai have linked the attack to an IRA gang who they said did not intend to kill Mr Quinn but to beat him up in retaliation for the injuries they claimed he had inflicted on a republican and a republican's son.

Mr Murphy has in the past insisted his party has been encouraging people in south Armagh to work with the PSNI.

"We have made a very clear statement that that is the way forward in dealing with these things."

Mr Quinn snr said the family just want to find out what Mr Murphy knows about any of those involved and if he has spoken to either the PSNI or gardai.

“We want him to tell us what he has done [to help the investigation] and what he hasn’t done,” he said.

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