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## Denial an insult says brother of UVF victim

(Allison Morris, [Irish News](#))

The brother of UVF murder victim Sharon McKenna said Sir Ronnie Flanagan's claim that he had no knowledge of police collusion with loyalists under his command is an insult to his family.

Paul McKenna was reacting to a statement from the former chief constable yesterday in which he denied that he had failed to cooperate fully with Police Ombudsman Nuala O'Loan's investigation.

Mr McKenna said the statement was an insult to the memory of the many victims of paid informer Mark Haddock including his 27-year-old sister, a Catholic gunned down as she visited the home of an elderly Protestant friend.

"It is a bit much to expect us to believe that the most powerful policeman in Northern Ireland, a former head of Special Branch, knew nothing at all about the activities of his men," he said.

"Mr Flanagan should be stood down from his current policing post with immediate effect."

Sir Ronnie, head of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, yesterday broke his silence on Mrs O'Loan's findings, having initially refused to comment.

"I utterly refute any suggestion, as has been misrepresented in some of the media coverage, that I was in any way evasive or unhelpful," he said.

"On the contrary, at no time during the investigation or since did any member of the ombudsman's staff express to me any reservations about my personal action or conduct in any post that I held.

"With respect to the specific matters dealt with in the ombudsman's report, at no time did I have any knowledge, or evidence, of officers at any level behaving in the ways that have been described.

"I would find such conduct to be abhorrent and if such behaviour took place my hope would be that it would be the

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subject of criminal or disciplinary proceedings."

Mrs O'Loan's report, triggered by a complaint from the father of loyalist murder victim Raymond McCord jnr, was scathing in its criticism of the RUC handling of informers.

It stated that junior officers "could not have operated as they did without the knowledge and support at the highest levels of the RUC and PSNI".

Ms McKenna was murdered by a loyalist gang, led by Special Branch informer Haddock, on January 17 1993.

Haddock admitted involvement in the murder to police the following day. He was later arrested and detained for six days and interviewed 37 times but he was never charged with murder.

A detective said Haddock had been agitated during questioning and wanted to bring up the topic of Ms McKenna's murder but was stopped by his handler before he could say anything.

In the weeks after Ms McKenna's murder Haddock was given a rise in the amount he was paid each month by the RUC.

Mr McKenna said he would meet the ombudsman's representatives in the next week and would raise questions about the collusion.

"I have no faith in the PSNI to re-investigate the murder of my sister," he said.

"Some of the people still in top positions were members of Special Branch at the time her murderers were being allowed to kill without fear of prosecution.

"I will be meeting with the ombudsman and we are currently looking at the possibility of taking a civil action against senior members of the RUC at the time including Ronnie Flanagan.

"This report is not the end but just the start of this process."

January 25, 2007

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