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Quinns want to meet Taoiseach

(by Suzanne Breen, *Sunday Tribune*)

The family of murdered South Armagh man, Paul Quinn, are hoping to meet the Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, to discuss their son's killing.

The Quinns are meeting the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dermot Ahern, in Dundalk on Monday. However, it is believed that a meeting with the Taoiseach will be arranged later.

Quinn, 21, from Cullyhanna, was lured to a farm near Oram, Co Monaghan, where he was beaten to death by up to eight men with iron bars and nail-studded cudgels in October.

He had been previously been involved in several confrontations with Provisional IRA-linked figures and their associates. Sinn Féin has denied Provisional involvement and described the murder as a falling out between "criminals" and "fuel-launders". However, local people insist the Provisionals were responsible.

The Taoiseach appears to have accepted Sinn Féin's denials, stating that Paul Quinn's murder "was not paramilitary but pertained to feuds about criminality that were taking place". The Quinns were deeply hurt by these comments.

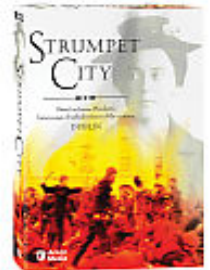
Local SDLP Assembly member, Dominic Bradley, said: "The family hope to meet the Taoiseach in the New Year and tell him their story face-to-face. They will be saying very strongly that their son was not a criminal. They hope that by hearing first-hand, from his mother and father, the facts about events leading up to Paul's murder, the Taoiseach will change his opinion."

Bradley will accompany the Quinns to their meeting with Dermot Ahern in Dundalk. Three TDs and several councillors from across the border were among a 300-strong crowd who attended a meeting in support of the family in Crossmaglen last Thursday.

Sinn Féin members and supporters, including Declan Murphy whose brother Conor is the local MP, were also present but were strongly challenged by the majority of the crowd when they

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spoke. Further meetings will be held on both sides of the border in the New Year.

December 18, 2007

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