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Head Office

121 Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 1SH

Phone

028 90 247700

Fax

028 90 236699

E-mail

sdlp@indigo.ie

News Desk



Dominic Bradley

6th December 2006

BRADLEY: DENIALS DON'T HELP FAMILIES OF DISAPPEARED

SDLP Newry and Armagh MLA Dominic Bradley said he hoped today's visit by Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams to the family of disappeared Crossmaglen man Charlie Armstrong signals a new honesty in dealing with the issue.

He said: "Any engagement with the families by any representative of the Provisional movement is obviously to be welcomed, because it is only by engagement that the remains can be delivered up to the families for proper burial.

"However, Adams's reiteration of the Provisional denial of involvement in this murder is far from helpful. The Provos have denied killings from Jean McConville to Frank Kerr and Garda Jerry McCabe, only to be found out in their lies.

"This is not what the families want or need. The Armstrong family have suffered for 25 years while the Evans family, also of Crossmaglen, have waited 27 years for the bodies of their loved ones to be returned. No one can underestimate the torment these families and all the families of the disappeared have had to endure.

"No organisation has the right to deny any family a proper Christian burial for their loved one. Paramilitaries took their lives, they took their bodies and now they must not continue to take away the right for Christian burials for the disappeared. It is not enough for Sinn Fein to say that this was wrong - they have to do what is necessary to put right their wrongs, and the knowledge to do that can be found within their own movement."

ENDS

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