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BRADLEY - MURPHY SHOULD RETREAT FROM SHAMEFUL QUINN POSTURE

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SDLP Newry and Armagh MLA Dominic Bradley said MP and MLA Conor Murphy should pull back from his shameful political posture on the murder of Paul Quinn now that the Quinn family and the whole community of Cullyhanna have given public assurances that there is no threat to Sinn Fein ministerial jobs.

He said: “Conor Murphy politicised this murder inquiry before Paul Quinn’s body was cold, exonerating the main group of suspects and pouring out scandalous accusations of criminality against the victim. Stephen and Briege Quinn have had the good grace and generosity to depoliticise it again by putting a motion before Wednesday’s public meeting in Cullyhanna explicitly stating that their campaign does not threaten the political settlement at Stormont. It is accepted that the Provisional IRA sanctioned the beating and executed it locally. The meeting called for Sinn Fein to remain in government but start telling the truth.

“Conor could start by telling the Gardai and the PSNI who gave him ‘very solid’ assurances that no Provos were involved. It is for the police, and not politicians, to assess the value, if any, to be given to such assurances. We have heard them before. Gerry Adams got ‘solid assurances’ when Frank Kerr was shot dead at Newry Post Office, and he got more when Detective Garda Gerry McCabe was shot dead in Adare.

“He should also tell the police where and when the assurances were given. Did he drop into South Armagh Battalion HQ for a chat in the officers’ mess, or did he go straight to the OC of the Cullyhanna Unit? Did he use the ministerial car? If he did, the ministerial driver should be questioned about where he went and who he met.

“Political interference in a murder inquiry is a very serious matter, particularly at ministerial level. Conor Murphy should look to his pledge of office. On my reading it does not permit ministerial consultation with criminal paramilitary gang leaders who may themselves be suspects in a murder inquiry.”

ENDS

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