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McAleese condemns 'despicable' collusion

The evidence of collusion between Northern Ireland police officers and loyalist paramilitaries pointed to the most despicable of behaviour, the Irish president has said.

By: Press Association

Mary McAleese made her first comments on Police Ombudsman Nuala O'Loan's report into the Royal Ulster Constabulary's Special Branch at an official engagement in London.

But the president insisted that the investigation's findings should encourage Sinn Fein to support policing at its special conference on the issue on Sunday.

The president described O'Loan's probe into how Special Branch officers protected a loyalist mass killer in north Belfast as: "A deeply disturbing report, a damning report.

"It evidenced the most despicable of behaviour."

Asked if a further inquiry into the affair was now necessary, Mrs McAleese said: "I think that it certainly, in the taoiseach's words, does merit follow-up and reassurance, not just to the victims, but to all democrats."

She went on to send a message to Sinn Fein, saying: "I would have thought that in fact that the publication of the O'Loan report should be a tremendous encouragement to those who want to support policing and the rule of law and who are going to promote that argument before the Sinn Fein ard fheis.

"This report should give them the very right kind of information and encouragement to do that."

Mrs McAleese was speaking at a new centre to help Irish emigrants in Britain.

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Her remarks come after the ombudsman`s disclosure that Special Branch handlers paid and shielded an Ulster Volunteer Force boss responsible for up to 15 murders.

Prime Minister Tony Blair was forced to fend off demands for the resignation of former RUC figurehead Sir Ronnie Flanagan from his post as the head of Her Majesty`s Inspectorate of Constabulary in the wake of the report.

Mark Durkan, the nationalist SDLP leader, used parliamentary privilege to name three senior officers who Mrs O`Loan claims refused to assist her probe.

The continuing controversy over the ombudsman`s investigation comes ahead of a special party conference on policing being held by Sinn Fein in Dublin on Sunday.


Party president Gerry Adams is expected to win the support of the majority of the 2,000 delegates, but hardline republicans opposed to the historic shift in Sinn Fein policy are to stage a protest at the conference venue.

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Shall we have an inquiry into collusion between the Irish Free State authorities and the terrorists who plague the ordinary people of the North? I wonder what the conclusion would be? Food for thought--Yes,No.

On 27 Jan at 19:40 - to concerned from reality said:

"free state", you really are one of those living way in the past!

On 28 Jan at 11:26 - Declan Walsh from Banbridge, Down said:

Yes lets waste money on a 'keep unionists happy' inquiry, and see the results!!! We Irish are not afraid, the inquiry would yield nothing and prove that myths exist with unionists not republicans !

On 29 Jan at 10:56 - Concerned from Portadown said:

To Reality,It really is the FREE STATE, it is the land of MILK and HONEY.
Where have you been all of your life?

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Now that Sinn Fein have voted to take part in policing, should the DUP further prevent power sharing in Northern Ireland?



Yes



No

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