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Victim told to get out of country

Monday, October 22, 2007

By Clare McNeilly

A young Armagh man whose family believe he was brutally murdered by the Provisional IRA was friends with a Cullyhanna teenager who drowned while they were on a Greek holiday together just two months ago.

As Sinn Fein denied any Republican involvement in the killing of 21-year-old Paul Quinn, the close-knit village of Cullyhanna was coming to terms with the second tragedy to strike its community in as many months.

The parents of Mr Quinn blamed the Provisional IRA after their son was found badly beaten near Castleblaney in Co Monaghan. He was attacked just after 6pm on Saturday and died some time later at Drogheda Hospital.

Speaking to the Belfast Telegraph, local priest Father Kevin Cullen said Mr Quinn had been on holiday with Brendan McCooley (18) who was found dead in a swimming pool in Crete in August.

"His family are devastated and shocked, like everyone is," he said.

"The community is very upset and numb at the death of a young person; one that died in such tragic circumstances, so young.

"It's the second tragedy in two months. Paul and Brendan were good friends. He was the last one to see him alive in Crete."

Jim McAllister, a close family friend and neighbour, spoke to this newspaper on behalf of the Quinn family.

"Our son Paul was recently involved in an altercation with individual members of the Provisional movement," read a statement.

"Following this he received a threat via a third party, ordering him to leave the country.

"Our son courageously and correctly refused to leave. We believe that he was abducted by the Provisional movement and brutally beaten to death.






"We do not intend to let this matter rest, but at this stage we have nothing further to say as we deal with our grief and arrange the funeral of our son."

Mr McAllister (64), a former Sinn Fein councillor, said that the family expected to receive the results of a post mortem examination today.

He added that Paul had suffered a barbaric and painful death.

"I've spoken to dozens of people," he said.

"I think brutality wouldn't be the word. The people who saw Paul's body after what happened were very, very distressed.

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"His parents are very distressed. The entire community is very distressed."

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The PSNI and gardai have confirmed that they are co-operating in an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the young man's death.

Community Telegraph

It is thought at least three others who were at the farm at Tullycoora crossed the border back into Northern Ireland.

Two people arrived at Daisy Hill Hospital in Newry a short time later to be treated for serious injuries.

Mr Quinn is survived by his father Steven, mother Briege, brother James and sister Cathy.

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