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## Letter throws fresh doubt on Finucane killing probe

Monday, 16 February 2009

The Government has been accused of threatening to rule out a public inquiry into security force collusion in the murder of solicitor Pat Finucane.

The solicitor's family has so far rejected Government attempts to launch a probe under the 2005 Inquiries Act, after the legislation was criticised for giving ministers undue influence over any investigation.

Now the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) has sent a letter to the Finucane family suggesting ministers may decide it is no longer in the public interest to hold an inquiry — though last night a NIO spokesman claimed the Government position remained unchanged.

Pat Finucane, a 39-year-old father-of-three, was shot dead by the UDA in front of his family on February 12, 1989.

In 2003 an investigation confirmed there was security force collusion in the case.

Last night a spokesman for the NIO responded: "We have always said that the only mechanism for an inquiry into the murder of Pat Finucane is under the terms of the 2005 Inquiries Act. That remains the position."

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