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### Republicans not involved: Murphy

Monday, October 22, 2007

I am confident that the republicans I know in that area were not involved in any way, shape or form

Sinn Fein minister Conor Murphy today insisted that republicans were not involved in the brutal beating of 21-year-old Paul Quinn.

As fears of the political ramifications of the Provisional IRA's alleged involvement in the young man's death were voiced, the Newry and Armagh MP urged anyone with information on the fatal assault to come forward to the police.

"I have spoken to republicans on the ground and they are as shocked as we are," said the Regional Development minister.

"Cullyhanna is a small place and people know the motivation of what's going on behind others' actions. I am confident that the republicans I know in that area were not involved in any way, shape or form."

The MLA said those responsible should "be brought to justice".

"There should be no hiding place for them," he added.

In response to allegations that the IRA were involved, he accused some figures of "exploiting" the death.

The senior Sinn Fein figure also insisted that his party have been working on the ground in south Armagh to encourage co-operation between the community and the police.

The DUP this morning gave a measured response to the death - but warned there would be serious consequences if it emerged the killing was sanctioned by the IRA.

Ian Paisley Jnr said the party must wait until the full evidence surrounding Mr Quinn's death emerged.

"Everyone knows the consequences of that (if the death was sanctioned by the IRA)," said the Junior Minister.

"You can't do Government and support for the police and have a private army. We will be making our own enquiries and waiting for the police to investigate this as promptly as they possibly can. We'll make a decision in terms of the evidence we see, not on a knee-jerk reaction."

SDLP Assemblyman Dominic Bradley also voiced concerns over who was behind the savage murder.

"We are moving into a new dispensation here in Northern Ireland. We're meant to be in a place where law and order take precedent. There are people who think otherwise and we have to stand up to those people," he said.

"This brutal murder was a planned, co-ordinated, and organised operation which involved up to 15 masked men.

"The community in Monaghan and south Armagh must work with an Garda Síochána and the PSNI by

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giving them the information they need to bring these people to justice."

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Former DUP MEP Jim Allister called for clarity on who was behind the incident.

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"The suggestion that the IRA killed Paul Quinn requires absolute clarity from the PSNI and the Gardai with no phoney distinctions made between 'organisational acts' and actions by individual IRA members," he said.

"If a gang of 15 IRA men beat a man to death, then it is an IRA murder. No ifs and no buts. Thus the police, without fear of political consequences, must objectively state their assessment."

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