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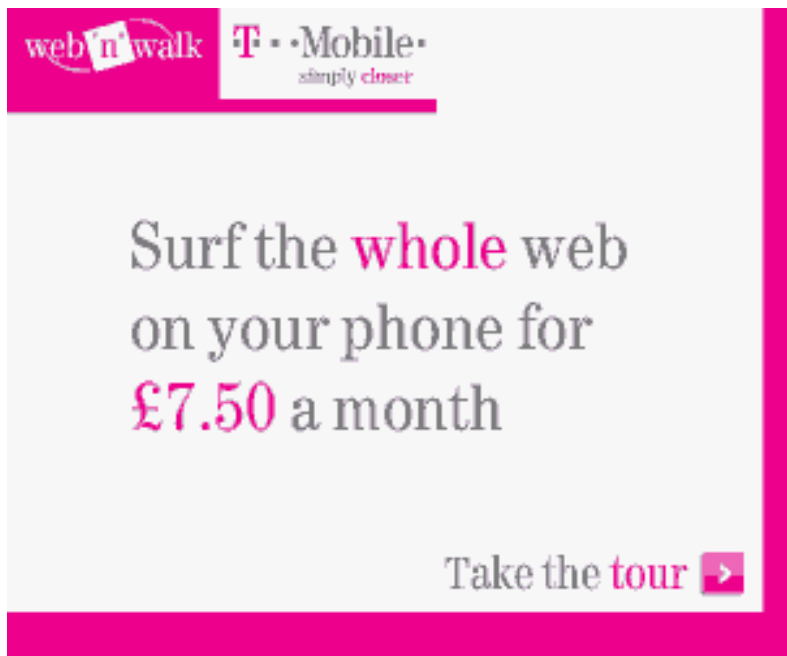
## My dad's murder is part of the last conflict demon

**Michael Finucane**  
Thursday June 28, 2007  
[The Guardian](#)

The decision by the director of public prosecutions not to prosecute any army or Royal Ulster Constabulary officers over the role in the murder of my dad, Pat Finucane, is disappointing but not surprising. Perhaps the most curious thing about the decision is that it makes a perverse kind of sense. After all, why prosecute people for doing the job you asked them to do in the first place?

This is what is at stake in the issue of collusion, and prosecuting people would have opened a murky world the government wanted kept hidden. In fact, the word "collusion" has become the adjective of choice for what was, in reality, British government policy in Northern Ireland since the 1970s.

Article continues ▾



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The official version was that state agents were infiltrating Loyalist paramilitary organisations in order to prevent what they were planning to do. There are problems with this explanation. Firstly, the activities continued despite the existence of agents, and many people were still being murdered. Secondly, this explanation conflicts with the internal reports of one of the main agencies responsible for running the agents.

State collusion with paramilitaries remains a festering sore in the way of rehabilitation from conflict-riven wasteland to modern, autonomously governed democracy. The responsibility here lies firmly with the government, which has never accepted that the state was a participant in the conflict.

This is the last conflict demon to be exorcised in Northern Ireland and if the society we hope to create is to have the best chance of overcoming the past then the truth must out. The answer is to expose and confront the facts. An independent public judicial inquiry, invested with all necessary powers and autonomy to do the job required, is the only vessel capable of bringing Northern Ireland across its last Rubicon.

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