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Row as banner honouring UVF killer carried at march

(Allison Morris, [Irish News](#))

The family of a murdered west Belfast man are to make legal representations to the Parades Commission demanding action be taken against the organisers of the controversial Whiterock Orange Order parade.

During the annual June parade, that makes its way along the mainly nationalist Springfield Road, a standard bearing the picture of Shankill Road killer Noel Kinner was carried.

Members of Glasgow flute band Sons of Ulster carried the flag honouring the convicted UVF murderer in direct breach of an earlier parades commission determination.

Kinner was convicted of the murder of Andersonstown man Brendan McLaughlin in 1980.

A Housing Executive employee Mr McLaughlin was gunned down by a three man UVF hit squad close to his work place in the Clonard area of west Belfast.

Speaking yesterday (Monday) his elderly mother Betty said she was horrified that the banner had been carried just yards from where her son was murdered.

The mother of 11 said that the family have struggled over the years to cope with Brendan's murder and that seeing the flag bearing the face of his killer had caused them great distress.

"To glorify this man in this way is a disgrace and through a solicitor we have made a complaint to the parades commission and to the PSNI.

"Three young boys were robbed of their father by him and his mob.

"For this Scottish band to chose him to put on their flag was no coincidence, they did it because they knew they would be marching close to the spot where Brendan was killed."

Kinner was sentenced to life for the murder of Mr McLaughlin. He was released from prison in 1994, two years

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before his death from a heart attack.

Following his sentencing in Crumlin Road courthouse supporters of the UVF killer made death threats to members of the McLaughlin family.

"Brendan's sons have had to grow up without a father because of this man and I know as a family we were all greatly upset when we saw this banner," said Mrs McLaughlin.

"At the time of his death I was worried that some of my sons were working in dangerous areas but I always thought Brendan was safe because he was based in Clonard.

"The pain of losing your child is something that cant be explained, its beyond words. To have his killer paraded in this way as if he is some sort of hero has caused a great deal of pain to my family."

A spokesman for the Parades Commission said: "The commission is currently awaiting reports on the parade from our monitors and any action will be considered at that time."

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