

Go to:

**Guardian**  
Unlimited

Compare flight prices &amp; hotels from over 120 providers in one place.

**Guardian****Unlimited****Travelshop****Guardian**  
Unlimited**TheObserver Politics**

Home	UK news	World news	<b>Politics</b>	Business & Media	Comment & Leaders	Focus	7 Days
Sport	Review	Travel	Cash	Observer Woman	The Observer Magazine	Food	Music

**Politics****Sinn Fein urged to aid McCartney inquiry**

Henry McDonald, Ireland editor

Sunday December 3, 2006

[The Observer](#)Search The  
Observer

Allowing Republicans to give evidence to detectives that will convict Robert McCartney's killers should be Sinn Fein's litmus test on policing, his sisters said last night.

In a statement to The Observer, Catherine McCartney said the party must instruct its members who witnessed the fatal assault on their brother to finally speak to the PSNI about the killing. 'That is the only way that Sinn Fein can prove they have genuinely changed their stance on policing,' she said.

**Tools**

Text-only version ▾

Send it to a friend ▾

Save story ▾

**The Observer**

Front page ▾

Story index ▾

Article continues ▾

**Recent articles**

[Stone made careful plans before attack on Stormont](#)

[Independent Scotland can't fight terror, says Reid](#)

[Cameron's poll ratings hit by 'Toynbee factor'](#)

[Sinn Fein urged to aid McCartney inquiry](#)

[Blair plans new generation of nuclear subs](#)

[Ministers 'failing to reach Muslims'](#)

[Blair: Britain's 'sorrow' for shame of slave trade](#)

[Livingstone declares war on race equality watchdog](#)

[One year on and Cameron is slipping](#)

[Will Hutton: Credit where it's due: Cameron talks sense](#)

[Andrew Rawnsley: The ruinously expensive folly of this mad five-ring circus](#)

[Home Office to clamp down on teenage asylum seekers](#)

[Ruaridh Nicoll: Jack McConnell's got Mr Blair on side. Just as well](#)

[Slavery: The long road to our historic 'sorrow'](#)

[How we saw the issues in 1791](#)



**Jobs** from our site

**Search executive jobs**

**Search all jobs**

Advertisement

---

Robert McCartney was savagely beaten before being stabbed repeatedly, following an attack by alleged IRA members in Magennis's Bar in central Belfast nearly two years ago.

His sisters launched a worldwide campaign to bring his killers to justice. They claimed the local IRA took part in and then covered up the murder of their brother and the attempted murder of the friend he died defending, Brendan Devine. Seventy-two people, including several members of Sinn Fein, were in the bar when the attack took place on 30 January 2005. Only one man has been charged in connection with Robert's death.

'We would see what happens about Robert's case as a litmus test for Sinn Fein,' said McCartney. 'There is no point signing up to policing as part of the St Andrews Agreement, sitting on the policing board but doing nothing to encourage your own members to co-operate with the police, especially in a murder investigation.

'After the murder the IRA destroyed all the forensic evidence. They wiped down the bar and got rid of all the knives and weapons that had been used in the attack. They told everyone to shut their mouths.

'The police have told us repeatedly that the only real evidence available is eye-witnesses and they have been few and far between. If the Sinn Fein leadership now allows its members to come forward and give evidence, then it will remove any question marks over Sinn Fein's commitment to policing.'

Policing remains the key issue dominating the Northern Ireland peace process. Ian Paisley and his Democratic Unionist Party will not share power with Sinn Fein in a restored devolved government until republicans pledge an oath supporting the PSNI and the rule of law. Sinn Fein cannot do so until the party holds a special delegate conference to ratify its support for new policing structures in Northern Ireland. Irish government sources last night admitted that their British counterparts might cancel Northern Ireland Assembly elections scheduled for early March if it becomes clear Sinn Fein is unable to stage its conference on policing before then.

Later this week Paisley and DUP North Belfast MP Nigel Dodds will hold talks in Downing Street with the Prime Minister. Dodds's presence on the delegation is significant because he is known to be a deal sceptic and has publicly stated that he did not envisage policing powers being devolved to an assembly in his lifetime. Transferring policing and judicial powers from London to Belfast has been a key Sinn Fein demand in the negotiations.

### Special reports

[Northern Ireland](#)

[Politics in Northern Ireland](#)

### Timelines

26.09.2005: [Northern Ireland: 1922-2005](#)

[Northern Ireland: A brief history of the Troubles](#)

### Video

[Watch the IRA statement \(MP4\)](#)

[Watch the IRA statement \(Realplayer\)](#)

## Interactive

[Ireland before partition: a brief history](#)

[The Troubles 1968 - 1995](#)

[Bloody Sunday](#)

[The peace process](#)

## Full texts

28.07.2005: [IRA statement on disarmament](#)

28.07.2005: [Tony Blair's response](#)

[The Good Friday agreement](#)

## Useful links

[Northern Ireland assembly](#)

[Northern Ireland Office](#)

[Northern Ireland executive](#)

[Parades commission](#)

[Police Service of Northern Ireland](#)

## The parties

[Alliance party](#)

[Democratic Unionist party](#)

[Progressive Unionist party](#)

[Sinn Féin](#)

[Social Democratic and Labour party](#)

[Ulster Unionist party](#)

## Media

[Belfast Telegraph](#)

[Irish Times](#)

[Irish News](#)

[CAIN \(Conflict Archive on the Internet\)](#)



[Privacy policy](#) | [Terms & conditions](#) | [Advertising guide](#) | [A-Z index](#) | [About this site](#)

Guardian Unlimited © Guardian News and Media Limited 2006

[Read today's paper](#) · [Jobs](#)

Search:

Guardian Unlimited  
Web