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News

'Tll go in to Mount Vernon'

Sunday, February 25, 2007

By Stephen Breen

The Father of loyalist victim Raymond McCord jnr last night vowed to defy UVF death-threats - by bringing his election campaign to the home turf of his son's killers.

Raymond McCord snr said he will be putting his Assembly election posters on lampposts and distributing leaflets in the UVF-controlled Mount Vernon estate.

But the north Belfast man, who launched his campaign last Friday, claims it will be "too dangerous" for him to canvass in the estate.

Mr McCord, who has also vowed to fight for support in republican areas across north Belfast, hit out at the UVF for warning him to keep out of loyalist strongholds during his election campaign.

Graffiti was also daubed in Mount Vernon on Friday saying: "Let the Games Begin Raymond."

Mr McCord said: "The UVF are still determined to silence me but they won't win.

"I got a warning from the police last week telling me that the UVF were going to shoot me if I was spotted in any loyalist area of north Belfast.

"I am prepared to go into any loyalist area but if I go into Mount Vernon then there would probably be serious trouble because this is where my son's killers come from.

"I know I have support from the vast majority of people in Mount Vernon who are sick of these police agents and serial killers living among them. I may not be able to talk with people at their front doors about the election but the paramilitaries won't stop me from putting up posters or distributing leaflets."

Mr McCord also said he was confident in securing votes from people in both sections of the community.

The campaigning dad is standing in the election in a bid to champion victims' rights and to expose paramilitary gangsterism, drug dealing and criminality.

"I am also standing to challenge the mainstream parties such as the DUP and the UUP because I feel they have let the victims down over the years. "

€ Raymond McCord is being lined up for a meeting with Tony Blair after the elections. He hopes to travel to Downing Street next month.

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