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News

Former cleric urges new probe into MP murder

Sunday, April 29, 2007

By Pauline Reynolds

THE former head of the Methodist Church is to ask the Police Ombudsman to investigate the IRA murder 26 years ago of UUP MP Rev Robert Bradford.

Former Methodist president Rev Jim Rea and Belfast councillor Jim Rodgers are due to meet with Nuala O'Loan tomorrow to call for the case to be re-opened following revelations in Sunday Life.

In our story, journalist Greg Harkin sensationally revealed how Special Branch AND Army intelligence knew details of the murder plot THREE days before.

Mr Rodgers also plans to raise the case with the PSNI Historical Enquiries Team.

He described our revelations as "terribly disturbing".

"Some people may think that because Robert was murdered so long ago it doesn't really matter any more," he said.

"But I believe it's important we find out the truth.

"Greg Harkin is a highly respected journalist with very good contacts and I have no reason to doubt his information.

"At the time of his murder, it had been rumoured Robert may have been set up, not by the Special Branch but by British intelligence.

"There were also a number of names put forward suggesting involvement in the killing, but no one has ever been brought to book. We need to get to the bottom of this and put it to rest.

"These claims will obviously have been very upsetting for Robert's wife Nora and the couple's daughter."

Mr Rodgers and Rev Bradford were good friends.

Added the councillor: "We had a lot in common, belonging to the same church and the same political party.

"We appeared on a number of public platforms together and his views and my own would have been very similar.

"He was a person who I held in the highest regard."

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