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From Times Online October 22, 2007

## Provisional IRA suspected of murdering man 'who refused to leave country'

David Sharrock, of The Times, Ireland Correspondent

The Provisional IRA was accused last night of murdering a 21-year-old man. If proved true it would be the first time that the terrorist organisation has killed since it formally announced that it was abandoning violence more than two years ago.

Paul Quinn, from the staunchly Republican village of Cullyhanna, south Armagh, was found with severe injuries at farm buildings across the Irish border near Castleblayney, Co Monaghan, on Saturday afternoon. Mr Quinn, aged 21, died a short time later in a hospital in the Republic.

Mr Quinn's family last night claimed that he had become involved in an altercation with Provisional IRA members, who ordered him to leave the country. "We believe that he was abducted by the Provisional movement and beaten to death," they said.

Conor Murphy, the Sinn Fein MP for the area and a minister in the power-sharing Northern Ireland Executive, said that he did not believe there was Republican involvement.

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comment on the claims, but said that they were investigating the matter fully.

The refusal to offer an opinion was reminiscent of the December 2004 Northern Bank robbery, when the Provisionals stole £26.5 million. It took the PSNI several weeks to finally say that the IRA was responsible.

Mr Quinn was severely beaten after being lured to a remote rural location. Despite attempts to treat his injuries, he died at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda.

Two men were treated at the Daisy Hill hospital in the border city of Newry, Co Down, for injuries believed to have been sustained in the same incident. However, it is understood that the men were discharged from hospital before anyone could interview them and that police south of the border were seeking to make contact with them. It was not known whether the men came from north or south of the border.

The area where Mr Quinn's body was found was sealed off for a garda forensic examination. Dr Michael Curtis, the Deputy State Pathologist, was alerted, gardai said. A garda spokeswoman said that a post-mortem examination was being carried out today.

The Quinn family said that they believed that Mr Quinn was brutally killed because he would not leave the country as allegedly ordered to do so. "Our son courageously and correctly refused to leave," they said.

Mr Murphy denied Republican involvement. "There are wild and baseless allegations being made," he said. "However, I do not believe that there is any Republican involvement in this murder.

"Whatever circumstances are behind the attack there can be no justification for this type of violence. Anyone with information that can assist the family should come forward to the Gardai or PSNI immediately."

Jim Allister, an MEP who resigned from the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) this year over its decision to enter a power-sharing executive with Sinn Fein, said that the family's claim could not be ignored.

"The suggestion that the IRA killed Paul Quinn requires absolute clarity from the PSNI and the Gardai, with no phoney distinctions being made between 'organisational acts' and actions by individual IRA members," he said.



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Libby Purves

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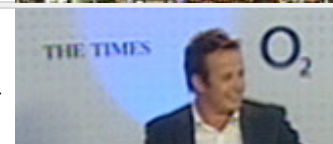
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