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Mark Durkan MP MLA

23rd January 2007

DURKAN - FLANAGAN DENIALS FOOL NOBODY

Ronnie Flanagan's denials of knowledge of collusion fool nobody, SDLP Leader Mark Durkan MP MLA has stated. Mr Durkan stated:

"Ronnie Flanagan's defence that he did not know what was going on fools nobody. As the Police Ombudsman said, this could not have happened "without knowledge and support at the highest levels of the RUC." That means Ronnie Flanagan.

Tony Blair has serious questions to answer too. Because collusion happened on his watch – not just on Margaret Thatcher's.

I warned Tony Blair that Ronnie Flanagan's appointment as Inspector of Constabulary would come back to haunt him. Today it has.

I have written today to Tony Blair to demand that if Ronnie Flanagan does not go, he should be dismissed.

I have also demanded an undertaking that justice will now be allowed to take its course. There must be no sweetheart deal between the British Government and Sinn Fein to cover up the past like in the On the Runs legislation.

It may serve their private interests to cover up collusion. But it does not serve the public interest. The public are entitled to truth about what happened over the last thirty years.

I am also demanding that Tony Blair scrap his proposals for MI5 to take over intelligence policing. Because Nuala O'Loan has no power to investigate MI5. So if in future MI5 run the likes of Mark Haddock as an informer, we would never be any the wiser. We would not get to the truth.

The SDLP is meeting with the Irish Government in Dundalk tomorrow morning to seek the Irish Government's support for our stance."

ENDS

23/01/07