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## Orde's Vow

**Collusion is past; cites 'root and branch' reform**



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As outrage over the revelations of RUC Special Branch collusion with loyalist murderers during the 1990s spread across the Atlantic this week, Northern Ireland's top police officer said there would be no criminal prosecutions of officers. But he vowed to prevent such collusion from ever reoccurring.

"I am determined to make sure that it is never going to happen again," Sir Hugh Orde told the Echo in a phone interview.

However, the fact that there will be no prosecutions -- this in large part because documentation in many cases of Special Branch collusion with loyalist killers was destroyed -- was not enough for one U.S. congressman.

"This is incredibly outrageous," said Rep. Jim Walsh of New York.

"There are clearly people in the [North] police system who need to be cleared out," the Syracuse Republican said.

Orde, however, said that the "vast majority" of those RUC Special Branch officers implicated in the report by Police Ombudsman Nuala O'Loan had since retired.

Orde said that the practice of destroying records had been discontinued in the RUC's successor, the PSNI.


The police chief said he found O'Loan's report to be "disturbing and very uncomfortable reading" and said that he felt "deeply disturbed" over the fact that some senior offices had not cooperated with O'Loan's inquiry.

Orde said he accepted all O'Loan's recommendations. He hoped that Sinn Féin would decide at its special ard fheis this weekend to become involved in a new police force that had undergone "root and branch" changes since the period covered by O'Loan's inquiry.

"There is now transparent oversight. I am the most accountable chief constable in the United Kingdom and Sinn Féin needs to be part of that accountability. They should engage [policing] at all levels," Orde said.


Full coverage on pages 3 and 8 of the print edition.


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This story appeared in the issue of January 24-30, 2007

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