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Thursday, March 19, 2009

11 held over murder of soldiers and PSNI officer

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GERRY MORIARTY

ELEVEN PEOPLE remained in custody last night as PSNI detectives continued their investigations into the murders of British soldiers Mark Quinsey and Patrick Azimkar at the British army base at Massereene in Antrim and of PSNI constable Stephen Carroll in Craigavon, Co Armagh. Seven are being held in connection with the Craigavon murder and the other four in relation to the Antrim killings.

Detention extensions under British terror legislation have been granted for two of the 11, with more extensions expected.

Under this special legislation suspects can be held for up to 28 days before they are either charged or released.

At Stormont yesterday before making a submission on Catholic education to the Assembly's education committee, Catholic primate Cardinal Seán Brady made reference to the murders of Constable Carroll, Patrick Azimkar and Mark Quinsey, whose funeral took place yesterday in Birmingham.

"I consider that these crimes were an attack on the whole community. They were an attack on the democratic will of people across this island and on their overwhelming support for the very institution in which we are gathered this morning," said Cardinal Brady.

"I am mindful therefore that we are engaging with you today as the democratically elected members of this legislative Assembly.

"We are engaging in the privileged context of democracy, a privilege we can never take for granted. We do so with great respect for you and for your role as politicians," he said.

"I am mindful too of our shared duty as elected and civic leaders to do all we can to consolidate progress already made towards a more secure, confident and reconciled future

for everyone in our society, not least the young," added Cardinal Brady.

This article appears in the print edition of the Irish Times



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