Monday 7 January 2008 "Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year from the DUP"

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OMAGH SHOULD NOT BE USED AS AN RUC WITCH-HUNT - SIMPSON

Following a special meeting of the Policing Board to discuss the recent Omagh bomb trial, DUP Policing Board member David Simpson MP MLA said,

"This recent court judgement should not be used by politicians as a means for scoring political points. Our priority must be that the victims receive justice. This should not be turned into a witch-hunt against the RUC. It was republican terrorists who planted the bomb in Omagh

and not the RUC. It grieves me that there are politicians who seem more committed to tarnishing the RUC than to catching those responsible for heinous acts of terror.

The RUC served this Province well and stood valiantly against terrorism. I would urge those who portion blame against the RUC to consider the difficult circumstances in



which these crimes were taking place. We must also consider scientific advances since 1998 and the advances in methods of crime scene investigation.

Undoubtedly there are lessons to be learned and the Chief Constable has my full support as he works to improve the effectiveness of the police.

Where there is a case of wrongdoing it should be fully investigated. There can be no tolerance of any form of misconduct within an organisation whose task it is to enforce the law.

The single greatest challenge which policing faces in Northern Ireland is how the community cooperates with officers in solving crimes. Those politicians who so often oppose the actions of the police should channel their energies and give their community leadership on how they can assist the police in solving crime.

There are people with information about this barbaric act which could help bring the perpetrators to justice, I would appeal for them to come forward to the police and assist in the investigation."



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