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Mark Durkan MP MLA

26th January 2007

DURKAN: EVIDENCE MOUNTS AGAINST FLANAGAN

The position of Ronnie Flanagan is now untenable and the British Government must act, SDLP Leader Mark Durkan has stated.

He has also called on the Government to clarify what role MI5 had in paying Mark Haddock.

Speaking following public confirmation in the Belfast Telegraph that Ronnie Flanagan met with Raymond McCord and Nigel Dodds, Mr Durkan stated:

"Ronnie Flanagan has claimed that he had no knowledge or evidence about Mark Haddock. In fact, it's now clear that he was told twice about the collusion.

"First, Raymond McCord and Nigel Dodds met with the Ronnie Flanagan following the murder of Mr McCord's son. At that meeting, Raymond McCord told Ronnie Flanagan all about Mark Haddock's activities.

"Second, Raymond McCord wrote to the Stevens team investigating collusion in 2000 about Mark Haddock. The Stevens team passed that letter on to Ronnie Flanagan.

"Despite being told twice about what Haddock was up to, Ronnie Flanagan did nothing. Mark Haddock remained an agent – and carried out further crimes.

"The British Government cannot wash their hands of this. They appointed Ronnie Flanagan as Inspector of Constabulary in London. They have the power to dismiss him. They must act."

Turning to allegations that MI5 paid Mark Haddock, Mr Durkan stated:

"These are the most serious allegations possible. Mark Haddock was paid at least £79,840 during the period that he murdered at least 10 people. After he confessed to the murder of Sharon McKenna to the RUC, he was given a 60% pay rise.

"So far, the story has been presented as if MI5 knew nothing of this. But he who pays the piper calls the tune. If MI5 was paying Haddock then they too were at the heart of this collusion. It also underlines in stark terms why the SDLP is totally opposed to British proposals for MI5 to take over primacy for intelligence policing.

"The SDLP is calling on the British Government to come clean on what MI5's role was in the Haddock scandal. And we are demanding that the Secretary of State make a statement in the House of Commons on the affair. If this happened in Britain, Ministers would be in the House of Commons explaining themselves. Why should lives in the North of Ireland count any less?"

ENDS

26/01/07

