



CHURCH of IRELAND GENERAL SYNOD
CHURCH in SOCIETY COMMITTEE

Response from the Chairman of the Church and Society Committee, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Jackson, Bishop of Clogher, to the Statement by the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland

“The Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, Mrs Nuala O’Loan, has done Irish society, North and South, an important service in publishing the findings on her investigation into the circumstances surrounding the murder of Raymond McCord Junior. Her references to collusion cannot but cause alarm to everyone who today seeks the confident assurance that the rule of law, objectively and consistently applied, holds sway in policing in Northern Ireland.

In light of what has now been revealed, my thoughts are those of continuing concern for the people who have been made victims in this way throughout many years. My concern is also for the bereaved and family members together with the communities traumatized and intimidated by the paramilitary activity which went unchecked throughout the time under scrutiny. Our thoughts inevitably turn to questions relating to the distortion of responsibility at the heart of policing. In expressing genuine gratitude for the good work done by the majority of members of the RUC, and their successors in the PSNI, throughout the Troubles in the execution of their duty, appreciation must also be expressed for the considerable courage shown by those individuals who have insisted on disclosure in a situation described as one of systemic injustice.

While noting the local nature of the findings of the Report, I seek assurance that appropriate enquiries will be mounted more widely as a matter of urgency. I further express my hope that every effort will be made, with renewed determination, by all with political influence to resolve the current impasse in relation to policing issues and to re-establish devolved government to Northern Ireland for the benefit of all its citizens.”

23rd January 2007