



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Irish-American Catholic Organization Announces Support for a Full, Public, Judicial Inquiry into the 1989 Murder of Belfast Solicitor Pat Finucane

ALBANY, NEW YORK – November 25, 2020 -- The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians (LAOH) Inc., the largest Irish Catholic women's organization in the United States of America, today announced that it earnestly supports the Finucane family in their request for a full, public, judicial inquiry to establish the full scale of British security force collusion in the murder of 39-year-old Belfast Solicitor Pat Finucane.

“Geraldine Finucane, the widow of Pat Finucane, and her children have spent the last 31 years actively working to uncover the truth behind the murder of her husband. Multiple investigations commissioned by the UK government have pointed to security force collusion. Now is the time for a full, public, judicial inquiry to establish the full scale of security force collusion in the murder of Pat Finucane,” said Karen Keane, President, Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Inc.

As a high-profile solicitor, Mr. Finucane represented clients in his community, taking on cases in the spirit of truth and justice and at times representing members of the IRA. Due to his success as a solicitor, he became a target for loyalist paramilitaries. On February 12, 1989, while the Finucane family were eating dinner, members of the loyalist paramilitary Ulster Defence Association/Ulster Volunteer Force (UDA/UVF) burst into the family home and shot Mr. Finucane fourteen times in front of his wife and three young children.

The case has been investigated multiple times, resulting in testimony and other evidence pointing to loyalist paramilitary collusion with British security forces. In December 2012, the United Kingdom released the de Silva report on the killing of Pat Finucane. That report documented extensive evidence of State collaboration with loyalist gunmen and concluded that “there was a willful and abject failure by successive governments to provide the clear policy and legal framework necessary for agent-handling operations to take place effectively within the law.”

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Prime Minister David Cameron apologized publicly to the Finucane family in the House of Commons. The prime minister acknowledged there had been "shocking levels of collusion" in what was one of the most controversial killings of the Troubles. "I am deeply sorry," he told the Finucane family, who were in the Commons gallery to hear his statement. However, he said he "respectfully disagreed" with the demand for a full, independent public inquiry, citing the cost of the Bloody Sunday tribunal as one reason.

In February 2019, the family brought their case to the [Supreme Court of the United Kingdom](#) which ruled in agreement with the Finucane family. By unanimous decision they ruled that the United Kingdom had failed to uphold Article 2 of the [European Convention on Human Rights](#), which requires signatories to adequately investigate state-caused deaths. On October 12, 2020, [Northern Ireland Secretary Brandon Lewis](#), announced that he would reach a decision on or before November 30, 2020 on whether a public inquiry would be held into the murder.

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About the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians (LAOH) Inc.

The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians (LAOH) Inc. is a 501(c) 3 charity. The LAOH membership is confined exclusively to practicing Roman Catholics, and Irish by birth or descent, legally adopted, the wife or mother of a Hibernian, the mother of a Junior Hibernian or a member of a religious order. The intent and purpose of the LAOH is to promote friendship, unity and Christian charity, to foster and sustain loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church and to the United States of America among its members, to aid and advance by all legitimate means the aspirations and endeavors of the Irish people for complete and absolute independence, and to foster the ideals and perpetuate the history and traditions of the Irish people and to promote Irish culture.