

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 59

Condemning the brutal killing of Rosemary Nelson.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 17, 1999

Mr. PAYNE (for himself, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. BORSKI, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. KING, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, and Mr. MCGOVERN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Condemning the brutal killing of Rosemary Nelson.

Whereas Rosemary Nelson, a prominent County Armagh Human Rights attorney, died after a car bomb exploded in Lurgan, County Armagh;

Whereas Ms. Nelson lost both of her legs and suffered extensive abdominal injuries in the blast and died despite intensive medical efforts to save her;

Whereas Ms. Nelson had previously represented the nationalist Garvaghy Road residents coalition in nearby Portadown over the long-running Drumcree Orange Order protest;

Whereas Rosemary Nelson testified before the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights of the International Relations Committee of the House of Rep-

representatives on September 29, 1998, that she had been threatened by officials of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) on several occasions;

Whereas Rosemary Nelson testified that “the behavior on the part of RUC officers has worsened during the last two years and particularly since I began to represent the residents of the Garvaghy Road, who have objected to an Orange Order march passing through their area from Drumcree Church”;

Whereas Rosemary Nelson last year asked to speak to the officer in charge and at that point she was physically assaulted by a number of RUC officers and subjected to sectarian verbal abuse, and she sustained bruising to her arm and shoulder;

Whereas many lawyers on behalf of residents in the North of Ireland are routinely excluded from interviews with their clients and are detained in holding centers;

Whereas it is public knowledge that Rosemary Nelson’s life was threatened on a number of occasions by the RUC Special Branch;

Whereas there have been no indictments or imprisonments of RUC officers concerning abuses of minority Catholics;

Whereas the North’s human rights group, the Committee on the Administration of Justice, has called for an independent investigation into Rosemary Nelson’s murder and said it would be “untenable” for the RUC to head the inquiry;

Whereas an independent judicial inquiry should be established to look into allegations that defense lawyers are systematically harassed and intimidated by the security forces in the North of Ireland;

Whereas the United States should fully support the implementation of the United Nations Special Rapporteur's recommendation for an independent inquiry into the killing of Belfast lawyer Pat Finucane; and

Whereas in the past few months there has been a concerted campaign of nocturnal firebombing and intimidation against Catholics in southeast Antrim from the Shore Road in north Belfast to Larne: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring),* That the Congress—

3 (1) strongly condemns the bombings and acts of
4 terrorism and the continued human rights abuses in
5 the North of Ireland;

6 (2) calls on the United Nations to condemn
7 these bombings and seek an independent investigation
8 apart from the RUC;

9 (3) calls on the United Nations to form an
10 independent inquiry into the harassment by the
11 RUC of human rights lawyers and the killings of
12 Rosemary Nelson and others; and

13 (4) calls on the United Nations to investigate
14 the systematic abuses against the residents of the
15 North of Ireland by the RUC.

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