

Justice for the Forgotten

The Organisation of Victims & Relatives seeking justice for the
Dublin & Monaghan Bombings of 17th May 1974;
and the Dublin Bombings of 1st December 1972 and 20th January 1973



CURRENT

ARCHIVE ▼

HOME

PRINT PAGE



PRESS RELEASE ARCHIVE: | [2005](#) | [2004](#) | [2003](#) | [2002](#) | [2001](#) | [2000](#) | <<< [1999](#) | [1997](#) | [1995](#) |

30 March 1999:

Dublin and Monaghan Bombings: Crucial New Evidence

New material has come into the hands of the solicitors representing the relatives and wounded in the last few days, which has been authenticated as to its source. The material has been passed on the Garda authorities and to the Taoiseach.

The new material identifies members of the security forces in Northern Ireland, including members of the R.U.C. and British Military Intelligence as having an active involvement in the planning and execution of the bomb explosions in Dublin and Monaghan in May 1974.

The material names the British Military Intelligence officer who supplied the explosives as well as the U. D.R. captain who participated in the attack on Dublin.

The material names the R.U.C. officer whose house was used for the assembly of the bombs.

It further identifies a group operating within the R.U.C. and in close liaison with the British military, which is responsible for many murders in Northern Ireland in addition to the 33 murders in Dublin and Monaghan.

It alleges that the clandestine and criminal operations of this group were authorised at a very high level within the R.U.C.

Just as disturbingly, but in the circumstances hardly surprising, the material received by our solicitors states that the R.U.C. never even questioned the persons suspected of involvement in these bombings, even though their identities were known to the R.U.C. and British Military Intelligence within days of the atrocities.

In his statement last night the Minister recited the fact of an intensive Garda investigation, which included interviewing potential witnesses and forensic examination and also “contact with the R.U.C.”

It is the firmly held belief of the relatives and wounded that the investigation by the Gardai effectively

fizzled out within three months of the explosions This was due chiefly to the failure of the R.U.C. to arrest and interview the person suspected of carrying out the bombings or to pursue those involved in their preparation and planning.

While the Garda file remains open, the relatives and wounded now believe that there is not, nor has there been for many years, any reality to the Garda investigation in terms of actually bringing any individual to justice.

The relatives and survivors have now come to the inescapable belief that what has become more important for successive Irish governments has been the maintenance of the concealment of Northern Ireland security force involvement in these atrocities and in avoiding the consequent political accountability and embarrassment for the failure of successive Irish governments to vindicate the lives of their murdered and wounded citizens.

A dossier of R.U.C. and Garda documents, forensic reports, and statements from Irish military personnel has been assembled. These documents came through official channels or with the cooperation of the individuals involved. Their examination gives rise to a number of very serious questions touching the management of the police inquiries in the aftermath of the bombings.

Among the questions that arise are the following:

Is the Minister of Justice or the Garda authorities aware of the current whereabouts of the debris from the bomb explosions?

Is the bomb debris within the jurisdiction of the State?

Identification of explosives is successful provided laboratory examination is carried out within six hours. Why did three days elapse before the earliest examination by a forensic scientist was carried out?

Why were only small fragments from the Parnell Street explosion given to Dr. James Donovan in the State Laboratory?

Why were these fragments not given to him until the 20th and 23rd of May 1974?

Why was the greater bulk of the forensic material from the bomb scenes in Monaghan, Talbot Street, South Leinster Street and Parnell Street not passed to Dr. James Donovan but sent to the Northern Ireland Forensic Science Laboratory?

Who was responsible for taking this decision?

Why was forensic bomb material retained by the Gardai for so long before being handed over for expert scientific examination? (the material sent to Belfast was not examined until the 28th May some 11 days after the explosions.

Is the Minister aware that these delays seriously prejudiced the opportunity for identifying the explosive substances and possibly thereby locating the source of the explosives?

Why was the report of the Northern Ireland Forensic Science Laboratory on its examination of the bomb debris never furnished to the head of Ireland's State Laboratory until it was handed to him today at the State Forensic Science Laboratory?

Who took the decision to effectively sideline Ireland's Forensic Science service from the bomb investigation, not only at the beginning but right up to the present day?

The public, and more particularly the surviving victims and relatives, have a legitimate right to ask the State that it report in a public manner on what is known of these outrages. In a significant case such as this where the Garda Siochana investigation yielded no results, it is right and proper that there be proper accounting to the public as to the nature and extent of the inquiries and a full reportage of all that is known of the facts and circumstances of the bombings.

It is hard to comprehend that any event of such significance in the history of the State has not been the subject matter of a tribunal of inquiry.

In essence, a tribunal of inquiry serves two very important functions: firstly to formally record what is known of the events that took place and secondly to act as a forum of accountability to the public for matters of legitimate public concern relating to the subject matter of the inquiry.

This State has conducted inquiries into the Stardust and Whiddy Island tragedies, the Kerry Babies case, the Lansdowne Road riots, the Beef Tribunal, the Hepatitis C Tribunal. We have ongoing tribunals in relation to political donations and planning matters.

In all respects, neither the passage of time nor the fact that the subject matter for the inquiry concerns matters criminal in nature have proved obstacles to the establishment of tribunals of inquiry in the past where the political will or the public demand for the same has been present.

Dublin, March 30th 1999.

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| [CURRENT](#) | [ARCHIVE](#) | [HOME](#) | [PRINT PAGE](#) |

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