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Local & National

Greysteel murderer Knight was not an MI5 agent: UPRG

Wednesday, March 14, 2007

By Sarah Brett

Top loyalists linked to the UDA today denied that Greysteel murderer Torrens Knight was an MI5 agent.

In a statement this morning, the Ulster Political Research Group responded to what they called a "two-year hate campaign" in the media against Knight, who drove UDA gunmen to the Rising Sun bar on Halloween night 1993.

He was one of four men jailed for life for his role in the "trick or treat" massacre in which eight people were shot dead as they celebrated Halloween in their local bar.

The Belfast Telegraph can reveal today that an investigation by the Police Ombudsman into claims of collusion around the murders is in its closing stages.

Knight received eight life sentences for the Greysteel massacre, together with four more for the murders of four Catholic workmen killed seven months earlier in Castlerock.

After being released from prison under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement having served just seven years, Knight got a full-time job, which regularly took him out of Northern Ireland for short spells.

Loyalist sources say he has no ambitions to become involved in terrorism again. Rumours began to circulate that he was an informer.

One of the most vocal advocates of this theory is Coleraine SDLP Assembly man John Dallat, whose claims sparked the investigation by the Police Ombudsman which should be completed by the summer.

Today, the UPRG said: "The effect of this campaign has been to deny Torrens a fair opportunity to gain employment in any part of the province. This has meant that at times it was necessary for Torrens to go abroad to work and for his salary to be transferred to his local account.

"Unfortunately his private banking details have become a public affair as well."

The UPRG also called on the Policing Board to state whether it is investigating Knight and concluded: "For the record Torrens Knight is not and never has been in the pay of MI5 or any other branch of the security services and has nothing more to add to this statement of fact."

In response today, Mr Dallat said: "It's remarkable that it's taken them this long to come forward with a denial.

"My information comes from people who saw Torrens Knight at army bases and I have a dossier of information with the Police Ombudsman.

"I am 100% on the authenticity of the information I have about Torrens Knight and he should come forward and admit that he was used by MI5 to commit atrocities."

It is expected to be at least a couple of months before the results of the Ombudsman's investigation are made public.

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