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## Report ignores collusion allegations

(Seamus McKinney, [Irish News](#))

The British army review of its engagement in the Troubles ignores controversies surrounding security force collusion in a series of murders in Co Armagh which culminated in the IRA's Kingsmills massacre of 10 Protestant workers.

In less than a month between the end of 1975 and start of 1976, more than 40 people were killed by the UVF and IRA in south Armagh and nearby areas.

The period is considered a turning point in the history of the Troubles.

As a result, security force leaders were given permission to officially deploy the SAS and to mark Co Armagh out for special treatment.

The murders included some of the worst atrocities of the Troubles.

On December 19 1975 three people were killed in a UVF bomb and gun attack on Donnelly's Bar at Silverbridge. On the same night, two were killed in a bomb attack on Kay's Tavern in Dundalk, Co Louth.

On January 4 1976 loyalist paramilitaries murdered three members of the O'Dowd family at their home near Gilford, Co Down.

Later that evening, two members of the Reavey family were shot dead at their home at Whitecross close to Markethill in Co Armagh. A third, Anthony Reavey (17), died a month later.

The following day the IRA shot dead 10 Protestant workers returning from a factory in Glenanne. They ordered the only Catholic man on a bus carrying the victims to leave before murdering his colleagues.

Evidence of collusion emerged through the Irish government's Barron inquiry last year and other details provided by police to victims' families.

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Guns used in some loyalist attacks were traced back to other incidents where UDR members and members of the RUC were involved.

Despite this, the British army's comments on the murders make no mention of security force collusion.

The report notes: "Sectarian killing had become common but a particularly vicious feud erupted in Co Armagh between south Armagh PIRA and north Armagh UVF.

"Between 19 December 1975 and 12 January 1976 over 40 people were killed and 100 wounded.

"The main effect of this feud was to raise tension and the perception of the political need to be doing something."

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