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## British and UVF met 10 days after bombs killed 33

25 February 2007 By Colm Heatley

The British government held secret talks with the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) ten days after the May 1974 Dublin and Monaghan bombings.

The British government held secret talks with the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) ten days after the May 1974 Dublin and Monaghan bombings.

The meeting took place at Laneside, MI5's headquarters on the outskirts of Belfast, 12 days after the bombings which killed 33 people. At the time, the UVF was widely suspected of involvement in the bombings.

Since then, fresh evidence has emerged which implicates British military intelligence in the attack.

Instead, the meeting focused on the internal state of unionist and loyalist politics and the ongoing Ulster Workers Council strike, called to prevent power-sharing with nationalists. Details of the meeting were uncovered by the Derry based, Pat Finucane Centre.

The fact that no reference was made to the Dublin-Monaghan bombings during the meeting so soon after the attacks is considered unusual.

A fortnight ago, Patrick McEntee SC who is investigating the Garda investigation of the bombing, was granted a ninth extension to his report.

The report is now expected to be published in mid-March.

In a separate document from April 1975, the Irish ambassador complained to the British government over the release from internment of a number of UVF members suspected of carrying out the Dublin/Monaghan bombings.

The loyalists were interned in October 1974, but released in April 1975. The Irish ambassador said that the British no longer had the right to hold republican detainees, "since, by the secretary of state's own admission, the loyalists released were responsible for the Dublin/Monaghan bombings".

The revelation that the British failed to raise the Dublin/Monaghan bombings with the UVF, just days after the attacks took place, comes after a series of investigations in recent months which found evidence of British collusion with loyalist gangs.

Last year, a panel of international jurors found "strong and credible" evidence of British state collusion in dozens of murders, north and south.

In November, a joint Oireachtas report found "disturbing" evidence of collusion with loyalists in a string of terrorist incidents in the south.

Alan Brecknell, of the Pat Finucane Centre, said that the latest information added "to a weight of growing evidence of state collusion. Clearly there has been mounting evidence in recent times to support long-held suspicions that the British government was actively colluding with loyalists in murders and bombings," he said. "What is needed is for the British government to come clean on its role."

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