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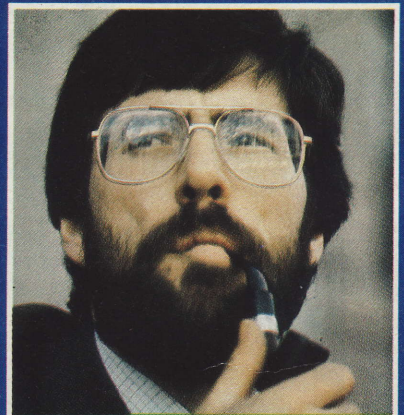
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CHANGE**

WHY GARDAI FAILED TO CRACK DUBLIN BOMB PLOT



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PEACE
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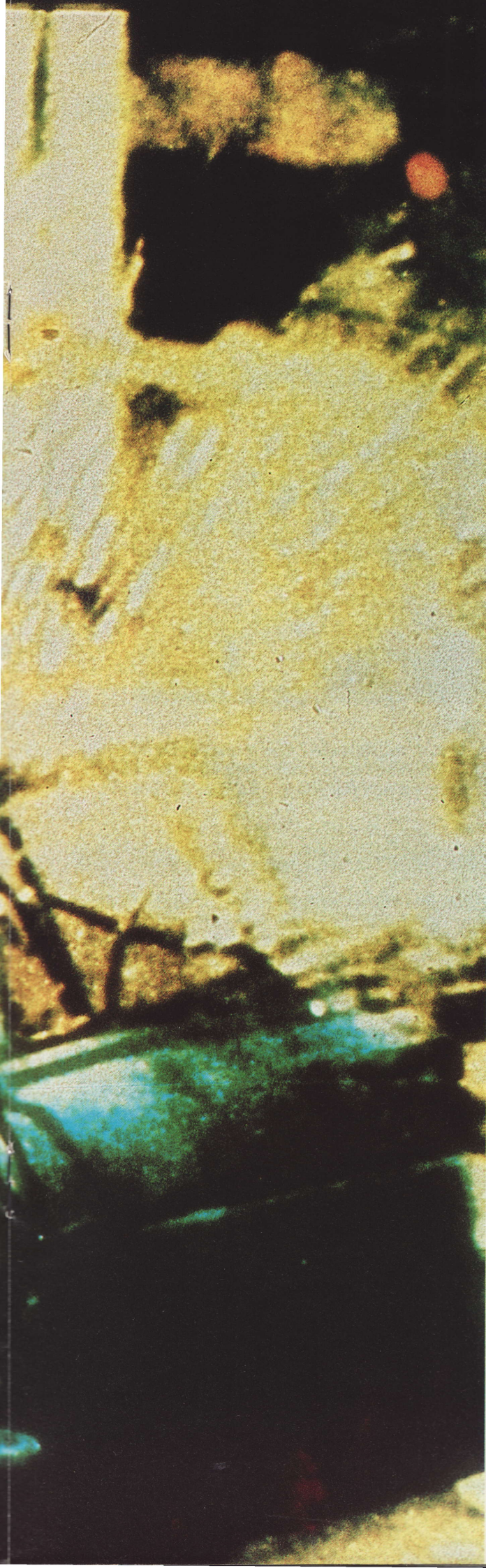


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BUICK



Dublin Bomb Plot

WHY GARDA HAVE
FAILED TO FIND KILLERS

by Frank Doherty and John Byrne

Sixteen years almost to the day after a series of bomb explosions in Dublin and Monaghan killed 33 people, new information has become available which indicates not only British involvement, but a failure by Garda authorities to pursue inquiries which may have led to the killers being apprehended. The names of several of the bombers are now known to security authorities in Dublin.

At least one of them is dead, others are alive and living in Northern Ireland or Britain. But so far no attempt has been made to have those involved interviewed by the RUC or British police.

Former security officers in Dublin and Britain claim that there is a reluctance by the Garda authorities to follow up inquiries into the affair because it would disclose that there had been active and probably unauthorised cooperation by Garda detectives before the bombing with a British intelligence officer who was closely involved with the bomb gang. While there is no suggestion that any member of the Garda Siochana was involved or had prior knowledge of the attacks, the fact that they had earlier brought to Dublin the man thought to have organised them would cause embarrassment, even 16 years on.

While it is policy to refuse to comment on security matters, former senior Garda and Irish Army officers have made it clear that gardai are not permitted to deal directly with the British Army. All security liaison must take place through the RUC. Despite this rule, there is evidence that at least two British intelligence officers were brought covertly to Dublin immediately before the bombings by Garda officers who are still serving.

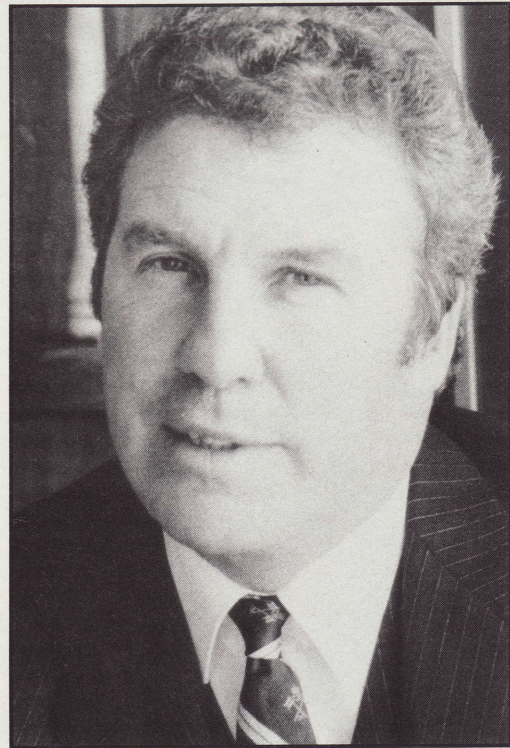
"I have no doubt that there is a much bigger can of worms here than anything connected with the Birmingham Six," said one. "There is a situation where the biggest crime in the history of this State is still unsolved, yet there has been no attempt to follow up information leads which have been provided recently."

Two of the named bombers now live on the west coast of Scotland, a third lives in mid Ulster, while a fourth was shot dead by the IRA in Belfast. The identity of a British Army officer who was involved with the bomb gang is also known. All of the names are known to NOW magazine and it has been confirmed that gardai are in possession of British intelligence notes which name the men.

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The bombings, which occurred on May 17, 1974, were the single biggest mass murder in Ireland or Britain this century, with 12 more dying than in the Birmingham bomb massacre later that year. A bus strike in Dublin meant that more people than usual were on the city centre streets at Friday tea-time rush-hour when the bombs exploded.

The motive for the attacks was initially thought to be loyalist vengeance for Provo bombings north of the Border. However, the timing coincided with the Ulster Workers Council strike which brought about the downfall of the power-sharing executive at Stormont set up by the Sunningdale Agreement. According to former British intelligence insiders like Colin Wallace, the British Security Service (MI5) actively worked for the overthrow of the power-



Former British intelligence officer Capt. Fred Holroyd. New information supports claims he made that British intelligence carried out "dirty tricks" in the South .

sharing administration as part of a plot to destabilise the Wilson Government.

The Dublin and Monaghan bombings weakened public support in the South for the Sunningdale Agreement by showing the Republic was vulnerable to terrorists opposed to the agreement, which had come into being with the support of the Cosgrave Coalition. A few days after the bombings the agreement collapsed.

As part of the anti-Wilson campaign, according to Wallace and another former intelligence officer who has never spoken publicly, MI5 bombed the Alliance Party HQ at Cromwell Road, Belfast, just before the February 1974 British general election. The attack was designed to attract a sympathy vote to the Alliance Party. MI5 feared that Unionist MPs would support Wilson in a hung parliament after the election. Wilson became Prime Minister in February, but only just. It was clear that there was going to be another election in the Autumn. In the meantime MI5 continued to undermine and discredit his administration. The Dublin bombings took place during that period.

Some security sources in Dublin now believe that the 1974 bombings were linked with the MI5 push against the Labour Government of Harold Wilson and the Sunningdale Agreement.

Recently, former Home Secretary Merlyn Rees called in the Commons for a judicial inquiry into



Loyalist leader Frenchie Marchant. He has been named as being involved in the Dublin bombings in a file given to gardai. He has since been shot dead.

allegations by Colin Wallace and former MI5 officer Peter Wright, whose book *Spycatcher* Mrs Thatcher made determined efforts to suppress. He said that when the Labour Party returned to power they would get to the bottom of it.

Both the UDA and the UVF denied responsibility for the Dublin and Monaghan attacks. The belief among some former security men in Dublin is that those involved were a maverick group controlled but not directly commanded by a British intelligence officer.

Information compiled in Dublin indicates that between 15 and 19 loyalists were involved directly in the attacks on Dublin and Monaghan, although not all crossed the Border on that day. Some acted as guards for motorists held captive after their cars had been hijacked. Others ferried explosives and stole vehicles which were used as car bombs. There is evidence now available that three other loyalists crossed into the Republic sometime before the attacks to prepare a hide-out well south of Dublin to which the bombers made their getaway.

Despite the large number of loyalists who were involved in the four-bomb attack on Dublin and Monaghan, no hint emerged about the identity of any of them during later supergrass trials in Belfast, when extensive details were given of loyalist activity over many years. Although the security forces obtained information from various supergrasses about almost

every important loyalist murder, no supergrass evidence about the bombings was supplied to lawyers by the RUC Special Branch, which is directed by British intelligence, as the Stalker affair showed.

Those identified in Dublin include Frenchie Marchant, a loyalist leader in Belfast's Shankill Road area who was shot dead by the IRA in 1987, allegedly in retaliation for the sectarian murders of Catholics. Marchant was accused of various murders by one supergrass. However, evidence against him collapsed and he walked free.

Also identified to the Irish authorities are two brothers who were named in interviews with gardai by Capt Fred Holroyd, who was a British intelligence officer in Portadown at the time of the bombings. They are not named here for legal reasons. Both brothers have been interviewed by Irish and Scottish journalists about the Dublin bombings, but have declined to say anything.

According to an intelligence file which has been seen by NOW magazine, a key figure in the bombing conspiracy was a British military officer whose real name is known to NOW but who is referred to here as Rupert. He was involved in intelligence work on both sides of the Border. Rupert has been identified by Irish Army intelligence as having visited Dublin in the company of a Garda detective from a Border area. There is no suggestion that the detective had any advance knowledge of the Dublin bomb plot.

Rupert was identified by Irish military intelligence after a video was shown to an Irish Army officer whom he approached and asked to supply details on IRA arms finds. Irish authorities believe Rupert was also responsible for the death of Newry man Eugene McQuade. He died when a motorcycle he was riding just north of the Dromadd border post on the Dundalk-Newry Road exploded. McQuade had been carrying a Provo rocket strapped to the motorbike. The rocket had been booby-trapped by Rupert after an undercover British patrol had discovered an IRA arms dump in Ravensdale Wood.

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near Dundalk in 1974.

The intelligence file on the attacks shows that the bombers made their get-away to the South to avoid being stopped by Garda road blocks between Dublin and the Border in the aftermath of the massacre. New information indicates that the bomb planters were picked up minutes before the explosions by a support team and driven out of the city in a south-westerly direction for 30 minutes. They hid out at a pre-arranged site in a country area where they stayed undercover for several days. It is believed that two of the bomb planters had made previous visits to the South under the pretence of visiting dog shows.

A total of six cars are thought to have been used in Monaghan and Dublin. The Monaghan attackers loaded their bomb in Portadown and drove across the



The scene of devastation in Talbot Street at tea-time on May 17, 1974. The victims are now largely forgotten by all but their relatives.

Border accompanied by another vehicle which acted as a "scout" car and getaway vehicle. A minimum of two bombers needed to cross the Border into Monaghan - one to drive the bomb car and one to drive the getaway vehicle - but it is thought that up to four actually made the crossing.

The Dublin attack involved five vehicles, the three cars which exploded and a back-up which acted as scout car and stand-by getaway vehicle. This last car, stolen in Portadown, was left abandoned in Dublin after the bombing. The two vehicles used to take the bombers out of the city after the attack had not been stolen but had been driven into the Republic some time earlier. By travelling south, the bomb planters avoided driving into the network of Garda and Irish Army road-checks set up along the Border immediately after the bombings.

NOW has seen a confidential file which indicates the area in which the attackers hid out after the massacre. Part of the file reads:

"2 There were three car bombs in Dublin. They exploded almost simultaneously at 1730 hours during rush-hour, ensuring maximum casualties. One car bomb exploded in Monaghan just before 1900 hours (1848 hours). The G.S. (Garda Siochana) concluded that the Dublin and Monaghan bombings were conducted by the same gang; they had the same M.O. (modus operandi).

3a. South Leinster St. bomb: car used, GREEN AUSTIN 1800, HOI 2487, hijacked in Agnes St., off Shankill Rd (Belfast) between 0900 and 1000 hrs that morning. Owner taken to own house in Torrens Rd, Oldpark area, Belfast, until 1500 hrs. Unable subsequently to give description of kidnappers to RUC.

b. Talbot St bomb: car used BLUE FORD ESCORT 1385 WZ. No witnesses. Stolen Duncrue Road, docks area, Belfast between 0800 and 1100 hours that morning. Exploded 1727 hrs. Street crowded, Was parked within 20 feet of Lower Gardiner Street junction.

c. Parnell St. bomb: car used GREEN AVENGER, DIA 4063. Hijacked by two armed men in Torrens Road, Oldpark area, Belfast between 0900 and 1000 hrs. Owner could give only very sketchy description of one of the men. Was b/folded (blindfolded) and taken to a house. Kept until 1500 hrs and released in Torrens Rd.

Miss Nora O'Mahoney, Roscarbery, working then in CALLAN, Co. KK, told G.S. (Garda Siochana) that a man asked her for directions in Westmoreland Street. He was aged 40-45, clean-shaven, about 5' 10", had clear-cut English accent, got into a frosted green car with mustard coloured number-plate bearing DIA (registration). She thought him to be the Parnell St. bomber.

d. Monaghan bomb: car used was GREEN HILLMAN MINX, 6583 OZ. Stolen from a car-park in Portadown between 15.30 and 1600 hrs. Exploded 1848 hrs, killing five, outside GREACEN'S pub, CHURCH SQ.

4. UDA and UVF denied responsibility. RUC did not inform G.S. (Garda Siochana) of stolen cars until 1800 hrs, though they had most of the information available about them by 1600 hrs. This is suspicious.

The new evidence about the 1974 bombings fits in with a pattern of British Intelligence dirty tricks which have been revealed in recent years by various former members of MI5 and MI6. In the early 1970s "pseudo-

Throughout the 1970s British intelligence ran a number of "pseudo gangs" ...

gangs" organised by the Military Reaction Force (MRF) carried out a series of assassinations in the North with unattributable weapons. The killings came to an end after a group of MRF men were detained at a random RUC road-stop.

In 1972 gardai arrested the Littlejohn brothers after a Dublin bank raid. Both were English criminals who claimed that they had been working for British intelligence in Ireland after being in contact with Lady Pamela Onslow and Junior Army Minister Geoffrey Johnson Smith. Throughout the 1970s British Intelligence ran a number of "pseudo-gangs" consisting of groups of "converted terrorists" who carried out "deniable operations." One of these groups was the Red Hand Commandoes, run by the late John McKeague, who has since been named in *The Sunday Times* by his former intelligence handler as a **NOW** British agent.