

Gerry Adams TD calls on Ombudsman to set aside Report

Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams TD commenting on the publication of a report by the office of the Police Ombudsman into the attempt on his life in March 1984 has described the Ombudsman's report as incomplete.

The Sinn Féin leader has called on the Ombudsman to set aside his conclusions until he has had access to British Army files and other pertinent intelligence records.

Mr. Adams said:

"Following the publication of several media articles in December 2006 claiming that there was collusion in the gun attack in March 1984 in which I and three others were wounded, I made a formal request to the Ombudsman's office for this to be investigated.

The Ombudsman also looked at two other allegations arising from newspaper reports by journalists and not raised by me. These were that the RUC knew of the attack one week in advance 'due to a Special Branch informant' and that the bullets were 'doctored by the authorities to reduce their velocity and dumb them down.' It rejected both.

The Ombudsman's report only deals with one of the three areas of concern that I brought to its attention in my letter of 18 December 2006.

The Ombudsman identifies these as:

'The RUC or security forces either had prior knowledge of the attack on him or were directly involved in the attempted murder Chief Constable Jack Hermon refused to acknowledge that Mr. Adams had been shot during a terrorist attack and didn't issue a certificate to support Mr. Adams' claim for criminal injuries RUC officers unnecessarily stopped and searched Mr. Adams' visitors at the RVH, making him feel like a prisoner rather than a victim of an attack.'

A previous Police Ombudsman had decided that two and three were not 'grave or exceptional' and consequently they were not investigated. This was a mistake. For a Chief Constable to refuse to confirm that a person has been shot was shameful and a grave misconduct in public office. It warranted investigation.

Equally the treatment by RUC officers of my family and of visitors to me in the hospital was outrageous and intimidatory. It also deserved to be thoroughly investigated.

The Ombudsman found that my allegation of collusion has not been substantiated.

He says that there was no collusion by the RUC or 'security forces'. But he did not have access to British Army files or those relating to the Force Research Unit which was the British intelligence agency principally responsible for running agents and informers, like Brian Nelson, within the UDA.

The Ombudsman also acknowledges that there was 'post intelligence (October 1984)' that identifies UDA leaders who planned, organised, sanctioned, and supplied the weapons for the attack

He goes on to state that this 'intelligence was not shared with the investigating officers and as a result there was no further enquiries made in respect of the planning and sanctioning of the attack.'

He does not investigate this or who took this decision.

The Office of the Ombudsman also bases its conclusion that there was no prior knowledge of the attack on the denials of the would-be assassins and the fact that they were captured within minutes of the ambush.

In my opinion this report is incomplete. The Ombudsman should seek access to British Army files and other pertinent intelligence records and set aside his conclusions until this is done.

I will write to him formally asking him to do this."

Concluding Gerry Adams TD said:

"I want to thank the Office of the Police Ombudsman for preparing this report. The length of time it took to prepare and the efforts its staff made to access all information and speak to potential witnesses emphasises the difficulties inherent in investigating actions that took place 30 years ago and where not all relevant British intelligence information is available."