



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Was the IRA involved in raid on Special Branch offices???



Castlereagh complex is Belfast headquarters of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Its Special Branch offices were raided on a Sunday, March 17th, and security documents stolen.

Upon the answer to this question hangs the fate of prominent politicians and the present political structures in Northern Ireland. The police have said that IRA involvement in the breach of security on 17 March, in which sensitive security documents were stolen and a Special Branch officer assaulted, was one of its main lines of inquiry. Sinn Fein leaders (and, it is believed, IRA leaders as well), Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness have been most vociferous in their denials, which are grounds enough for most people to

conclude that the IRA, in fact, is the guilty party!

David Trimble must be praying that it is not the IRA for, if it is, then he will have much egg on his face since he, against the advice of many in his party, entered a coalition with Sinn Fein/IRA. It could turn out that he has been sharing power with those who are still actively engaged in terrorism. This time it will not be something that some unionists are claiming, but something that providence has exposed for all to see. David Trimble will have great difficulty acknowledging that he was wrong in trusting the IRA and that his critics were right. In raids upon republican homes, police claim to have found documents which security sources believe show that the IRA had been involved in gathering intelligence on the people named in the past few weeks. Amongst those whose names were found on the list were prominent members of the Conservative Party, such as leader, Iain Duncan-Smith and John Major. Iain Duncan-Smith discussed his party's worries about the list at a private meeting with Tony Blair and the Northern Ireland Secretary in Downing Street on Monday morning.

ASSURED

Afterwards, he said he had been assured that the prime minister considered it a matter of the "utmost seriousness" and a "priority item". Tony Blair's government have built so much of their Northern Ireland policy upon the IRA ceasefire that they would tell any lie in order to create the impression that it is maintained. This is something the IRA have been making use of to the full and which has resulted in all manner of public and private concessions to Sinn Fein. Dr Reid, Northern Ireland Secretary of State, said there was "no imminent threat" to the ceasefire. Leading police figures have been faithfully following this line also. Acting chief constable Colin Cramphorn, a man with his eye on the Chief Constable's chair, said he had no information to suggest that the IRA intended to resume violence.

In a statement, the IRA said the arrests and raids in republican areas were "part of a smokescreen". It is understood none of the Special Branch files stolen from Castlereagh was found in the raids. Ian Paisley junior, of the anti-Agreement Democratic Unionist



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Party, said the IRA was an organisation of “killers and liars” and its “denial means nothing”.

COLOMBIA

Sinn Fein/IRA have had something else to worry about of late as well as Castlereagh. It's Colombia and the three IRA men arrested there quite some time ago. Their impending trial has not prevented the Colombian President, Andres Pastrana, from accusing the IRA of training the FARC Marxist guerrillas. The US Congress has heard evidence placing the Provos in a worldwide terror network ranging from South America to Iran. The high-level Washington committee report placed the IRA within a “global terrorist network” and concluded Irish, Iranian, Cuban and possibly Basque groups had “been sharing techniques, honing their terrorism skills, using illicit drug proceeds in payment.”

INVESTIGATION

The report, following nine months of investigation, said American lives have been put at risk by Provisional IRA activity in Colombia. Gerry Adams was invited to give evidence but he refused to go, having been strongly advised against going, because he would have had to face a barrage of hostile questions and that very close to an Irish election in which his party hopes to do well. Henry Hyde, chairman of Congress's International Relations Committee, said, however, that the Sinn Fein chief needed to explain “why two IRA explosives experts and a Sinn Fein political officer stationed in Cuba were arrested last August”.

Gerry Adams will do anything to avoid answering that question!