



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

Riot in Lurgan after Republican bomb factory find



Masked men stone police vehicles during the rioting in Lurgan

Police came under attack in Lurgan recently after they seized 250lbs of explosive material during an operation against dissident republicans.

Crowds of youths bombarded police, throwing petrol bombs, bottles, stones and paint bombs at security lines. The breaker's yard where police found the explosives was set on fire.

Components for a massive car bomb were uncovered during the major security operation in Co Armagh.

The discovery was made during searches in the Antrim Road area of Lurgan.

Four men, aged 22, 26, 36, and 46, were arrested and are being held under the Terrorism Act.

Superintendent Alan Todd linked the find to dissident republican paramilitaries and said a bomb attack would have been imminent.

Ready for use

"Material of this sort is by its very nature unstable and, therefore, people preparing these things do so with the intent to use it as soon as possible," he said.

Police discovered the bomb parts at a vehicle breaker's yard. Bomb disposal officers were at the scene and part of the town was cordoned off for a time while a search operation went on.

The initial search was believed to have involved dozens of officers and police sniffer dogs and a large amount of material was taken away for further examination. Seven policemen were injured in the rioting. Two men have appeared in court in connection with the bomb find.

Speculation

Political speculation suggests that hardline republican dissidents are believed to be planning a bombing campaign in a bid to force the Queen to scrap a possible visit to Ireland. There has been widespread speculation that a date may soon be announced for the Queen to make her first visit to the Republic later this year. However, a statement released by the Continuity IRA to a local newspaper said that the visit would be resisted with "all the force at our disposal".