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Devastation of bomb

TUESDAY
18/09/2007
15:14:35

Relatives boycott Omagh memorial

A planned memorial to victims of the Omagh bomb atrocity was hit by a new row today.

Eventhough a special tribute has now been commissioned, relatives of some of those murdered in the Real IRA attack threatened to erect their own monument.

They boycotted an official unveiling of the Dublin-based design team`s plans over their demands for an inscription which declares dissident republican terrorists were to blame for the August 1998 outrage.

The narrative on the memorial, which was announced in Omagh today, has still to be agreed.

But Michael Gallagher, whose son Aiden was among the 29 people killed in the bombing, claimed those involved are refusing to guarantee the form of words requested.

He said: "If the memorial working group and the council are unwilling to address the issue, we will mark the spot.

"We will take appropriate action to make sure the truth is told.

"Some people might view that as a threat, but if the truth is a threat

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people can judge for themselves.

"We will have no choice other than to address the issue ourselves.

"There can be no ambiguity over what happened on August 15 1998, and no dancing around words can distract from the truth."

Mr Gallagher and others in the Omagh Support and Self Help Group, which represents some of the bomb victims` families, withdrew from the process to identify an appropriate memorial over the wording row.

They were absent as Danny McSorley, chairman of the Omagh Memorial Working Group, announced landscape architect Desmond Fitzgerald and artist Sean Hillen had been commissioned.

But Mr Gallagher, who stressed his support for a fitting memorial, wanted guarantees over the wording favoured by the relatives.

"We have already told the truth in the (memorial) garden," he said.

"But people who visit the street may not visit the garden and we need it there.

"We are the families who have come together since 1998 and consistently pursued the interests of those affected by the bomb.

"Things are being manipulated because the views of the families are not acceptable."

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FILM: DEATHPROOF

DIRECTOR: Quentin Tarantino.

STARRING: Kurt Russell, Rosario Dawson, Rose McGowan, Sydney Tamiia Poitier.

DETAILS: US / 113mins (18)

RATING: ★★★★★

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