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Local & National

Blair urged to reveal identity of SF 'human bomb mastermind'

Thursday, December 07, 2006

By Mark Hookham

A senior Sinn Fein politician was the mastermind behind a horrifying IRA 'human bomb' attack 16 years ago, it was claimed in Parliament today.

DUP MP Sammy Wilson used Prime Minister's Questions to allege that the person behind the killing was both a top republican politician and MI5 informer.

Royal Irish Ranger soldier Cyril Smith died in a bomb blast in 1990 while trying to rescue a man who had been forced to drive a car bomb into an army checkpoint near Newry.

His parents, Bernie and Cyril, from Carrickfergus, believe their son was allowed to die to protect the identity of a republican spy.






Mr Wilson today made a direct appeal to Tony Blair to ensure that no MI5 intelligence on the attack is held back from the PSNI historical inquiries team, which is currently reviewing the case.

The East Antrim MP said: "The families of those victims were told that the mastermind behind those bombs was a very senior Sinn Fein politician who was also an intelligence source for MI5.

"The historical enquiries team have now re-opened that case.

"Would the Prime Minister ascertain first of all if any intelligence exists as to the mastermind behind that bomb and secondly give the House the assurance that no intelligence will be held back to protect a senior politician or an intelligence source?"

The Prime Minister replied: "I can assure him that no information whatever, whether of an intelligence nature or any other information, will be held back from the proper authorities. I obviously can't comment on

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the particular case of his constituent, however."

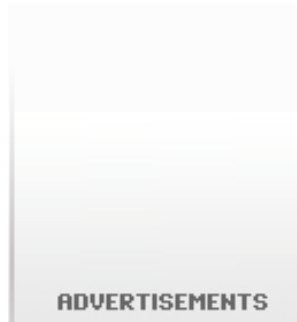
Ranger Smith (21) died after a bomb ripped through the permanent border vehicle checkpoint at Killeen, outside Newry, on October 24 1990.

He had just rescued James McAvoy (68), who was warned by an IRA gang that his sons would be shot if he did not drive the bomb to the checkpoint.

Cyril was running back to warn his comrades about the device when it exploded, killing him instantly.

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