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# PM reads Omagh report about secret recordings

No date set for a statement in the Commons

Monday, 19 January 2009

Gordon Brown has now read the report into what the Government's top secret listening post heard the Omagh bombers say on their way to devastate the town over a decade ago.

A Downing Street spokesperson confirmed on Friday that the Prime Minister has read the document prepared by Sir Peter Gibson, but wouldn't say when he would make a House of Commons statement on the bombshell report.

Last year a BBC Panorama programme revealed that mobile phone conversations between dissident republicans in a 'scout' car and the Vauxhall car carrying the bomb were secretly recorded by GCHQ staff in Cheltenham as the vehicles travelled across the border into Northern Ireland heading for Omagh.

It isn't known yet if the conversations were listened to by spooks as they took place or were recorded at the listening post and reviewed hours after the devastating explosion that killed 29 people and unborn twins.

Former senior RUC officers who were involved in the initial investigation into the bombing say they were never told of the existence of the tapes and were only given names of possible suspects by GCHQ days after the attack.

In September, Gordon Brown asked the Intelligence Services Commissioner to carry out a review of the sensitive intelligence material compiled by GCHQ staff about the Omagh bombing.

Sir Peter Gibson's report was delivered to Downing Street before Christmas but until Friday there was no confirmation that Gordon Brown had read it.

Downing Street declined to indicate how many pages the report contained or say when Brown would make a statement to the House of Commons about its content.

"The Prime Minister will make a statement about the report in the near future. He has read it," was all No 10 would say.

On Thursday relatives of the victims will meet the Northern Ireland Secretary Shaun Woodward at Hillsborough Castle to discuss issues arising out of the bombing including Sir Peter's report.

Michael Gallagher who chairs the Omagh Support and Self Help Group said yesterday that he has received a letter of acknowledgement from Gordon Brown in response to a letter he sent to Downing Street.

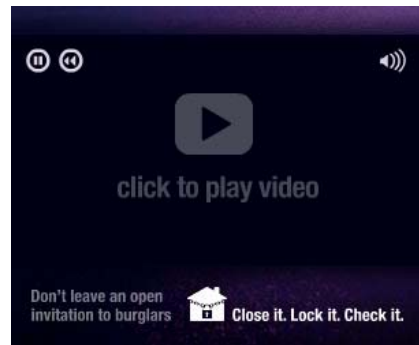
"I believe it is important that the PM should personally address the families and assist them in every way possible to get to the truth and I will impress that upon Shaun Woodward on Thursday", he said.

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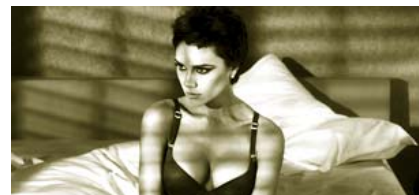


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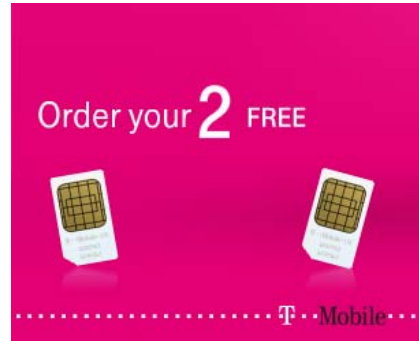


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