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Local & National

Brother's fury at failure to stop Haddock run of terror

'My sister could have been saved'

Tuesday, February 06, 2007

By Chris Thornton

A revelation from the Police Ombudsman's collusion report has angered the family of a woman who was originally alleged to have been Mark Haddock's first victim.

The brother of Sharon McKenna, who was shot by the UVF in 1993, believed she was the first person to die in Haddock's reign of terror - meaning police may not have been able to prevent the killing.

But Nuala O'Loan's report revealed that the informer was already suspected of the murder of Newtownabbey man Peter McTasney two years earlier.

Paul McKenna said on several occasions - including the day Mrs O'Loan's report was launched last month - that it may not have been possible to save his sister.

But he said police should have acted afterwards to prevent other families from suffering at the hands of the paid police agent.

Mrs O'Loan's report revealed that he and his mother may now be among those families whose loved one could have been saved.

"This all changes now," said Mr McKenna, who was 19 when his sister was killed. "The report says police had intelligence that was reliable and probably true that he was involved in murder before my sister's.

"If he had involvement in that he should have been stopped."

Sharon McKenna was shot in January 1993 as she cooked dinner for a Protestant friend.

Mark Haddock is alleged to have told RUC handlers that he was involved in the killing, but his role was said to have been ignored so he could continue to be used as a UVF informer.

According to ex-police sources, this was the first time the informer had been involved in murder.

But Mrs O'Loan's investigators found intelligence that showed police believed he played a role in the killing of Mr McTasney (26) in his Bawnmore home in February 1991.

Haddock was questioned about the murder in September 1991, with his police handlers conducting the main interviews.

He was not mentioned in files subsequently passed to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Paul McKenna said: "At first when I read the report the penny didn't drop.

"I went straight to my sister's part and read that.

"It was only later when I went through the whole report, trying to take stock that I realised if he had involvement in that murder, it was before my sister's."






He said he was angered but not suprised to find that Haddock may have been involved in murder before his sister's death.

"It did not surprise me after all I heard over the last couple of years, " he said. "It didn't take the floor out from under my feet but there is anger there.

"Why did they let this go on? It's just incredible.

"I also had no idea that there were so many CID or Special Branch officers involved in this. Could that many people turn a blind eye and let Haddock and the rest of the team continue to operate?"

He said he hopes other families like the McTasneys will now get involved in a push for a public inquiry - even though Secretary of State Peter Hain says that won't happen.


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"The thing is, I knew Peter McTasney - I remember where I was the night he was killed and all," Mr McKenna said.

"I had no idea that his murder was linked to any of this. It was only when the families had their meeting with the Ombudsman that I recognised one of his sisters there."

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