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## Inquiry call over first garda killed in Troubles

(Valerie Robinson, [Irish News](#))

The family of the first garda shot dead during the Troubles have demanded a public inquiry into the murder.

Garda Richard Fallon (43) was uniformed but unarmed when he was shot in the head by suspected members of the republican splinter group Saor Eire during a bank raid on April 3 1970 at the then Royal Bank – now AIB - on Arran Quay in Dublin. The father-of-five died at the scene.

Three men charged with the killing were later acquitted.

His youngest child Finian Fallon, who was three when his father was murdered, said the family remained frustrated by the lack of progress in the investigation.

"There are so many questions surrounding it and it has such implications for us even today. The only possibility of the truth coming out is if there is a public inquiry," he said.

"While the British government responds to these things piecemeal and with great reluctance, they have initiated a lot of investigations into the Bloody Sunday inquiry and other issues such as the death of [solicitors] Pat Finucane and Rosemary Nelson.

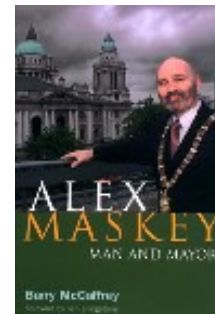
"The Irish government seems to want to walk away from the Troubles with clean hands and I can tell you from my point of view they don't have clean hands," he said.

Mr Fallon has claimed investigating gardai were told not to probe too deeply into his father's death.

The murder remains shrouded in secrecy and rumours, with the family claiming members of the government and gardai were in contact with the group behind the fatal shooting.

In 1991 a document stored in the national archives revealed the murder had occurred the day after an order was issued for the transfer of arms to Dundalk for possible defensive use by Catholics in Northern Ireland amid loyalist violence.

The Fallon family believe the gun used to kill the garda was



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by Barry McCaffrey

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part of an illegal consignment smuggled into the Republic with the knowledge of senior Fianna Fail figures.

They claim that off-the-record comments to the family by a former senior politician and retired garda linked 1969/70 bank raids by republican paramilitaries to the events that led to the arms trial.

It has also been alleged at least one of the killer gang was ferried out of Dublin in a cabinet minister's vehicle.

Gardai have confirmed that the case of Richard Fallon, the first of 13 members of the force to be killed during the Northern Ireland conflict, remains open and is the subject of regular cold case review.

December 2, 2006

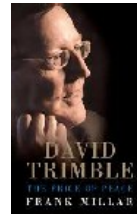
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This article appeared first in the December 1, 2006 edition of the [Irish News](#).

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