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Report on murders a travesty say grieving family



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THE father of two Catholic brothers murdered by the UVF 14 years ago has described the Police Ombudsman's report into their killing as "like a knife in the heart of this family".

Eamon Cairns, his wife Sheila and daughter Roisin have refused to accept the main thrust of the report that there was no collusion by the security forces in the murder of sons Gerard (22) and Rory (19) when gunmen burst into their home at The Slopes in Ballydougan just after eight o' clock on the night of October 28, 1993.

"This was our last chance of justice and we have been failed again," said Mr Cairns, seated at the kitchen table -the same table where his daughter Roisin sat, laden with the trappings of her 11th birthday, and which the killers ran past on their way to the living room where they shot her brothers.

missing

"They haven't just failed us. They have failed everyone, as the whole thing stinks of collusion. It betrays democracy, and I have to say that the shambles of the investigation into the murder of my sons has been repeated over and over again on all sides of the community."

The Ombudsman's

report heavily criticises the RUC where forensic evidence went missing and where Special Branch failed to pass on all relevant intelligence during the investigation which petered out after just three weeks and was, to all intents and purposes, wound up after three months.

Mr Cairns said, "Yes, the police lost vital evidence, on purpose in my view. This includes burned clothing found in the burned-out blue Talbot car that was bought at an auction in Portadown a fortnight beforehand.

"This clothing could have yielded DNA with modern techniques, but it - like other forensic evidence - was 'lost'. How did a so-called professional police force manage to 'lose' vital evidence. And all records of interviews with the nine suspects at the time have been destroyed because police say it was contaminated by asbestos. How convenient is that?"

Full report and pictures in this week's Portadown Times

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