

State criticised in McEntee report

Sunday, March 18, 2007 - By Colm Heatley in Belfast

Successive Irish governments did not do enough to investigate the 1974 Dublin/Monaghan bombings which killed 33 people, the government-commissioned report by Patrick McEntee SC is expected to say when it is made public within the next fortnight.

The report was handed to the Taoiseach's office last Tuesday, but it won't be presented to cabinet until Tuesday when the Attorney General, Rory Brady, returns from an official visit to Argentina.

The report, which investigated Garda handling of the 1974 atrocity, should be made public in the week beginning March 26, a week before the Dail breaks for Easter.

The findings were to have been published in mid-February, but McEntee was granted a further extension, his ninth in total.

McEntee told The Sunday Business Post last month that a number of people claiming to have information about the bombings had come forward in the latter stages of the investigation, but had failed to stand over their claims.

Part of the investigation is expected to examine whether some members of the Garda Síochána had close ties with British military intelligence.

There have been persistent allegations that the attacks were carried out with the aid of British intelligence operatives, colluding with loyalist paramilitaries.

Recent official investigations into British government collusion with loyalists in a string of attacks in the south in the 1970s have concluded that the British state was involved in carrying out terrorist attacks in Ireland.

Campaigners for the victims had expressed concerns to the Taoiseach that the report's findings would not be made public in time for them to be debated fully before the Dail breaks for Easter.

In a letter sent to Ahern last week, Justice for the Forgotten, a campaigning group for the victims of the Dublin/Monaghan bombings, urged the Taoiseach to ensure that a full debate was held into the inquiry's findings.

"Whatever findings this inquiry produces need to be debated in the Dail, and cannot be stalled until such time as the Dail is effectively over until after the elections," said Margaret Urwin of Justice For The Forgotten.

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