

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES

### IRELAND



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RÚNAÍ RÍOSHÁIDEACH

BRITAIN, FAKES IRA INCIDENTS

A major scandal has arisen in Britain with the revelation that the British government has "faked" IRA raids to discredit the IRA.

The facts were made public by two British intelligence agents tried in August in a Dublin court for bank robbery. The scandal involves high ministers of the British Cabinet, including Lord Carrington, Britain's Defence Minister, and a top aide to Prime Minister Edward Heath.

Two self confessed British agents broke the story during their trial. They are Kenneth Littlejohn and Keith Littlejohn. Their story has been confirmed by other sources high in the British government. The British Labour Party has demanded a full parliamentary investigation. Here are the facts.

The Heath government set up a top secret intelligence operation designed to discredit the Irish Republican Army. Special agents were sent to Southern Ireland and Ulster where they were given selected targets to bomb. After the bombings, the incidents were carried in the British press as "IRA atrocities". Many of the targets included non-military installations such as pubs and churches. In each case, the IRA was blamed by the police and the British Army. Several civilians were killed in these incidents. Despite IRA denials, the resultant publicity severely damaged the image of the IRA and cost some public support.

Political assassination was employed by the British government. Selected individuals were "targeted for assassination by the British government", according to the Irish Times. Kenneth Littlejohn, one British agent, described how he was ordered to assassinate Sean MacStiofain, a leading Irish Republican in the summer of 1972, and how he stalked his intended victim's home. Littlejohn's orders were to blow up MacStiofain's body so that it was "completely unrecognizable".

Catholics in Northern Ireland have long contended that the bombing of Catholic pubs and churches were the work of British intelligence agents, and not the actions of Protestant extremists. The disclosure of Britain's intelligence operation lends credence to this version. The IRA is the only real threat to British control in Ulster, and observers have long noted that British policy has been designed to discredit the IRA and separate it from the Catholic community.

In December, 1972, downtown Dublin was bombed and two people were killed. This was immediately described as "IRA terrorism", but it is now felt that British agents set the bombs off to discredit the IRA and force the Irish Parliament to enact amendments to the Offences Against the State Act, aimed at controlling and suppressing the IRA. The Littlejohns also disclosed the bombing of two police stations in Southern Ireland were the work of British agents, and not the IRA as originally reported.

Ivan Cooper, a leading Irish Protestant M.P. has charged "The British Secret Service has been responsible for some of our atrocities in the name of political expediency".

The British Defence Ministry has admitted the Littlejohn brothers were British agents. The Littlejohns were extradited to Dublin from London. During the London extradition hearings, all proceedings were held in secret at the insistence of the British government on the grounds of "national security".