



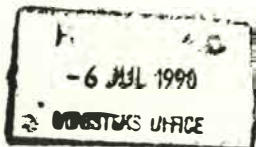
## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

<b>Reference Code:</b>	2021/44/205
<b>Creator(s):</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs
<b>Accession Conditions:</b>	Open
<b>Copyright:</b>	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.



SEANAD ÉIREANN  
BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH  
(Dublin 2.)

Mr. Sean Calleary T.D.,  
Minister of State,  
Department of Foreign Affairs,  
St. Stephen's Green,  
Dublin 2.



4 July 1990.

RE: THE ARMAGH FOUR

Dear Sean,

You will be aware of the above case, otherwise known as the U.D.R. Four. This case has received quite an amount of publicity in Northern Ireland but little here.

I would like to support the call for a retrial for these men.

I enclose some information about the case and I would be glad if you could help by drawing attention to this case and using your influence to have this raised through the Anglo-Irish Agreement arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

*Brendan N. Ryan*

SENATOR BRENDAN RYAN.

P.P.

# THE ARMAGH FOUR

Neil Latimer, James Hagan, Noel Bell and Winston Allen were convicted six years ago of the murder of Adrian Carroll in Armagh town in November 1983.

The bulk of the evidence against these four men was largely taken from statements made while in police custody and by the evidence of 'Witness A'. At their trial the Armagh Four claimed the statements were made under duress and accused the RUC of ill treatment. The so-called 'Incriminating' evidence of 'Witness A' has also been undermined by her own statements, prior to, during and after the trial. Witness A has partially retracted her statements and has accused members of the RUC of lying to her, and of tricking her into a statement which wrongly pointed the finger at an innocent man.

The Armagh Four were at the time of the death of Mr. Carroll UDR soldiers on duty in Armagh. There is substantial evidence that lends itself to their wrongful conviction. The campaign on behalf of Latimer, Hagan, Bell and Allen is a demand for a retrial. This is not an unfair or unjust demand as the facts point to an unsafe verdict based upon police evidence that was concocted in a deadly cocktail to convict four innocent men.

## THE FACTS

- The bulk of evidence against the Four is based on statements extracted while the men were in police custody - These statements were all withdrawn.
- Witness A claimed that she saw Neil Latimer in civilian dress at the time of the murder in Lonsdale Street, when Neil Latimer claims that he was on the Moy Road on a search duty.
- The original case was against seven soldiers, but because of police mishandling and brutality only four came to court.
- Witness A's attempted withdrawal of evidence during the trial was disallowed.
- Witness A's subsequent statement that undermines her evidence in court, accuses the police of lies and tricks.
- The fact that Lonsdale Street is on the other side of Armagh, where the murder took place.
- The statement by E. Faulkner, the eyewitness who was in Abbey Street at the time of the murder, identified the murderer and gave the police a description which was used as an original photo-fit.
- E. Faulkner knew N. Latimer and stated clearly that the gunman was not the same. Certain facts as height and build were opposite to the physique of Neil Latimer.
- The resident in Abbey Street who heard the footsteps of the gunman running away.
- The eyewitness account from the Archbishop's gardener who saw the get away car.
- The attempt by the crown to ignore these last two points as superficial evidence that meant nothing.
- Three PAF statements claiming the murder of Mr. Carroll.
- The attempt by the police to make a second photo-fit to incriminate the accused N. Latimer.
- The precise timing of the murder would have overruled the fact that the four UDR Landrovers were on the Moy Road at 4:20, which has been established.
- The eyewitness account of two men who can say that they saw the UDR patrol on the Moy Road, at the same time as the murder took place.
- The ludicrous idea that soldiers would plan a murder at such short notice while on duty with at least 16 other soldiers as witnesses to the event.
- The police unsatisfied with the first confessions extracted several other confessions until they had four corresponding statements. N. Latimer made as many as 14 statements in an attempt to give the police enough so-called evidence to convict the case.
- The gun used in the murder has never been found and it is believed the police will not check the ballistics with other more recent shootings.
- The alternative demands that a gunman be found. The PAF have produced evidence that points to the real gunman who carried out the murder.
- The case points to a major cover up by a high ranking members of the RUC who in order to alleviate the political pressure of the then shoot to kill campaign and Stalker Inquiry, had to take the heat of themselves. The trial of the four UDR soldiers had the desired effect.

We have in Northern Ireland, a situation that demands justice and fair play be done and be seen to be done for these men.

A retrial will allow them their right to produce new evidence which since the trial has come to light.

On the 8th November 1983 at 4.30pm Adrian Carroll a painter by trade and alleged IRA republican, was murdered outside his home 6 Abby St Armagh. Later that evening the Protestant Action Force (PAF) claimed responsibility. This claim fitted in with the material evidence that a Ford Cortina, stolen from the Shankill Road in Belfast some weeks before, was the vehicle soon as the getaway car in Abby St that afternoon. The murderer was soon by a key witness in Abby St a Miss Faulkner as she was then. The gunman wore a distinctive tartan cap, gold rim spectacles, and a navy anorack. This witness who knew Neil Latimer quite well denies adamantly that it was Latimer who she saw; reported what she saw to the police.

As is the procedure in such a case it usually takes days if not months before the police have any real evidence as to the whereabouts of the murderer. Two weeks after the murder another witness came forward with evidence that was most surprising. This witness concealed her identity under the pseudonym of 'witness A'. She has alleged to have seen four UDR men, one whom she knew was in civilian clothing, getting on board a UDR land rover which was parked beside the Armagh Tech. The surprising thing being that the man she knew, namely Neil Latimer was alleged to be wearing the distinctive clothing that the murderer had on.

In December 1983 several UDR men who were on patrol in Armagh on the evening in question were arrested and charged with the murder of Adrian Carroll. At their trial the UDR soldiers denied any guilt of murder and withdrew confessions that they alleged had been beaten and interrogated out of them while in Castlereagh holding centre by R.U.C. Officers.

All such charges of ill treatment were strenuously denied by the police.

The trial judge Lord Justice Kelly accepted the statements made in Castlereagh as truth and gave the benefit of doubt to the prosecution not the defendants.

Since their incarceration Neil Latimer, Noel Bell, James Hegan, and Winston Allen have continued to contest the court's verdict. They claim that other important evidence relating to the crime simply does not add up to the verdict of guilt. Witness 'A' has gone on radio to denounce the police for the way in which her statements were concocted to fit the police scenario. She has alleged that the police involved are hiding something. It is believed that since her allegations were made that she has come under police pressure to shut up.

The whole idea of a police cover up fits in with events in 1983/84. At that

time the RUC were under pressure because of a so called 'shoot to kill' policy. In 1984 John Stalker arrived in Northern Ireland to investigate the police. It is alleged that in order to take the heat off the RUC the murder of Adrian Carroll should be solved as quickly as possible. By pinning the blame on the UDR this inevitably took the heat off the RUC.

It now appears that there could be an element of truth in these allegations. Dr Paisley and other politicians convinced of the men's innocence have called for a fresh investigation of new evidence in the hope that a retrial will result. Peter Brooke has given his word that he will consider the suggestion for an appeal.

What has emerged seems to point to a scandalous campaign to malign the UDR for the benefit of the RUC. The verdict of Lord Justice Kelly is unsafe. What now matters most is that the UDR Four receive a retrial based upon, (a) New evidence, (b) The retractions of witness 'A', (c) The confessions of the PAF, (d) and an eye witness account unheard at the trial.

In the interest of justice and fair play these men are entitled to the benefit of the doubt as was the case with the Guilford Four. Their release has obvious implications for the four soldiers now serving life sentences in Magaberry prison. If these men are guilty so be it, but what has the police to fear? They must be given a fair hearing. If there is reasonable doubt as to their guilt then justice demands freedom for the four.

#### THE LIST OF FRESH EVIDENCE SO FAR.

1. The prosecution's allegation that the UDR four would trust three land rovers full of soldiers with their plans for a murder.
2. The impossibility of planning a murder so quickly while on duty.
3. The PAF confession- here are the real killers.
4. Miss Faulkner's statement.
5. The Abby St resident statement concerning the direction of the noise of the getaway foot steps.
6. The stolen Ford Cortina.
7. The witness at the UDR search point at the time of the murder.
8. The element of time and how the convoy stayed together.
9. The murder weapon.
10. Witness "A's" statements since the trial.
11. The four confessions.
12. The RUC's attitude.