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## Victims' families deserve the truth

### Pro Fide et Patria

Editorial

16/04/08

The son of a murder victim criticising police, alleging collusion and demanding truth and justice is nothing new in Northern Ireland. What makes the case of Gavin Larmour unusual is that his father was a serving police officer, murdered by the IRA, yet fellow officers failed to fully pursue those guilty of his killing.

John Larmour was one of 98 people who died in 1988. He was off-duty and helping out at his brother's ice-cream parlour on Belfast's Lisburn Road when he was shot dead by an IRA gunman.

Mr Larmour's only child was just 13 at the time and Gavin Larmour's sense of frustration, grievance and pain at the loss of his father and the RUC's failure to adequately investigate his death is all too apparent.

It is not difficult to understand why he is feeling as he does and why he decided to complain to the Police Ombudsman.

According to a critical report by Al Hutchinson, the RUC failed to carry out a thorough investigation. Basic follow-up inquiries relating to witnesses, suspects, telephone calls and vehicles thought to have been used in the attack were either not started or not completed.

Even more damning, detectives investigating the case were not told about information passed to police about the murderer.


The question is why police failed to properly investigate this murder and why potentially relevant information was not communicated to investigating officers.

Like all other relatives of those who died, the family of John Larmour deserve to have their questions answered and their quest for the truth taken seriously.

However, as the ombudsman has pointed out, there is a major issue regarding the provision of resources to deal with the large number of historical cases. This is a matter which the government needs to address on behalf of bereaved families.

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