

## British Justice Still Questionable Regarding the 1974 Birmingham Bombs

### News:

More than forty years after two bombs killed twenty-one people in Birmingham pubs, an inquest into their deaths has started. The inquest at this time is the culmination of years of effort by the families of the victims campaigning to learn what actually happened in 1974. Controversially, however, they will not learn who is suspected to be responsible for the attacks, as the Coroner Sir Peter Thornton has ruled that out of the investigation.

### Comment:

There are many unanswered questions around the Birmingham bombings, and the fact that they are still unanswered brings into question the British state's murky dealings and indeed complicity with terrorism and to what extent they still are.

Within hours of the bombs' detonation a number of local Irish men were arrested and then beaten by police into signing false confessions. They were convicted the following year, despite their claims of coercion, and spent nearly seventeen years in prison. Known as the Birmingham six, their convictions were eventually ruled unsafe in 1991 and they were finally released. One of them Patrick Hill wrote while in prison "The British system don't know how to spell the word JUSTICE never mind dispensing it."

The whole sorry affair is so controversial because at the heart of it is the allegation that a British Security Service agent was directly involved with the bombing, and at the very least the British government had prior knowledge of the attack.

Despite the efforts of campaigners over the decades, government and police files of the bombings have not been released, files of evidence are alleged to have gone missing, and before it even began this new inquiry already announced that "there is no evidence of state involvement." Indeed, the coroner had to fight a legal battle just to limit the scope of the inquiry to not investigate who was responsible. A major factor in the inability of the families to effectively fight the government's inaction is their meagre access to funds, while the state has put aside millions for their legal team. This situation was worsened when the government Legal Aid Agency denied ninety percent of the funding requested by the families' lawyers.

Julie Hambleton, sister of one of the victims, said, "Something is seriously amiss, it's absolutely outrageous. We are meant to have a judiciary system that is the envy of the world, but we're going to be left with more questions than we started with."

This case, and many others, may bring into the open just how infiltrated by British intelligence agents the IRA group was during the height of its terror campaign, and the extent to which acts of terror were tolerated or even coordinated by the British state against its own people in order to win the propaganda war against the Northern Irish Republican Movement.

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