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Local & National

Border murder group told to disband

Thursday, February 14, 2008

By Will Ellison

Republicans today demanded that a group they are blaming for the murder of Andrew Burns should explain themselves or disband, senior sources said today.

Republicans say that a group was behind the slaying of the 27-year-old painter and decorator.

Mr Burns was abducted after his father had left him off in Strabane around 6.45pm and was discovered at 7.30pm, some 800m from the border at Doneyloop between Clady in Co Tyrone and Castelfinn in Co Donegal on Tuesday.

The group -which has used the traditional Ogligh na hEireann title and is defined by the Independent Monitoring Commission as a splinter group of the Continuity IRA - is thought to have 20 members and is believed to be based mainly in east and west Tyrone. It has been behind a number of pipe bomb attacks in Strabane, one which nearly killed the mother of two dead IRA members.

Following the murder, a number of republican groups have distanced themselves from the attack. The Real IRA, Continuity IRA and the INLA have all denied they were involved.

Republican sources in Strabane indicated that would leave only two groups, Ogligh na hEireann and the Republican Defence Army, in the frame for the shooting.

Both groups are relatively new, having only come into existence in the last couple of years.

A senior republican source, speaking about Ogligh na hEireann, said: " There is an onus on this group to accept responsibility and to explain their actions and justification of them to the republican community. If they can't or are unwilling to do so then they should disband."

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