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Wednesday, 10 September 2008

A convicted Real IRA member accused of the Omagh bomb atrocity told gardai he wanted to see terrorist attacks in England, a court heard yesterday.

Seamus Daly, one of five men being sued by families of those killed in the 1998 massacre, revealed he had rows over the peace process with former allies in the Provisional IRA.

The landmark lawsuit, sitting in Dublin's Four Courts, heard Daly was being questioned in November 2000 over the car bomb attack on the market town when he opened up about bitter rifts among republicans.

After initially refusing to answer detectives, he said: "The war has to be taken to their own ground, in England."

Daly is being sued by the families for £14m along with Michael McKeivitt, the alleged leader of the Real IRA, Liam Campbell, who is said to be his

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number two, Colm Murphy and Seamus McKenna. All deny any involvement in the bombing.

Detective Sergeant Dermot Flannery said Daly was being questioned at Monaghan Garda Station after being arrested for possession of explosives.

Referring to transcripts of the interview Mr Flannery said Daly repeatedly responded "no comment".

But he opened up when asked about what he thought of the peace process and the Good Friday Agreement. "It's not going to work," Daly told gardai.

"I've had rows and arguments with the Provos over it.

"It's a sell-out completely to the men who died on hunger strike and who died on active service."

Det Sgt Flannery said he asked Daly about the attack on Omagh.

"Wasn't that atrocity in Omagh shocking?" Mr Flannery asked.

"Well the car bomb is not the way to go anyway," Daly replied.

"It was a thing of the past."

Daly, from Co Monaghan, pleaded guilty to being a member of the Real IRA in 2004 and was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison.

The groundbreaking court case initially opened in the spring before adjourning until yesterday.

Last December, a Belfast judge cleared Sean Hoey, the only man ever charged in direct connection with the car bomb attack, of any involvement.

Garda testimonies are being heard by Judge Conal Gibbons in the presence of Mr Justice Morgan, who has presided over the case in Belfast Crown Court but has no judicial powers in Dublin.

The case continues.

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