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UVF boss covered murdered informer

North Belfast News

By Ciarán Barnes

27/04/2007

A senior member of the UVF has been accused of covering up for a Special Branch agent.

Police informant Colin 'Crazy' Craig was shot dead by the INLA in June 1994. Loyalists Trevor King and David Hamilton died in the same attack. The first person on the scene in the seconds after the killings was the most senior UVF man on the Shankill.

Loyalist sources this week accused the grandfather, who is in his late 50s, of removing a police panic button from Craig's jacket.

They said the UVF leader admitted doing this in the months after Craig's death.

But they are now questioning why he did not reveal details of the panic button at the time.

"Craig was given a UVF funeral, he got a real hero's send-off," said our loyalist source.

"Why would this man, who is the most senior UVF figure in Ulster, allow Craig to get a UVF funeral when he found a Special Branch panic button inside his jacket? It just doesn't make sense.

"People on the Shankill have been asking for years whether this man is a tout. Now even UVF volunteers are questioning who he is really working for."

The source also revealed that at the time of his murder Craig had been under UVF 'house arrest' because of suspicions that he was a tout.

"If that was the case what was he doing walking along the Shankill Road with Trevor King who was the UVF's military commander?" asked the insider.

In February the North Belfast News revealed that Colin Craig's role in a rocket attack on an Ardoyne Sinn Féin centre was covered up by his Special Branch handlers.

Security sources also confirmed he passed details to his police bosses warning that the UVF was targeting black taxi drivers at the junction of Divis Street and the Westlink.

Special Branch failed to act on the information and just days later the UVF killer Tommy 'Toddler' Hughes at that exact location.

The informant was also involved in the April 1994 murder of fellow UVF man Ian Hamilton.

Craig is understood to have been paid thousands of pounds over a 10-year period by his Special Branch handlers. He drove a top of the range 4X4 despite being unemployed.

However, the UVF ended up getting its hands on most of the money he had

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amassed.

After Craig's death UVF men raided the home of a relative of the dead man. Paramilitaries found bank books revealing how much the informant had stashed away. They made the relative withdraw the cash and give it to the UVF whose members then smashed up Craig's grave.

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