

IRA any more



Support: A new mural on the Lower Falls Road

The two former Sinn Féin colleagues who accused Adams

By **Ali Bracken** and **Eamon Donoghue**

TWO former friends of Gerry Adams – both now dead – accused him of involvement in the disappearance and murder of Jean McConville.

Brendan ‘The Dark’ Hughes was a legend within the IRA, rising to become the Provisionals’ Belfast commander and leading the first hunger strike for political status in the Maze in 1980.

Once a close friend of Gerry Adams, he spent time in jail with the future Sinn Féin leader after the pair were interned in 1971.

The Falls Road republican came out of prison a disillusioned man and became a bitter opponent of Sinn Féin’s peace strategy, believing it would not deliver a united Ireland.

Before his death in 2008, Hughes gave an interview to the Boston College Belfast Project history archive detailing his life in the IRA.

On tape he claimed his former friend Adams had ordered the death and

disappearance of Jean McConville. ‘There was only one man who gave that order for that woman to be executed. That man is now the head of Sinn Féin. He went into this family’s house and promised an investigation into the woman’s disappearance. That man is the man who gave the order for that woman to be executed.’

Mr Hughes said he ‘never carried out a major operation without the OK or the order from Gerry.’

Mr Hughes claimed that, as well as ordering the execution of the widowed mother of

ten, Adams also ordered for her to be buried, because ‘she was an informer’.

The Sinn Féin president has always denied Mr Hughes’s claims.

‘Brendan is telling lies. I had no act or part to play in the abduction, killing or burial of Jean McConville or any of the others,’ Mr Adams said.

Claim: Dolours Price



Dolours Price, the woman convicted of the 1973 IRA bombing of the Old Bailey, was among the first to publicly accuse Adams of being responsible for the abduction of those the terrorist organisation considered informers.

In an interview with The Telegraph in September 2012, Ms Price claimed that Adams – as her ‘Officer Commanding’ in the Belfast Brigade of the Provisional IRA – ordered her to drive alleged informers from Northern Ireland into the Republic. They would later be executed.

She also claimed Adams was involved in approving an IRA bombing campaign on mainland Britain, including the attack on the Old Bailey for which she served eight years in prison.

The Sinn Féin president has constantly denied all such allegations; ‘I reject entirely any allegations made by Dolours Price,’ he said. ‘She is a long-standing opponent of Sinn Féin and the peace process... she clearly has her own issues.’



Pleas: Helen McKendry has begged her brother to talk

‘Give them the names, don’t be afraid’

THE daughter of the mother-of-ten allegedly executed on the order of Gerry Adams yesterday pleaded with her brother to have the courage to give police the names of her killers.

As it emerged that graffiti threatening those who have accused the Sinn Féin president has been daubed on walls in Belfast, Michael McConville insists he is too scared of retribution to identify the gang he saw dragging his mother to her death 42 years ago.

His sister, Helen McKendry, revealed yesterday she had given police their names last year – but because the then 15-year-old was out of the house buying dinner and didn’t witness the abduc-

By **James Tozer**

tion, her account was treated as ‘hearsay’.

Yesterday she begged him: ‘Michael, what are you afraid of? It’s time to put that behind you.’

‘You were there when it happened – give them the names, don’t be afraid any more.’

Jean McConville was abducted from her Belfast home by the Provisional IRA in December 1972 after being accused of being a traitor because she earlier comforted a British soldier shot by Republican terrorists as he lay dying in her street outside her house.

After being shot in the head the 37-

year-old widow was buried on a beach in the south but her remains were only discovered by chance in 2003.

Her orphaned children were split up and raised in children’s homes, and while some have bravely come forward to demand justice, their troubled upbringing has meant the siblings have not always seen eye-to-eye.

Following Wednesday’s arrest of Mr Adams, 52-year-old Mr McConville – who says as an 11-year-old he was subjected to a mock execution to stop him naming his mother’s abductors – said he still feared he or one of his family would be shot by the IRA if he spoke out now.

Mrs McKendry – who moved to rural

Co. Down in the 1990s after she and her husband Seamus, 57, suffered death threats – said his testimony as an eyewitness would be crucial.

She believes their high-profile campaign for justice – giving interviews to television stations and newspapers from all over the world – has protected them from retribution.

Members of the IRA who abducted Mrs McConville allegedly on Mr Adams’ orders include well-known Republican figures, her family claim.

‘They can go about their lives as if nothing could happen to them,’ Mrs McKendry said, adding that some of them now had grandchildren.

‘How can they look them in the eye?’