

DAAD targets 'wrong man'

THE shooting of a convicted drug-dealer in a south Belfast bar this week was almost certainly a chilling bid to fulfill an extortion pledge by the IRA.

But Belfast man Brendan 'Bap' Campbell, who was singled out and shot in the Meadow's Tavern, could have been the victim of a case of mistaken identity.

The murder attempt comes less than a month after Sunday Life exclusively revealed a Provo threat to kill two drug pedlars.

Direct Action Against Drugs — a cover name for the IRA — warned that it would kill those it held responsible for a grenade blitz on Sinn Féin's west Belfast HQ in early November.

As fears grow that the shooting marks the re-emergence of DAAD, security sources said they believed that Campbell had been the victim of a case of mistaken identity. The 29-year-old Poleglass man, a convicted drug dealer, had survived an apparent IRA murder bid in April 1995.

Prison

Campbell was shot in the head during a shoot-out at his Colinbrook Crescent home, just days after being released from prison on a drugs charge.

He later appeared in court charged with firearms offences, relating to the murder bid incident.

A Crown lawyer claimed Campbell had been targeted by the IRA "who would prefer to keep control of the profit of drugs". Campbell — who was on bail at the time — pleaded with the judge to be remanded in custody.

His lawyer told the court: "He might not be alive by Christmas if his bail is not revoked."

According to sources, Campbell foiled his would-be assassins this week by wearing a bullet proof vest.

Republicans in west Belfast are also claiming that Campbell had been lured to the Meadow's Tavern for a meeting with the IRA, after being given assurances about his safety.