

CONFIDENTIAL - POLICY

ANNEX A

BACKGROUND**Edward Butler, Hugh Doherty, Henry Duggan, Martin O'Connell**

Butler, Doherty, Duggan and O'Connell were members of an IRA gang operating in London in 1974 and 1975. They were responsible for many bomb explosions and other terrorist incidents in and around the capital which resulted in the deaths of nine people. They became known as the Balcombe Street gang after their arrest in that street following a siege. They were convicted on 10 February 1977 at the Central Criminal Court and each received 12 life sentences and 8 long determinate sentences. The trial judge recommended that each man should serve a minimum of 30 years. The Home Secretary has recently set aside this recommendation and instead set whole life tariffs.

Details of offences

In August 1975, an explosives officer, Captain Roger Goad, was killed whilst attempting to defuse a bomb outside a shop in Kensington.

In September a man was killed when a bomb exploded at the Hilton Hotel; one other person died (but a further charge of murder was not proceeded with) and 60 other people were injured.

In October a passer-by examining a suspect package near Green Park underground station was killed when it exploded, 20 other people were injured. In the same month Professor Gordon Hamilton-Fairley was killed when a bomb exploded as he was passing by (or examining) a bomb planted under a car belonging to Sir Hugh Fraser M.P.

In November a bomb was thrown at the windows of a Mount Street restaurant killing one of the diners and injuring 17 others. Six days later a bomb was thrown through the window of another restaurant in Walton Street. Two diners were killed (a charge of murder was not proceeded with in relation to one of the victims) and 18 others were injured. On 27 November Ross McWhirter was shot in the stomach and head on the doorstep of his home and died shortly afterwards.

After a police chase the four men held two people hostage at gun point in their own flat in Balcombe Street from 6 to 12 December 1975 before surrendering to the police.

Paul Magee

Paul Magee and Michael O'Brien were travelling in a car when they were stopped by a police patrol car. When Special Constable Goodman approached the car, Magee got out and shot him dead at close range. Magee then fired twice through the windscreen of

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the police car hitting the other police officer (PC Kelly) in chest. Magee then moved to the side window and fired several more shots at the officer who was gravely injured and fortunate to survive.

Magee and O'Brien were captured and subsequently received sentences of life imprisonment and 18 years respectively. Magee who has a previous conviction for the murder of an Army Officer in Belfast has been given a whole life tariff. O'Brien was repatriated to the Republic on 3 November 1997.

Magee was involved in the attempted armed escape from Whitemoor prison in September 1994 during which a prison officer was shot. He was subsequently charged with various offences arising out of this incident, however due to prejudicial media coverage and the subsequent collapse of two trials the charges were not proceeded with.

Magee has previous convictions for terrorist offences in Northern Ireland (including for the murder of a British Army Officer). He and others escaped from the Crumlin Road prison in Belfast shortly after conviction. He fled to the Republic where he was given a 10 year sentence for shooting a police officer. On release he was detained pending extradition to the North but was granted bail which he subsequently jumped. He then made his way to England where he committed the offences for which he is currently detained.

The parents of Special Constable Goodman have mounted their own campaign against Magee's repatriation and have written several letters to the Prime Minister and to the Home Secretary. There is already local press interest in this story and this would be likely to escalate in the event that Magee's request is successful.

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