

undefined

Sections

- 1. The Irish Times
- 2. Breaking News
- 3. Sport
- 4. Business
- 5. Technology
- 6. Weather
- 7. In Focus
- 8. Blogs
- 9. Archive Search
- 10. Family Notices
 - Editions

Search for

- Jobs
- Homes
- <u>Cars</u>

Services

- Premium Email
- Games
- Dating
- Travel
- Frontpage Sales
- Photosales

- Ancestors
- Irish Times Training
- Mobile
- Reader Offers



THE IRISH TIMES

Friday, December 21, 2007

Next Day

- Front Page
- <u>Ireland</u>
- World |
- Finance
- Features
- Sport
- Opinion |
- <u>Letters</u>
- The Ticket

Judge accuses police of 'deception' in Omagh case

Dan Keenan and Gerry Moriarty

The judge who yesterday freed the man charged with the Omagh bombing has accused the police of "deliberate and calculated deception".

Mr Justice Weir described to Belfast Crown Court "a most disturbing situation" whereby two officers had "beefed up" their statements concerning the atrocity. Had evidence not been available to "gainsay" the "lies" of these two police witnesses the court could have been deceived, he said.

Before releasing Sean Gerard Hoey (38), Molly Road, Jonesborough, Co Armagh, the judge said he found "deliberate and calculated deception in which others concerned in the investigation and preparation of this case for trial beyond these two witnesses may also have played a part".

In a devastating critique of the police handling of the case, he said this was "deeply disquieting".

- Transcripts of the trial are to be forwarded to the office of the Police Ombudsman for further consideration.
- Throughout his verdict, which took 80 minutes to deliver, Mr Justice Weir also catalogued a series of failures and inadequacies which he said had failed to offer evidence of a standard needed to secure a conviction.
- The judge described the prosecution case as one founded on three "strands". These were that the defendant had "authored" devices used in a series of dissident republican attacks in 1998 leading up to the bombing of Omagh; that fibre evidence also linked him to the devices; and that DNA evidence also associated him with the 56 charges he faced.
- The judge's verdict systematically took apart the case against Mr Hoey in all three "strands".
- In relation to the DNA evidence, the judge described the approach of police and scenes of crime officers as "thoughtless and slapdash". Items of evidence were "widely and routinely handled with cavalier disregard for their integrity", he said.
- Staff at the forensics service must have been "very well aware of the risks of improper labelling, storage and examination".
- Before freeing Mr Hoey, the judge said he was "acutely aware" of the feeling of the Omagh relatives, many of whom were in the public gallery alongside friends and supporters of the accused who applauded his release.
- Outside the court, the defendant's mother, Rita Hoey, said her son was an "innocent" man while relatives spoke of their anguish.

© 2007 The Irish Times

Related links

From The Irish Times

- 18/01/2007 Judge to consider Omagh trial verdict
- 27/05/2005 Electrician charged with 29 Omagh murders
- 22/01/2005 Omagh retrial as conviction deemed 'unsafe'

Email to a Friend | E Print this Page

Article Tools

Email to a Friend

Print this Page

HDUERTISEMENT

Most popular stories

- Most Read
- Most Emailed
- 1. Ex Trinity student was CIA's Irish link, records show
- 2. Search continues for Dublin teacher
- 3. Death of Irish actor Peter Caffrey
- 4. Iowa votes tonight in first test of presidential hopefuls
- 5. Drivers fail to get message as phone penalty points mount

Based on usage over last 24 hours

Weekly Index

M Price Watch

Innovation

T Health

W Motors

An Teanga Bheo

T Property

Science Today

F The Ticket

S Magazine

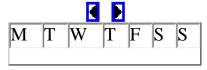
News Features

Weekend

Obituaries

Archive

Click a date to view the paper on that day



Breaking News

Article Index

Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat

© 2008 ireland.com

- About us |
- Privacy policy
- Help
- Contact us
- Advertise
- Terms & conditions |
- Site map