

I first met Malachy McAllister in the Rayburn Building, US Congress a decade ago. I had been invited to give a Congressional briefing on British state collusion with loyalist paramilitaries in Ireland and the many resulting deaths.

I knew about Malachy's case, as I'd been involved in research, documentation and campaigning around collusion. Malachy was lucky in many respects even though he, his late wife Bernadette (whom I had the great privilege of meeting), and their young family had to flee Belfast with what little they could carry.

If Malachy had remained in Belfast it is highly likely he'd have been killed and the briefing I was invited to give would have been dealing with the circumstances of his killing too.

Malachy had witnessed several of his close friends being killed. Loyalists shot dead a friend, Jim Templeton, in front of him whilst in his early teens. Death, injury and the conflict had disproportionately visited the few small terraced streets lined with two-up two-down room homes with outside toilets where he grew up on south Belfast's Lower Ormeau Road.

This was a community that would also witness many more murders long after Malachy fled and the sectarian excesses of Orange marches forced through that community by the RUC as the peace process struggled to take root.

As our delegation sat in the offices of Congressman Chris Smith, Richie Neal, Elliott Engle and the late Donald Payne, we spoke about some of the people killed that Malachy had grown up with and who were his friends. All victims of British collusion.

Theresa Clinton, mother of two young girls, was one of those we spoke of. Theresa was shot twenty-three times by two loyalist gunmen who had first smashed her living room window with a concrete block before turning their automatic weapons on her. Theresa's husband Jim, a highly respected figure throughout Belfast and beyond, had been the Sinn Féin candidate in the Belfast City Council elections. Like Malachy, he too had been the subject of numerous RUC death threats.

However, the collusion policy had by that time taken on another more sinister dimension; that of killing the relatives of republicans including their spouses and children.

When the RUC arrived at the Clinton home they mocked and taunted the family. There are still unspeakable truths about what the RUC did to Theresa's remains that evening.

Two witnesses, a nurse and a passerby who had positively identified one of Theresa's killers, were later asked to attend a nearby RUC barracks. Whilst waiting there the RUC brought before them the killer and proceeded to read out the names and addresses of the witnesses. Understandably they withdrew their evidence.

When the British government refused the promised inquiry into the murder of human rights lawyer Pat Finucane, instead determining that a paper review only would be carried out, Sir Desmond de Silva conducted that review.

The three key agencies involved in collusion were the RUC, British army intelligence and MI5. At the heart of the collusion web were their agents within loyalism carrying out the murders and attacks. The collective group directing these agencies was the Task Coordinating Group (TCG). TCG reported directly to London appointed government ministers in the North including the Secretary of State and through Assistant Political Secretaries (ASP's) directly to London.

The British army agent Brian Nelson was tasked to target and kill Malachy. Nelson, a 'former' British soldier secreted into the UDA, worked with the UVF's Red Hand Commando's (RHC's) to carry out the attack using the actual car purchased for Nelson by the British army's Force Research Unit (FRU) – the unit that had Pat Finucane and many others killed. This we know from Nelson's diary/jail journal and interviews he gave to BBC investigative journalist John Ware.

The RHC's also used automatic weapons procured through Nelson and others from the South African apartheid regime with the full

knowledge of London. An entire shipment of weapons was imported rearming loyalism.

When De Silva published his review (Dec 2012) I was in a secured room on 'lock down' in the Stormont Hotel, Belfast. I accompanied Teresa Slane, the widow of Gerard Slane killed through Nelson's information on direction of the FRU, as was Terrance McDaid and Pat Finucane. Also there was Teresa's lawyer Paul Pierce of KRW Law. We had prior access to the embargoed report hence the 'lock down'.

In those several hours I also came across an attack on a south Belfast home on October 2nd 1988 by the RHC's. The date of the attack, the subject, the assailants, and the account precisely matching that of Nelson's detail to Ware of targeting Malachy, including that the RHC's, a so-called specialist unit of the UVF, were seldom active. It was the only attack by loyalists that same evening in Belfast. Whilst De Silva reported the attack on the McAllister home Malachy is not named as no one was ever charged – Malachy is referred to as T12 (7.222/ 7.223 page 165/166) – T being Target. Theresa Clinton's husband Jim was T1.

In a further twist the PSNI appears to believe that one of the RHC's alleged leaders, Winston Rea, has made some sort of admission in the Boston Tapes 'project' concerning certain murders and attempted murders.

Whereas the PSNI engaged in protracted international legal proceedings to obtain the Boston College tapes, they have not sought disclosure of materials much closer to home from the MOD which would shed more light on the collusive actions between the security forces and RHC in Malachy's case

However, here was proof, finally confirming what Malachy had been rightly saying for years in exile. Evidence in a review report, commissioned by the British Prime Minister David Cameron, that his security and intelligence services targeted and tried to kill Malachy and his family.

For me this would finally end the uncertainty about Malachy's future ensuring that he would be afforded the right to stay in the

US indefinitely. For those who may have doubted him he was finally vindicated.

And yet after all this Malachy McAllister now faces deportation. Despite the life he has made for himself and his family in over two decades of exile, despite this life being in a country that is now undoubtedly his home, where he has lived a normal life, something he could not live in Ireland.

American values ensured that Malachy and his family were safe from harm, had equal opportunity, and were free from intimidation, discrimination, prejudice and inequality. It afforded Malachy opportunity he was denied in his birthplace. Malachy made the most of that opportunity and he contributes back acting with the greatest integrity and respect for his host country playing a full and active a role in citizenship as any other US citizen.

The decision of the Department of Homeland Security to now deport Malachy, while not unlawful, runs contrary to the ongoing involvement and support by the US administration for the Irish peace process not least the focus on addressing the legacy of the past that has so affected the McAllister family. It runs contrary to American values and flies in the face of the notion of liberty and the right to family life.

We in Relatives for Justice call on the US administration to reverse the deportation order and to end the suffering of the McAllister family.