

BOOM & BUST

Ex-Provo's security firm quizzed over innocent

THE SON of ex-Provo godfather John Noonan, who was arrested in connection with the attempted murder of an innocent postman, has insisted: "I was just one line of enquiry."

This week, company boss Sean Noonan was forced to hold a meeting with his creditors in a north Dublin hotel to wind up his father's once-mighty security firm, Strand Security Services (SSS).

This week also marked the fourth anniversary of the attempted murder of postman Robert Delany (31), who was shot in the head when he looked out the window of his apartment in Tallaght, Dublin.

Dad-of-two Robert was targeted because of a minor exchange of words outside a pub and remains in a permanent vegetative state.

Following an extensive investigation, gardai arrested CAB target and ex-IRA commander John Noonan and his two sons, Andrew and Sean. It is believed the Noonan family were quizzed about whether they were involved in hiring hitman Daniel Gaynor to murder Robert.

Noonan snr made a fortune providing security for high-profile celebs during the last decade.

His firm was hired to provide bodyguards to stars like U2 frontman Bono, Hollywood actress Cate Blanchett and Irish actor Jonathan Rhys Meyers.

However, on Friday, his son Sean was forced to call a creditors meeting in advance of placing the company into liquidation. The *Sunday World* has learned the Noonan's firm is being wound up with debts of over €508,000.

It marks a dramatic fall from grace for the multi-million-euro security empire controlled by the Noonan family. When confronted by the *Sunday World*, Sean Noonan said he had no message for the Delany family.

"What's it to do with me? I don't have anything to say," he said.

When it was pointed out that he was arrested in connection with the attempted murder, he replied: "We



SECURITY: Bono and John Noonan

By NIALL DONALD

were questioned, not arrested. I was just one line of enquiry, no charges were ever brought. The issues with the company have nothing to do with that. I haven't set up any other companies."

Tragic Robert - who had no involvement in crime - was gunned down in the apartment he shared with his girlfriend in Russell Rise, in Tallaght, on October 23, 2008.

He was targeted after he intervened to rescue someone who was being attacked outside a pub in Saggart. Following the row, Robert's life had been threatened. However, he subsequently told his family and friends that he had arranged to meet John Noonan and the issue was resolved.

Damaged

Gardai believe Daniel Gaynor - who has a hitman for the RIRA - was paid to carry out the shooting. Gaynor was later shot dead by rival criminal Keith Wilson in 2010.

Robert was shot in the head and while he is physically strong and well, his brain has been so seriously damaged as to leave him in a condition that is described as a "living death".

Robert's father Terry launched a high-profile campaign to bring his son's attacker to justice.

Speaking to *Sunday World* this week, he said: "It's difficult for the family to witness Robert's condition, we visit him every day in hospital. His kids are growing up without a dad."

"In Robert's case, there is no closure as he is in a vegetative state. They call it the living death and the likelihood is that he could live in that condition for several years."

Terry said the gardai and the local community knew who ordered the shooting within hours of it happening.

"The gardai have told us this is an ongoing investigation. We are satisfied that everything possible is being done to bring the people who ordered the shooting to justice. The gardai know who organised and financed the shooting on Robert - they knew within days who did it and there are no new theories."

On Friday, Noonan's creditors were called together and told that the company was being wound up and would be unable to pay its debts in full.

It is believed that the majority of the money owed by the firm is to the Revenue Commissioners.

Sean claimed he had taken charge of the company in 2011 and attempted to turn it around. However, during one bizarre exchange, Sean revealed his company had been evicted by his own father for not paying rent.

SSS was booted out of a premises in the north inner-city by Noonan snr when they fell behind in the rent.

The meeting was also told how the firm had lost clients after it emerged that John Noonan was being investi-

wound up by son who was postie's horrific shooting

gated by CAB. Last year, a Dublin court heard how Noonan snr owed more than €2.6million to the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB).

The Bankruptcy Court was told how he had declared himself bankrupt last March and had debts of €4.2million.

In court, Noonan had attempted to avoid a tax assessment being pursued by CAB by claiming he had been operating a bank account for the IRA.

Noonan had said that up until 2004, he was a senior member of the republican movement, but the tax assessments were confirmed in December 2009.

Noonan snr had come to the atten-

tion of CAB following an investigation into the assets of slain drug baron Martin 'Marlo' Hyland. CAB officers discovered a direct link between the crime godfather and Noonan - a founding member of Concerned Parents Against Drugs in the 1980s.

Last year, protests were held after Sean's brother Andrew was appointed manager of Leinster Senior League football side Bluebell United.

Andrew had been brought to court after a weapon was seized from his Co. Kildare home during the investigation into Robert's attempted murder.

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WIND UP: Sean Noonan



DENIALS: Our man Niall Donald confronts Sean Noonan



PROTESTS: Andrew Noonan