

# The theories about who & why

- 1 The al-Hilli family were executed by a far-right fanatic.
- 2 Saad al-Hilli was targeted because his father had allegedly been involved in siphoning off Saddam Hussein's millions in Swiss bank accounts.
- 3 Saad was assassinated by Mossad either because he was allegedly selling satellite secrets to Israel's Middle East enemies
- or because of alleged links to Islamic extremism online.
- 4 French cyclist Sylvain Mollier was the intended target because of his work or alleged philandering.
- 5 Saad's death was due to his long-running feud with his brother Zaid over the inheritance of their family home and their recently deceased father's bank account.
- 6 The deaths were a murder-suicide, in which Saad paid a hitman to assassinate him and his family, making Mollier an inconvenient witness.
- 7 All of the victims were random victims of crazed psychopath who lay in wait in the forest.
- 8 Saad's wife Iqbal was the target because of secrets going back to her time in the United States and the United Arab Emirates.
- 9 Iqbal's mother Suhaila was the target, over her decision to give her granddaughters in Britain some of her money, provoking resentment in Sweden where she lived.



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# MASSACRE IN ALPS: BROTHER'S 1ST TALK

Pictures: PHILIP COBURN

## EXCLUSIVE

BY TOM PARRY  
Senior Feature Writer

**IT WAS a bloody massacre that shocked the nation.**

British engineer Saad al-Hilli, his wife and her mother were shot dead in a hail of bullets as they parked up in a lay-by on a trip to the French Alps. The fourth victim, a passing cyclist, was also murdered by the lone gunman armed with a semi-automatic Luger.

He then shot and pistol-whipped the couple's seven-year-old daughter while her younger sister cowered under her dead mother's skirt.

To this day, the 2012 murder of Saad al-Hilli and his family remains a mystery.

The victim's brother was arrested by French police but not charged because of insufficient evidence.

Zaid al-Hilli, 56, has now broken his silence over the killings. In an exclusive interview, he said accusations that he was connected to the murders were "lies and nonsense".

And he claimed that 11 months before he was killed, younger brother Saad attacked him in the family's £1million detached house after months of arguments over ownership of the property.

It was the last time he spoke directly to his brother. All further communication was via a lawyer.

Zaid refutes all suggestions he had anything to do with the deaths of his brother and his family and denies even knowing Saad was in the Alps.

But for French prosecutor Eric Maillaud, the argument 11 months before the shooting remains a valid line of inquiry.

He said: "We cannot find another member of the family who would have wanted rid of Saad apart from Zaid."

But Mr Maillaud said police have no evidence linking Zaid to the murders and conceded: "We have not found any suspicious movements in relation to Zaid."

## UNSOLVED

His suspicions have been fuelled by Zaid's refusal to travel to France to meet detectives since the day of the killings. But Zaid said: "If they want to interview me they can come here. Why should I go there?"

It remains one of the strangest unsolved crimes of recent years, but the most likely theory is that Saad, 50, was shot dead by a professional hitman.

Wife Iqbal, mother-in-law Suhaila, both in the back seat of their parked BMW, and French cyclist Sylvain Mollier, found on the ground next to the vehicle, were killed by the same assassin.

Saad and Iqbal's oldest daughter Zainab, seven, was left for dead and Sister Zeena, four, was found unharmed hiding under her mother's skirt. The assassin fired 21 bullets from his Swiss Army semi-automatic Luger pistol.

Three years on, Iraqi-born Zaid agreed to be interviewed for a new publication by Mirror Books, *The Perfect Crime*, which is out next week.

He is adamant he has been set up by the French authorities because of his ethnic background to cover for their complicity in a plot to target cyclist Mollier. Asked about the fight which resulted in his brother dialling 999, Zaid recalled: "All I asked him is for something and he reacted."

"I went up to my bedroom and he came back, charging - he's a much bigger guy than I am. He pinned me down on the bed and he calls his wife and says 'He's hitting



## HOUSE

Forensic officers examine the home at centre of row



## SHOCK

Mirror front page on the horrific French Alps murders back in September, 2012

## SCENE



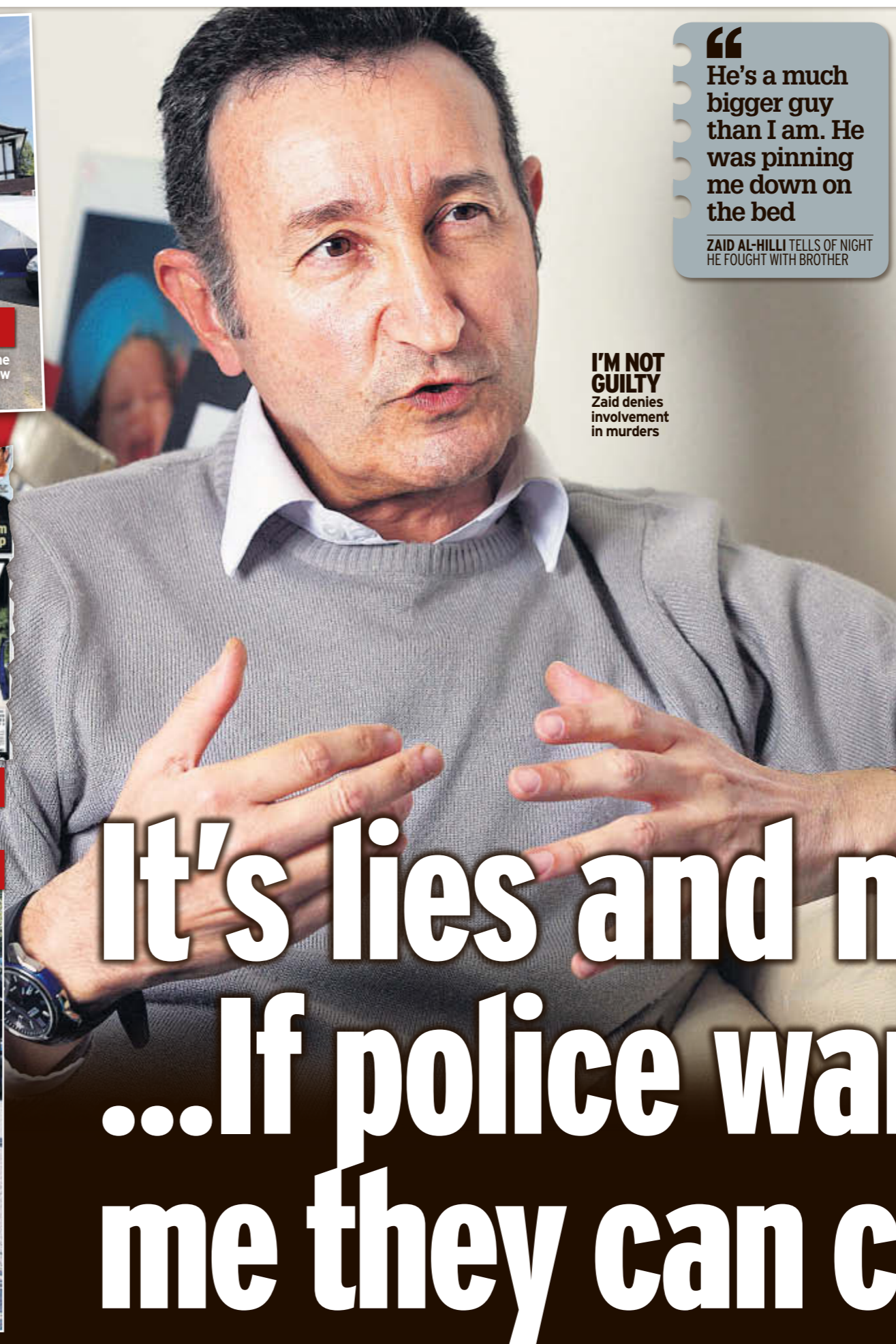
Gendarmes speak to a cyclist near the murder scene

**“There is a cover-up. I think they know who is behind it, who is the gunman**

**Zaid al-Hilli tells of his suspicions over deaths**

me, he's hitting me'. I was underneath! He told her to phone the police. She said 'No, what are you talking about?' But he went and phoned the police. The policewoman said, 'Look, I'm not interested in any of this.

It's only because of the children here.' Zaid said the trigger for Saad's fury in October 2011 was his refusal to hand over the £1million house in Claygate, Surrey to his brother. The mock-Tudor stockbroker-



**“He's a much bigger guy than I am. He was pinning me down on the bed**

**Zaid al-Hilli tells of night he fought with brother**

**I'M NOT GUILTY**  
Zaid denies involvement in murders



## VICTIM

Engineer Saad al-Hilli had fallen out with his older brother over their inheritance

## HORROR

Police examine the wrecked BMW at the centre of the shooting tragedy



**It's lies and nonsense ...If police want to quiz me they can come here**

belt home had been half-owned by Saad and half by their mother Fasiha, who drew up a will assigning her share to Zaid.

When she died in 2003, Zaid claims the brothers agreed to share ownership. This broke down when their dad Kadhim, died at his home in Spain, in 2011. Because he had maintained the property while Zaid lived elsewhere, Saad believed he was entitled to sole ownership.

In a text conversation with friend James Mathews, Saad wrote: "I put half this house in his name when my mother died. And now he wants me to buy it from him. £400K! When he has put zero

£ in it." In a separate email, Saad claimed: "Zaid and I do not communicate any more as he is another control freak and tried a lot of underhanded things even when my father was alive... now I have just had to wipe him out of my life."

Speaking at the flat in Chessington, Surrey, where he has lived since the night of the row, Zaid told me: "The disagreement is merely about one thing. Saad wanted the house that he was living in, my share, to give it to him.

"I've left it to him in a will but I wasn't

prepared to give it him there and then." Echoing the comments of Saad's friends, also interviewed for the book, Zaid said his brother often looked "so down and so sad" before the final confrontation.

Until falling out, the brothers shared an exceptional bond. Only three years apart in age, they went to the same school in Pimlico, Central London, after their parents fled Iraq in the 1970s.

The link was so special that when Zaid lost his wife to cancer in 2007, Saad invited him to move to the family home.

But it wasn't to last. Friends recall Saad was so stressed by the feud that he went to hospital with heart problems and changed the locks on the Claygate house, alleging Zaid had taken away antiques.

Asked about this, Zaid replied: "Lies. We are trying to find them now. I've never had them."

Zaid told me police had him under observation from the moment Saad was identified as a victim and searched his flat three weeks afterwards.

He added: "Saad was in the wrong place

at the wrong time. I think they twisted it around. It's not fair on the families and the victims this went on for such a long time with not a shred of evidence.

"There is a cover-up. I think they know who is behind it, who is the gunman and everything. I think they know exactly who was the target, and it was Sylvain Mollier."

■ To buy *The Perfect Crime* (£9.99) go to [www.mirrorcollection.co.uk](http://www.mirrorcollection.co.uk)  
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