

INC NEWS

IRISH NATIONAL CONGRESS - COMHDHÁIL NÁISIÚNTA NA HÉIREANN

May 2011

BRITISH ROYAL VISIT

Arising from an Executive meeting of the INC held on 26th March 2011, the following statement was issued.

The Irish National Congress is deeply critical of the decision to proceed with the proposed visit of Queen Elizabeth of England to the 26 counties. This decision simply disregards the considerable opposition towards the visit. It will be a divisive and polarising event: public protests are inevitable.

Outside of Ireland, this visit will be interpreted as signifying the end of all outstanding areas of disagreement between the Irish and UK governments in relation to the national question in Ireland: and that Irish-UK relations are now fully normalised. This complacent establishment consensus will have to be challenged, because there are still serious outstanding issues that the British state has, so far, failed to address.

Leaving aside the issue of the unresolved national question, the reason we are opposing the visit is because of the way the British state has hindered and obstructed investigations into the activities of sections of the British state security services during the period of the armed conflict. In November 2006, a report issued by the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, spoke of ... "acts of in-

ternational terrorism that were colluded in by the British security forces". The report went on to highlight instances of British obstruction in investigating crimes such as the Dublin and

Monaghan car-bomb massacres of 1974 for which British-controlled agents were believed responsible. We find it utterly bizarre and unacceptable that the Irish state would proceed with the royal state visit, given

that these issues have still not been adequately dealt with.

Queen Elizabeth is not only Head of State in Britain, she is also Commander in Chief of all United Kingdom armed forces, which would include the shadowy and largely unaccountable undercover units widely believed responsible for inciting sectarian conflict in the north of Ireland, and to have carried out terrorist attacks in the 26 counties. Until Britain deals with its recent past record in Ireland, it must continue to be seen as a hostile and adversarial neighbour. The visit of Queen Elizabeth will be viewed by many as a provocative and unwelcome intrusion.

*Elizabeth Windsor Visit
On our web site are constant
updates on INC responses.
www.inc-cne.com*

This issue of INC News is being brought out urgently to deal with the 'royal' visit. Another issue will be forthcoming in a few months' time containing matter for which there is no space here.

ODIOUS DEBT AND PLUNDER

Our country sits at the edge of an economic, political and social abyss, brought about by the banking collapse, the global recession, and, more lately, by the policies being enforced upon us by our new overlords; the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund. It is against this background that the results of the recent general election should be seen.

The people have elected a centrist Fine Gael-Labour coalition, with a sizeable working majority, to replace a hapless Fianna Fáil-Green Party coalition, largely held responsible for the collapse of the economy. The election has also seen the rise of Sinn Féin as a serious contender in 26 county politics, together with a large bloc of left-wing and non-aligned independents.

The new government has an extremely difficult, some would say impossible, task in front of it, in seeking to mitigate the colossal debt burden now faced by the Irish state. So far, the omens are not good. Politically mobilised global finance capital, in the form of the IMF and ECB, are insisting that the Irish state rigorously sticks to the terms of the bailout package for the broken, dysfunctional banking system. If the Irish state complies fully, bankruptcy is almost certain.

The recent seismic political changes are greatly overshadowed by a looming catastrophe that would turn the Irish state into a wasteland. The scale of the 'national' debt is frightening: it stands at nearly 100 billion euro, if one includes the bailout costs for the collapse of the criminally irresponsible, privately owned banking system. To put this figure in perspective, it costs about 55 billion per annum to finance the state, but the state is only bringing in 35 billion or so, due to the collapse of the 'celtic tiger' property-bubble boom. The shortfall has to be made up with yet more borrowing - a vicious cycle.

The global financial houses and their mouthpieces in the IMF, the EU, the political parties and the media are demanding that the

full burden of this now unrepayable debt should be borne by ordinary Irish citizens through additional taxes, slashing of entitlement payments and the selling off of large segments of socially useful public services. Everything that we have worked and struggled for as a people since 1916 is now in extreme jeopardy. Not since the Williamite conquest has Ireland experienced such looting and plunder of the populace and the massive transfer of wealth to private institutions - in this case, German, French and UK banks. And it is all legal!

With this grim outlook, our society faces either political instability and civil disorder like Greece or, alternatively, like Latvia, mass despair and a truly frightening exodus of people out of the Irish state. It has been reported recently that the UK government has been secretly drawing up contingency plans to deal with a possible flood of Irish economic refugees.

So what should our attitudes as Irish citizens be towards this bleak situation and, more importantly, what are we to do about it?

To begin with, it is morally right and politically legitimate for citizens to argue for repudiation of the bank bailout aspect of the Irish state's total debt. These debts were not run up by the Irish people, but instead were the result of a behind the scenes deal and guarantee between the then government and the private banking cartels. Calls for repudiation are by no means radical; even mainstream economists and academics are saying similar things. Faced with the destruction of our country, left-wing and right-wing politics are finding common ground.

In the meantime, however, repudiation is not on the agenda. So let us put forward another strategy in an attempt to strengthen the negotiating position of the Irish government. We should demand:

- *A referendum on the terms of the banking bailout.* The bank debts are

not the people's debts, and if we are denied a vote on this matter then it is a case of "taxation (or rather confiscation) without representation". Remember also that we were not allowed a free vote on the Nice and Lisbon treaties!

- *A full audit to be done on the now socialised bank debt.* This should help to determine the extent to which foreign banking cartels contributed to the Irish crisis.
- *The 'federalisation' or burden sharing of the Irish banking debt across the entire Eurozone or even the entire European Union* - bearing in mind the role of UK banks in helping to create this crisis. We should argue this on the basis that it is the EU and not the sovereign Irish democracy that is imposing policy.

Soon, very soon, we as a people are going to have to make hard choices; we simply can't watch passively while our country is ground down, asset stripped, looted and pauperised by those in the European and global financial elites who, alongside criminal and reckless elements in the Irish establishment, created these problems. We may have to think the unthinkable and start planning for the possible exit from the Eurozone or even the EU itself.

Francis Martin

Once Upon A Time

It was a dark, wet and cold evening in the late 1950s when I met with a young man wearing wellington boots near the junction of Summerhill and the North Circular Road. As a 22 year old Irish American, I had made my second ocean crossing to Cobh in six months and had some messages to deliver to what were euphemistically referred to as "friends of the family".

The first trip went off without a hitch. The messages were left at an appointed hostelry on the north side of Dublin to be collected. This time however, a 'split-in-the-camp' raised the problem of just where and with whom the messages should be left. Feelings were running high in this political squab-

ble with two and, at times three, groupings seeking delivery of messages' from America contained in suitcases lying under my bed in the north side house where I was staying.

Seeking advice on how this dilemma was to be sorted out, I was directed to a well regarded stalwart of the extended political family who, among other enterprises, kept pigs in Dublin central. A not uncommon practice at the time, it was one that fulfilled the historic role of pigs as domestic garbage disposal units, being fed on segregated domestic collected by ass and cart from sympathetic local households. It also made sound economic sense. It was one of this man's several sons that I met that winter's evening and was led through side streets and narrow approaches until I was delivered to a catacomb-like cellar with sheds housing the pigs and great heaps of turnips and potatoes. My host was a short man wearing a soft tweed cap. The light was dim at times to the point of near darkness. A strong cup of tea was produced and a wide-ranging conversation began. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of Irish history and, at a time when many of the great names of Ireland's struggle for independence were still alive or active (de Valera, Lemass, Traynor, McEntee, Boland, MacBride, Breen, Gogan), he was fully briefed on the issues of the day. The boys in the mohair suits hadn't yet appeared on the scene, Irish television was still a couple of years in the future, and *The Irish Press* still had occasional thunder in its veins. *The Irish Times* was for the most part an eight-page West-Brit apologist. It was the twilight years of a passing order.

The old man could weave a spell in which history, events, betrayals and personalities, living and dead, were re-enacted, interpreted and analysed. But there was something strange in his delivery. It seemed to speak of a still more distant time, an even older order, of oaths, allegiances and political lineages that seemed almost foreign to me. And then, by the light of a few oil lamps and fresh cups of steaming tea, he lit upon his main theme – assassination. In a low and measured voice, his eyes fixed upon me; he outlined its many virtues as a tool, a means of political discourse. Its tight focus on a chosen target lessened greatly the danger of collateral damage to others. The multiple targets available to choose from; the difficulty for the authorities

to provide constant protective cover on all potential targets once such a campaign began; the minimum requirements of men, money and materials to carry out the campaign; and most important of all from his perspective, the fear a sustained campaign of assassination would throw into the established political and security apparatus once they knew it was they that were now on the front line.

The final segment of the evening's encounter was a monologue. I simply had no mental software in place to handle the concept of assassination as a method of political discourse or action. The cogent critique on its use met with no response or agreement. They never taught that course in American academia. And therein lay my discovery of what transpired that winter's evening.

It was not uncommon 50 years ago for a judge or someone in authority to ask a defendant or applicant if he was a 'scholar'. It was a gentle and respectful way of probing whether the individual could read and sign his or her name. Adult illiteracy was still a factor to be considered in human relations. Despite my host's natural intelligence, drive and initiative, he could neither read nor write. Spared from the trash of British tabloids, and political correctness of Irish radio and English television (RTÉ did not begin broadcasting until 1960), he had evolved his own criteria for political discourse. In all western societies, education, through grade school, secondary school and third level, imbues conditions and shapes behaviour and mental processes so that by the time the individual realises it, he or she has already been moulded to the standard pattern of political correctness. Absent from formal education and the dumbing-down influence of the media, print and TV, individuals had to rely on the oral tradition, experience and their own creative thought process. It was not surprising, therefore, to see in my new acquaintance a direct spiritual and political descendant of the Dublin Invincibles who shocked the late Victorian era with just such tactics as my host espoused.

The theories expressed that evening remained just that, theories. The campaign of 1956-1962 eventually wound down and political stagnation in Ireland, north and south, re-emerged, until a new force of civil rights, "one man, one vote", swept into Ireland from America in 1969.

Its message was far more appealing.

This story was submitted by a long-standing member of the INC. The 'INC News' editor welcomes letters and opinions for consideration for publication in our next issue after the Summer. Please submit any articles to inc.cne@gmail.com or The Editor, INC, PO Box 2814, Dublin 7.

IRELAND: ENGLAND'S VIETNAM

Fionnbarra Ó Dochartaigh has been a stalwart civil rights campaigner for over 40 years and was one of the 40 people who founded the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) in Belfast in January 1967.

In late December 2010, he published a book entitled *Ireland: England's Vietnam 1960's- 1990's*. This book is a collection of articles spanning the full spectrum of northern nationalism's struggle for civil and human rights. The book covers a wide period from the author's public speaking days at Speakers' Corner, in Hyde Park, London in 1965, on behalf of the Derry Unemployed Action Committee, to the celebrations in Derry's Guildhall Square following the publication of the Saville Report on 15th June 2010, which vindicated the 14 innocent martyrs murdered by British paratroopers on the streets of Derry in Bloody Sunday in January 1972. (Chapter 2)

Many of Fionnbarra's articles have an eyewitness quality to them, so much so that they read like dispatches from the front line in the battle for civil rights in Ireland.

The book contains a wide variety of articles from biographical portraits of the life and works of people such as Bishop Edward Daly of Derry (Chapter 9), Nobel peace prize winner, Seán MacBride (Chapter 3) and 1970 arms trial fall guy, Captain James Kelly (Chapter 23) to book reviews such as of Fionnuala Connor's "In Search of a State" (Chapter 11), Mark Ryan's "War and Peace in Ireland" (Chapter 18) and David Miller's "Don't Mention the War" (Chapter 16).

The book also contains some interesting investigations into the murky world of British state collusion with loyalist paramilitary death squads. Chapter 6 examines the

career of UDA chief intelligence officer and British military intelligence double agent, Brian Nelson, and his role in reinvigorating the UDA/UFF and rearming them with arms from the racist apartheid regime in South Africa in 1988. These revelations forced Britain to establish the Stevens Inquiry, the conclusions of which have been suppressed to this day.

Chapter 21 examines the allegations contained in Paul Bruce's book *The Nemesis File* and allegations made by former British intelligence agent Colin Wallace that MI5 destabilised the British Labour government of Harold Wilson and ran a paedophile blackmail ring from the Kincora boys home to blackmail senior unionist politicians and paramilitaries. Chapters 12 and 13 examine Amnesty International and Committee for the Administration of Justice reports into allegations of security force collusion and shoot to kill policies as

well as harassment of the bereaved and abuse of the inquest system.

The book also contains many unique photographs and reproductions of important documents such as the "Irish Front Manifesto" of the mid 1970s (Chapter 4). I believe that Fionnbarra's book provides a useful and unique insight into northern nationalism's struggle for civil and human rights over the past 40 years and would be an essential acquisition for anyone who seeks a deeper understanding of that struggle.

Paul McGuill

The book is available on www.lulu.com and in paperback from the Amazon website. The initial retail price of £14.50 was reduced by 30% at the author's request to make it more widely available.

1916-21 Club & Queen Elizabeth's visit to Ireland

At a recent meeting of the executive committee of the 1916-1921 Club a motion was unanimously passed protesting at the coming planned state visit of Queen Elizabeth to the Irish Republic.

This club was founded in the 1940s by veterans of the 1916 Rising and the War of Independence to honour and remember those who died for Irish freedom and all those who worked for its achievement. Some of our founder members had immediate relatives executed during the War of Independence. The British government had no legitimate authority to execute young Irishmen after the Irish people had voted by a big majority in the 1918 general election for an independent parliament to legislate for Ireland. In the subsequent period, 1918-1921, English rule in Ireland was illegal and all executions, murders, imprisonments, burnings of houses and other heinous acts carried out by British troops in Ireland were unlawful. The Irish people who suffered never received an apology from any British government or monarch for these evil crimes.

The members of this club think that the Queen's state visit to the Irish Republic is premature. The Queen of England is head of the British forces, which still occupy our six north-easterly counties. Republicans, who comprise our club, think that there are two venues on the Queen's tour that are very insensitive. They feel that the visit of the British monarch to the Garden of Remembrance, without any announcement of regret, is pure hypocrisy.

GAA officials expect that the visit of the Queen of England to Croke Park will be welcomed by all those "who play, administer and support our games". Many members of the 1916-1921 Club have played, supported and promoted Gaelic games, but they also remember that, on Bloody Sunday, British troops mowed down fourteen unarmed civilians in Croke Park, including Mick Hogan from Grangemockler. They also recall that British troops killed more than 100 other GAA players throughout Ireland during the War of Independence.

These young fellows were recruited into the Irish Republican Army through membership of their local GAA clubs and top GAA officials at the time were well aware of that.

We are told that this visit will cost at least €10 million. The 1916-1921 Club is aghast at the spending of such a large amount of money at a time when the finances of this country have hit a record low. How much

more beneficial it would be if this money were spent on providing better treatment and care for our boys and girls who suffer from cystic fibrosis?

NORA COMISKEY,
President of the 1916-1921 Club,
Strawberry Beds,
Dublin 20.

National Graves Association Statement

The National Graves Association opposes the upcoming visit to Ireland by British Queen, Elizabeth Windsor.

The invitation has been extended by the President, Mrs McAleese, who herself is claimed as a "subject" by the British monarchy. Therefore, under British law, our President is expected to offer unswerving loyalty and obedience to Mrs Windsor.

Éamon Ó Cuív (Fianna Fáil) on the recent BBC programme *Spotlight* informed viewers: "All heads of state on state visits lay a wreath at the Garden of Remembrance in memory of those who gave their lives for Irish Freedom". It would be an insult to our patriot dead if the Queen of England, who is claiming sovereignty to a part of our country, was permitted to visit the memorial. It would be a direct challenge to what our patriots died for, "A 32 County Republic".

In 1900, Queen Victoria (Hanover) visited Ireland. Then, as now, she did not receive an over enthusiastic welcome. Dublin Corporation, however, was at the head of the band 'bending the knee'. Motions were put and carried condemning "the slavish attempt of Lord Mayor Pile and the other members of the Corporation who voted a loyal address to the Queen of England, in as much as such ac-

tion is an endorsement of England's policy in Ireland and a repudiation of the principles of nationalism." Another resolution called on people to repudiate the action of those who voted the address and recommended the taking of steps "to free Ireland from the disgrace of being misrepresented by renegades who seek castle favours at the cost of national honour." Sound familiar?

The men and women who died trying to free our country can only be fittingly honoured when Ireland is united and free. Come that day, the British monarchy may be welcomed to visit us as neighbours and as equals. Not until that day.

Matt Doyle
National Graves Association
Box 7105 74 Dame Street,
Dublin 2.

Irish National Congress
Freedom
Unity
Peace

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Seán Russell

To *The Irish Times* 18 April 2011

The reported attempt by Éamon de Valera to smear Seán Russell, the IRA's chief of staff at the outbreak of the Second World War, and

portray him as a Soviet spy, drew a response from Tommy Graham, Editor, *History Ireland*. Mr Graham said: "the real threat in 1939 came not from the Soviets but from the Nazis". This is not so. The only overt threat to Irish sovereignty came, not from Nazi Germany, but from the British prime minister Winston Churchill who threatened "to come to close quarters with Mr de Valera" over the Treaty ports. Britain was prepared to violate Irish sovereignty if it was in its interests. Ironically, it was the violation of Polish sovereignty by Nazi Germany which forced Britain to declare war on Germany.

Smears against Russell have continued to the present day. He continues to be depicted as a Nazi stooge and an anti-Semite. Russell, according to those who knew him, was loyal to a cause, not an ideology. He had no world view other than a firm commitment to ending British rule in Ireland. He had made many expeditions to the United States, Germany and the Soviet Union, seeking arms to be used against the British occupation of Ireland.

About the same time as Russell was seeking arms from Germany, Avraham Stern, founder of Lehi, the Zionist organisation in pursuance of a Jewish state, collaborated with the German Nazi authorities, offering to "actively take part in the war on Germany's side" in return for help in securing Jewish independence. Stern and his successor, future prime minister Yitzhak Shamir, rejected collaboration with the British, and claimed that only the defeat of the British empire would lead to an independent Jewish state. This did not mean that Stern and Shamir were Nazi sympathisers.

In an *Irish Times* article on spies in Ireland published on Friday, June 6th, 1958, Seán Russell was quoted as saying: "I am not a Nazi, I am not even pro-German, I am an Irishman fighting for the independence of Ireland. The British have been our enemies for hundreds of years. They are the enemy of Germany today. If it suits Germany to give us help to achieve independence, I am willing to accept it, but no more, and there must be no strings attached."

Russell was neither a Nazi collaborator nor a Soviet spy. He was an Irish patriot

who gave his life fighting for Irish freedom.

Tom Cooper
Cathaoirleach
Irish National Congress

The Commonwealth

To *The Irish Examiner* 9 October 2010

Your columnist Stephen King, writing in your edition of September 29th, ("Where's the Irish Mandela to lead us back into the Commonwealth?") performs a welcome volte-face in his apparent admiration for Nelson Mandela. As the special adviser to the former First Minister, David Trimble, Stephen King, presumably in line with Ulster Unionist Party policy, regarded Mr Mandela and the African National Congress as terrorists and supported the US decision to include Mr Mandela and the ANC on the US State Department's list of terrorist groups.

In his call for Ireland to consider re-joining the Commonwealth, Stephen King joins that small, unrepresentative, Anglo-centric neo-unionist minority wishing to restore the 'British Dimension' to the 26 county state. It is tempting to dismiss those like Stephen King who favour Commonwealth re-entry as political cranks and malcontents, but this would be a mistake. People like Mr King, by virtue of their profession, have the ability to influence out of proportion to their size. Despite the machinations of the political elite and remnants of southern unionists, there is no significant support for Commonwealth re-entry. This is not a demand that is coming from the public.

The Irish state formally left the British Commonwealth in 1949 with the establishment of the Republic of Ireland. At that time, this policy was seen as a natural further step in the direction of a fully sovereign Irish state, separate from Great Britain. Today, a full 61 years later, there are figures of the political elite calling for the restoration of the Commonwealth link. I take the view that rejoining the Commonwealth would be a retrograde step. It would be seen as a rejection of the

separatist aspect of Irish nationalism and it would also create a climate favourable to the rebirth of Hiberno-Unionism.

In terms of international affairs, we would once again become a White Commonwealth Dominion on a par with Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Much of Europe would interpret our move as a 'return to the fold' and a rejection of our policies of separation from Great Britain. Alongside the armies of Britain and other Commonwealth dominions, the Irish defence forces would be expected to participate in Armistice Day ceremonies and wear the Poppy. Remembrance Sunday is the most solemn day in the calendar of the white Commonwealth. Even French Canada must display due respect. No allowances will be made for the Irish who will be expected to conform and participate fully.

The re-Britishing of the 26 counties would once again bring about attitudes of subservience and servility amongst sections of our political and social elite. A return to the

days of the Viceregal Lodge. Britain undoubtedly would continue the practice of handing out 'gongs' to selected Irish citizens in the form of Knighthoods and other titles of 'nobility'. We would be shamed once again by the obsequious antics of those whom General Tom Barry once described as sycophants and lickspittles. Our relationship with our nearest neighbour must be based, and respected, on our sovereignty and independence, not on whether we agree to return to the Commonwealth.

Tom Cooper
Cathaoirleach
Irish National Congress

Comhdháil Náisiúnta na hÉireann
Saoirse
Aontacht
Síocháin

COMHBHRÓN

Betty Ballagh

It is with deepest sorrow that we report the sudden death of Betty Ballagh, wife of our esteemed founder and former Cathaoirleach and National Executive member of the Irish National Congress, Robert Ballagh. On behalf of the entire membership of the INC, the National Executive extend their sincerest condolences to Bobby and children Bruce and Rachel on their sad loss.

Joe Nealon

It is also with sorrow that we report the death of a former member of the National Executive, Joe Nealon from Galway. Joe was a stalwart member of the INC during the dark days before the establishment of the Peace Process. He was heavily involved in our campaigns for justice for six county nationalists, including the campaign to abolish Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, all party peace talks, our leafleting distribution, British Embassy pickets etc. A long time trade unionist in the West, Joe was also a regular contributor to the INC newsletter as our scríbhneoir gaeilge. To Joe's widow, Mary, and his children we extend our deepest sympathies on your sudden and sad loss.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

IRISH NATIONAL CONGRESS

P.O. Box 2814, Dublin 7
E-mail: inc.cne@gmail.com
Internet: www.inc-cne.com

Membership subs: waged €10, unwaged €5

INC RAFFLE 2011

With this newsletter, you will receive a booklet of raffle tickets. Tickets are €2 each or €10 per booklet. Please send completed stubs and money to the INC at the above address before 3 June. The draw will take place on 4 June. 1st prize - hamper, 2nd prize - book token, 3rd prize - bottle of spirits. As ever, your support is invaluable and greatly appreciated.