



INC NEWS

Autumn/Winter 2001 Comhdháil Náisiúnta na hÉireann P.O. Box 2814, Dublin 7.

REBUILD THE INC

The Irish National Congress extends greetings to our members and supporters in Ireland and overseas. We thank you all for your past loyalty and commitment. We look forward to your continued support in the coming period.

The main purpose of this issue of *INC News* is to prepare our membership for the forthcoming AGM, which will take place in Dublin on Saturday, November 10th. This AGM will be critical for us; its outcome will determine whether or not the INC can continue as a distinct organisation. Above all else we need more of our membership to become activists. We have set ourselves two principal goals:

1. To establish ourselves on a permanent basis and decide a structure suited to our memberships needs.
2. To decide upon a programme of activity centred around aspects of the national struggle.

We would urge everybody to carefully read the article on the back page of this newsletter entitled "An INC Plan of Campaign" written by Paul McGuill. We hope that Paul's article will help in focusing minds on planning future strategy for the INC.

Founded in 1989, the INC was established because of the need to build a broad based nationalist and republican consensus, particularly in the twenty-six counties. That time was a period of widespread state repression; raids, house searches, section 31, extradition, open collaboration with British forces. There was a serious attempt to drive nationalist and republican political activity out of business.

The newly formed INC was engaged from the start in mass mobilisation and civil resistance. We gave our full backing and support to the fledgling Irish peace process. We continue that support to this day, despite our publicly stated criticisms of the 1998 Belfast Agreement and its implementation.



Rebuilding the INC will require more members to come forward at the AGM and join the National Executive. There are at present only eight people on the National Executive.

DEATH OF KEVIN BOLAND

On Sunday, September 23rd, Kevin Boland passed away after a short illness. He was 84. He was the son of Gerald Boland, a 1916 veteran, Fianna Fáil founder member and long-serving Government minister. His uncle was Harry Boland, a former comrade of Michael Collins who was killed in the Civil War defending the Republic.

Kevin Boland, ex-army engineer and staunch republican, was first elected to the Dáil in 1957 for Dublin South. He was appointed Minister for Defence on his first week in Leinster House. He subsequently served as Minister for Social Welfare and finally as Minister for Local Government. But he is best remembered for the principled stand he took during the "arms crisis". He resigned his Dáil seat in a gesture of support for his dismissed cabinet colleagues, Neil Blaney and Charles Haughey. Both were sacked by then Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, for an alleged conspiracy to import arms for the defence of beleaguered Northern nationalists who were being subjected to loyalist pogroms and murderous attacks by the RUC. Blaney and Haughey were later acquitted by the courts.

Having been expelled from the parliamentary party for refusing to take the party whip, he resigned from Fianna Fáil and founded his own party, Aontacht Éireann, which was dedicated to the ending of partition. Unfortunately, the party failed to make an impact with the electorate.

He was the author of several books, "Up Dev!", "The Rise and Decline of Fianna Fáil" and "Under Contract With The Enemy", which charted the degeneration of Fianna Fáil and the abandonment of its founding principles. He actively opposed the introduction and practice of political extradition of republicans to the Six Counties and Britain. He was member of the INC from the beginning and an active supporter of the many events we organised.

Kevin Boland was a shining example of what constitutional republicanism could be and should be. May he rest in peace.

CHANGED UTTERLY?

The dawn of the new millennial year of 2001 has brought with it great drama, symbolic of the end of one era and the beginning of another. The most striking example of this has been the recent terrifying events in America and an impending world recession. Events in Ireland have also reflected this mood.

The general election in the north last June left Sinn Féin as the largest nationalist party at 22% up 4%. The combined Sinn Féin – SDLP vote is now at it's highest ever at 43% – up 3% since 1997. These gains were also mirrored in local election results. This led to John Hume and Seamus Mallon stepping down after leading the SDLP for decades to be replaced by a new generation.

Regardless of weather you think the 1998 Belfast Agreement was a good thing or a bad thing all would agree that unionism has responded to its modest programme of reforms as if it marked the breaking of the seventh seal in the book of revelation. Unionism seems to view the minor reform of policing, Drumcree, prisoner releases and increasing nationalist numbers as they would the four horsemen of the apocalypse.

The reaction of unionism to these inevitable changes have been the de-facto ending of the UDA cease-fire and 257 petrol and pipe bomb attacks on Catholics up to the end of July. Unionism has always proved itself incapable of adapting to even the slightest of changes and has sought refuge from unpalatable realities in the familiar rhetoric of extremist intransigence. This quest for reassurance and certainty may account for the 7% rise in DUP support, the political extinction of the Alliance party and the 10% drop in support for the UUP to 26.7%. All but two UUP MPs are openly anti agreement (the remaining two appearing lukewarm at best).

Loyalism seems gripped by a fanatical and millenarian panic as was evidenced by their irrational and hysterical protests against Catholic primary school girls in Ardoyne in September whereby they wildly grasp for scapegoats to sacrifice to ward off the dreaded day of change. Unionism needs leadership, which recognises the urgent necessity for radical change rather than setting it upon a futile course of endless procrastination, delay and evasion. Unionism needs to recognise that the time has come for it to swim with the tide of history, not against it, to keep its communities head above water.

– Paul McGuill

(Paul McGuill is a library assistant and has been an INC activist since 1994. he was INC Cathaoirleach from 1998 – 2000 and is currently Secretary of the INC)

Your Letters

A Chara,

With the recent death of Kevin Boland Ireland has lost another one of her great sons. The likes of Dessie O'Malley didn't save us from civil war but looked on while it happened, leaving Irish citizens in the North to fend for themselves. The southern populace were kept ignorant and misinformed with partisan reportage and section 31 censorship by a political establishment that didn't want us demanding that they stand up for our people in the North. This political cowardice was done in the name of democracy and non-violence. Principled men like Kevin Boland were sidelined. The conflict of the past 30 yrs is a damning indictment of the failure of Irish constitutional politics to provide real leadership and an alternative to violence. With the Belfast Agreement, constitutional politics has once again been given the lead, but it seems to be having trouble rising to the occasion. Let's hope history doesn't repeat itself.

The terrorist (and they were terrorists) attacks on America look likely to spark a world conflict as America prepares to, understandably, retaliate. Afghanistan, like Ireland 80yrs ago, is a third world country. Our government seems to have changed its attitude towards violence and is willing to back America, no matter what she does. America should remember what Abraham Lincoln said when he was criticised for being too courteous to his enemies and reminded that it was his duty to destroy them, he gave the great answer, "Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends? Even if a man be utterly mistaken, be opposed to us, we must never regard him or her as an enemy to be destroyed, but as a strayed friend to be recovered by love."

Is Mise,

Una Ní Bhrian
Luimneach

Send your letters to:

Irish National Congress, P.O. Box 2814, Dublin 7

or e-mail us at: inc32cne@eircom.net

NB: Letters should be typed or clearly written – that means BLOCK CAPITALS – if your handwriting is as bad as mine!

The cartoon below, by doll, depicts the late Kevin Boland being 'side lined'. It was first published by the *Irish Independent* in 1970.



Loyalist Violence - Prelude to Repartition

For nationalists living in many parts of the six counties, the daily (and nightly!) reality is the experience of violence being meted out by organised gangs of loyalist thugs.

Since the beginning of this year, there has been an upsurge of loyalist sectarian violence on a scale unprecedented, say many commentators, since the 1970's. Gun attacks, bomb attacks, the deliberate destruction of schools, places of worship, business premises and many, many homes belonging to the nationalist community. Several people have been murdered by outfits such as the UDA and LVF operating under the guise of the Red Hand Defenders. Mobs are being incited in Unionist districts to riot in the streets and attack their neighbours. We are witnessing protracted and sustained warfare being waged against the nationalist community. It's a war that the British and Irish political establishments are trying hard to pretend is not happening.

Much of this violence is centred in the eastern and northern half of the six county statelet, usually in areas with a clear unionist majority. It would appear that the thinking behind the loyalist strategy is twofold. Firstly, there is the clear attempt being made to topple the political institutions set up under the Belfast agreement. Secondly, and more seriously, it's about land, space and territory. Some unionists have been openly arguing for "repartition" and the creation of an ethnically purified Ulster homeland state. Attacks on catholic homes in counties Down, Antrim and Derry are designed to trigger a gradual exodus from particular towns, villages and rural districts. One working class housing estate in Carrickfergus was recently declared by loyalists to be a "Taig Free Zone". Catholics in this district had been forced out.

The British administration at Stormont has behaved with a breathtaking degree of indifference to what is happening on the ground. The most frenzied violence of loyalist mobs has been treated with a kid-glove approach, as has been witnessed recently with the disgraceful scenes outside the Holy Cross school in Ardoyne, Belfast. A worse charge against the British however, is complicity*. They have stood by and allowed the unhindered growth of the Ulster Defence Association and the Loyalist Volunteer Force; neo fascist and racist paramilitary organisations that are preparing the ground for all-out ethnic war.

Get this! In the town of Larne, County Antrim, population 20,000, the local UDA is said to be some 400 strong! Remember that the UDA is an illegal terrorist organisation, and has in Larne been involved in a systematic campaign of terror against that town's 6,000 catholic residents. 400 members and activists in a town no larger than Athlone or Clonmel; that's no ordinary terrorist cell. That's virtually an army, a mass organisation; spawned right under the benign gaze of the local RUC!

Today's UDA is mobilising in ways similar to its counterpart of the early '70's. The organisation is recruiting heavily in protestant urban working class districts. It is attracting angry, disinherited young males; poor and poorly educated, usually unemployed with few prospects. They are embittered and resentful with what they see as nationalist advance at their expense. They are being trained and "blooded" in the numerous pipe-bombing incidents and the nightly "interface warfare" in north Belfast.

Another side of the UDA is criminality, racketeering and drug trafficking. The social fabric of once proud and cohesive protestant working class districts has been corroded by loyalist gangsterism. During last year's UDA / UVF feud on Belfast's Shankill Road, in which some 1,500 people were expelled from their homes, gun-wielding young loyalists went on the rampage, many of them crazed with alcohol and ecstasy tablets.

The most worrying aspect of all this is the looming political reality, which must soon be faced by all. The six county statelet, which was established on the basis of a unionist numerical majority, can no longer be governed in the old way now that the population is moving towards a 50 - 50 balance. Ultra right wing unionists and loyalists, sensing the end of mono-cultural unionist domination within an exclusively British ethos, are thinking aloud in terms of warfare and repartition. This is the un-stated project that lies behind the apparently irrational and nihilistic events that we are witnessing on our television screens each day.

Repartition was considered by both Heath and Thatcher, who had plans drawn up but never published. The DUP and the UKUP have advocated repartition in the recent past. In a pamphlet published by the shadowy Ulster Society in 1995 it is argued that the only viable future for Unionism / Protestant supremacy is to do away with the province of Northern Ireland and establish the "*sovereign independent kingdom of Ulster*" with a reduced area, "*The present international boundary does not reflect the real border - the cultural border. This would be an area composed of Antrim, Down, most of Londonderry, north and central Armagh and parts of Tyrone and Fermanagh - an area of some 7,000km. The population would be only around 900,000 with a stable Protestant majority of around 82%.*" and an easier to manage Catholic minority! Whether or not the British government would facilitate such a move, as they have done in the past (Government of Ireland Act 1920), remains to be seen.

*British complicity also extends to the fact that the so-called security and intelligence services of the U.K. were involved in covertly re-arming loyalist death squads, as in the case of M15's Brian Neilson and the UDA. Then there is the policy of murder carried out by the UDA and other loyalist groupings in collusion with the British state.

NOTHING BUT THE SAME OLD STORY

The reaction of the media and southern political establishment to the increase in support for Sinn Féin, north and south, has been nothing short of hysterical, panic-stricken and unscrupulous. And in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the U.S. they have plumbed new depths of vulgarity.

Earlier this year, in May, Labour's Brendan Howlin T.D. asked in the Dáil for the Gardaí to investigate Sinn Féin in North Kerry and West Dublin. Needless to say, there was no investigation, but parliamentary privilege allows mud to be thrown in the hope that some might stick and the media reported Howlin's comments with great enthusiasm. The real motivation behind Howlin's remarks lies in Labour's fear of being overtaken by Sinn Féin in those constituencies. In North Kerry Martin Ferris looks set to deliver the goods for Sinn Féin and possibly at the expense of Labour. This is because Sinn Féin have worked hard on the ground and stood shoulder to shoulder with communities there in their fight against drugs and crime. The same goes for Sinn Féin's Sean Crowe (Dublin South West) and Dessie Ellis (Dublin North West). As former INC Cathaoirleach, Fianna Fáil defector and Sinn Féin's Dublin West candidate, Mary Lou McDonald, put it "we are a campaigning party, this is not the kind of party where you can carve out a cosy political career for yourself." The ex-Fianna Fáiler might yet surprise us and steal the show from Labour's Joan Burton. Roscommon might be in for a surprise too, with the defection of the high profile Fianna Fáiler, Paul Whealan to Sinn Féin last July.

In July, Alan Ruddock in the *Observer*, later reprinted in the *Irish Independent*, wrote: "For those in any doubt, the Nice referendum campaign in the Republic of Ireland and the general and local elections in Northern Ireland provided graphic evidence that Sinn Féin is now a political force to be reckoned with on both sides of the Irish border...It is probable that Sinn Féin will win four seats in the next Dáil and it is possible that it could win as many as 10. Either way, it could hold the balance of power and could conceivably enter government as Fianna Fáil's coalition partner... All democrats should be in no doubt that Sinn Féin represents a real and present danger to Irish society. Its current strength is an indictment of the political will of the established parties and is a particular slap in the face for the Irish Labour Party...Now their fears are our fears, and Sinn Féin threatens to destabilise our democracy as it has destabilised Northern Ireland's. Sinn Féin's role in blocking peace in the North and in stoking violence on our streets must be faced down by politicians in the Republic. Unless Irish politicians are prepared to take on Sinn Féin, they face being swamped by them." Clearly no one ever bothered to inform Mr. Ruddock that the Northern statelet was never a democracy to begin with and that its inbuilt inequalities are what led to the conflict in the first place, inequalities that the Good Friday Agreement are an attempt to remedy.

With the arrest of three republicans traveling under false passports in Columbia we were treated to another display of shoddy journalism and political opportunism. Without a single shred of evidence we were told that these men were in Columbia to train terrorists in bomb making. The possibility that they might have been there to advise the FARC rebels on their peace process wasn't even considered. Nor was there any mention (except for *Phoenix Magazine*) of the role played by MI5 and the SAS in Columbian affairs. For the past few years the SAS have been training right-wing paramilitaries (the largest traffickers of drugs in the area) how to become more efficient death squads. The Department of Foreign Affairs has received delegations from Columbia's opposition parties in the past and is only too well aware of Columbia's frightening human rights record. There wasn't a peep out of the 'Sandanista's' in the Labour party, except of course to attack Sinn Féin. With the

exception of their families, Sinn Féin and a tiny handful of media commentators, no one seemed overly concerned for the safety of three Irish citizens who were being held in a prison where inmates are murdered on a regular basis. While the media emphasised alleged links between FARC and the IRA, they also reminded us of their links with ETA and the PLO but neglected to mention their links with the ANC, who were instructed by the IRA in bomb making techniques. Of course, linking the IRA with Nelson Mandela's ANC would not produce the desired result.

The political opportunism became positively vulgar following the terrorist attacks in the U.S. The Dáil reconvened to debate the tragic events; each party with two T.D.'s or more were allotted ten minutes to speak. Having extended condolences to the American people and condemned the attacks, all the major political parties spent half their allotted time attacking Sinn Féin and demanding decommissioning. It was a disgusting and shameful display and it was broadcast live on television. The Green Party, with two T.D.'s and a sense of fair play, decided to share its ten minutes with Sinn Féin's Caoimhghin O'Caoláin and the Socialist Party's Joe Higgins. As O'Caoláin uttered his first word RTE ended its live coverage and took a six and a half-minute break before returning with *Home and Away*, an Australian soap opera of great importance, apparently.

The *Irish Independent* attacked Sinn Féin's statement that there was no comparison to be made between the attacks on the United States and the IRA's history of violence. The voice of southern unionism, Ruth Dudley Edwards, wrote that the only difference was one of scale: "Both targeted 'armed forces', both targeted civilians, both used human beings as human bombs, both targeted the centre of the democratic state and centres of commerce, and both are involved in global terrorism. And as for the bombers being prepared to commit suicide. Are not Sinn Féin always demanding we honour Bobby Sands and all his colleagues who starved themselves to death for the cause?" The (*Oirish*) *Sun* went even further, publishing a picture of a bearded and blanket clad Bobby Sands during the dirty protest next to one of the bearded and robe wearing Osama bin Laden in a sick effort to burn a visual comparison into the minds of its readers. But such tactics might yet prove counter-productive as Bobby Sands and his comrades are held in high esteem by more than just Sinn Féin and its supporters, most Irish people would find such comparisons offensive and in poor taste. The ravings of Dudley Edwards and her Britannic cohorts are not merely attacking Sinn Féin but the peace process itself. Nothing they have written lends itself to reconciliation or conflict resolution. They have never acknowledged Nationalist victims or the victims of State violence. In fact, they have failed to address the whole issue of State violence and collusion between the British State and Loyalist death squads. In a conflict that has cost the lives of thousands and seen horrendous atrocities committed by all sides, such a partisan view of the conflict, takes from, rather than contributes to, the building of a lasting peace. Simply put, these people are opposed to republican violence only.

Writing in *An Phoblacht / Republican News* about the attacks on the U.S., Jim Gibney gave the Sinn Féin view: "I am very firmly of the view that the actions and the result of those actions in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania have no place in the world of resistance to oppression...Those who planned and carried out the attack, whatever their ideology, have done a grave disservice to the cause they believe in and to genuine causes around the world. They have provided platform for people who will divide the world up into 'baddies and goodies'; those who stand for 'democracy', however unworthy it is, and those who stand for 'terrorism'...I've supported the IRA all my life. Not unconditionally, especially at times when I thought the IRA stepped over what for me is an acceptable moral line... There were many occasions during the last 30 years of conflict when the IRA unintentionally killed innocent people. Their willingness to

accept responsibility for these killings and to apologise to their relatives helped to create the moral context for republican activists and supporters within which the IRA primarily operated. Of course, to the relatives of those killed this matters little. They had lost a loved one at the hands of the IRA. That is all that mattered to them and correctly so...Liberation struggles will of course continue because, as the famous phrase goes 'all politics is local' and therefore all struggles are local and contain their own dynamic. But in the aftermath of the attacks in New York and Washington, it will be easier for those inclined to label those who struggle for freedom, justice and real democracy as 'terrorists'."

SINN FÉIN – THEY KILL PROTESTANTS, DON'T THEY?

The assault on Sinn Féin reached contemptible levels on RTE's *Primetime* (27/9/01). Speaking to Miriam O'Callaghan about the Labour party's lack of political direction, Maol Muire Tynan, Political Editor of the *Sunday Business Post*, said that the Labour party members she had spoken to felt "... afraid, that they are directionless, that they have abandoned a great swathe of their traditional constituency to Sinn Féin for example..." to which Labour spokesperson for finance, Derek McDowell T.D., had this to say:

Derek McDowell:

"You see Maol is saying, and to be honest and fair about this she's not the only one who says this, that we're abandoning some of our constituency to Sinn Féin. Y' know, what does Sinn Féin have to say about management of the economy, what does Sinn Féin have to say about investment in the health services, that is..." (interrupted by Miriam)

Miriam O'Callaghan:

"They seem to arouse the dispossessed which Michael Marsh* says your party fails to do."

(*Professor of Political Science, TCD.)

Derek McDowell:

"...it is a party, it is a party that has spent the last 30 years murdering Protestants! We haven't abandoned any of our constituency to those people and we certainly don't believe that they have anything to contribute towards the well being of the 'dispossessed', to use the phrase that you used yourself..."

Parliamentary privilege does not extend to the studios of RTE, as Derek McDowell well knows, and the fact that he felt comfortable enough on national television to accuse Sinn Féin of spending the last 30 years murdering Protestants speaks volumes about the sorry state of what passes for political debate in this country. The fact that such a slanderous, mendacious and libellous remark could go unchallenged says even more. Even in the days the Section 31 broadcasting ban applied to Sinn Féin things were never as bad. Remember the Question & Answers when Mary Holland of the *Irish Times*, (who is not noted for her republican sympathies), quickly put Dessie O'Malley back in his box when he claimed that the Provo's were involved in drug trafficking, informing him that there was absolutely no evidence to substantiate such claims.

The Good Friday Agreement has been considerably watered down since the Irish people voted for it over 3 years ago; Unionist tantrum throwing brought about most of these changes and it is the equality agenda that has suffered. Nevertheless, all parts of the Agreement are inter-locking and inter-dependent, a fact that has been conveniently over looked by most of the media and political establishment. If their objective is truly to remove the gun from Irish politics then why haven't they suggested that the dual issues of decommissioning and demilitarisation be addressed in tandem and proportionally, say one IRA dump destroyed for every 20 British Army Barracks dismantled. Instead we are constantly reminded of all the pain and suffering caused by

THE GUNMEN AND COMMUNISTS ARE VOTING FOR FIANNA FAIL TO-DAY

THE PARTY OF "PEACE, PLENTY & PIETY"

HOW

ARE

YOU

VOTING ?

VOTE FOR THE GOVERNMENT PARTY

republicans; constantly reminded of Enniskillen, Le Mons and Warrington; constantly reminded of the accidental killing of Garda Special Branch Detective Jerry McCabe as if it were deliberate murder. There is little mention of atrocities committed by the British or their part in sustaining the conflict. There is no outcry as the reconciliatory aspects of the Agreement are whittled away. The National interest is being usurped by the selfish party political concerns of the major parties whose fear of losing even a single vote to Sinn Féin has sent them into hysterics.

Such hysteria is not unprecedented in Irish politics and has always been concerned with republicans. In 1926 when De Valera emptied the Sinn Féin coffers and led a majority of its members to form Fianna Fáil there was a similar reaction. In 1932 the Free State government took out full-page advertisements on the front page of all the broadsheets for every day of the week leading up to the general election. Warning people that "the gunmen and communists" were voting for Fianna Fáil, the advertisement on the day of the election contained the following quotes:

"It is said we killed people. We did kill. Killing is a hard thing and we make no apology for what we have done, and if circumstances arose WE WOULD KILL AGAIN. It is said we took money from the banks. There were millions in the coffers of the Bank of Ireland, and who had a better right to it than the men who were fighting for their country?"

— MR. DAN BREEN, Fianna Fáil candidate, at Borrisoleigh, last Sunday.

"The policy of his party was before all a Republican one... He would not condemn the prisoners in Arbour Hill who believed in gun violence"

— MR SEAN T. O'KELLY Fianna Fáil shadow Minister, in Dublin, last Wednesday.

Despite this, Fianna Fáil won the majority of seats and formed a government, declared a general amnesty and promptly released all the republican prisoners. Dan Breen, the veteran IRA man, went on to represent the people of Tipperary as their T.D. until he died in 1967. O'Kelly went on to succeed Douglas Hyde as President of Ireland in 1945 and was re-elected in 1952 Fianna Fáil maintained links with the IRA until 1934 and in 1936 declared them

an illegal organisation. 1936 saw Sean McBride resign of as chief-of-staff of the IRA to form a new party, Clan na Phoblachta, similar hysterics ensued, this time from Fianna Fáil. Victorious in the next two elections, Fianna Fáil was to hold power for 16 years. During its time in office it had removed the oath of allegiance to the crown; established a written constitution and expelled the British from the naval ports they still occupied. They had also banned the sale of the Easter lily, outlawed the annual Wolfe Tone commemoration at Bodinstown and executed several republican prisoners. The general election of 1948 saw Clan na Phoblachta win 10 seats and form a government with Fine Gael, strange bedfellows indeed. The government fell in 1951 and Fianna Fáil returned to power. Clan na Phoblachta faded into obscurity, but Sean McBride went on to form Amnesty International and become the only person in history to win both the Lenin and Nobel peace prizes. When he died the headline in the *Sun* read: "DEATH OF AN EVIL MAN" – some things will never change. However, what does seem to change, as history demonstrates, is republican policy when a republican party becomes part of the establishment. At present the majority of political parties, north and south, have a vested interest in maintaining partition. Ending partition would upset the political landscape. The largest republican party in the south, Fianna Fáil, no longer has a united Ireland as one of its main objectives. The recent hysteria over Sinn Féin hasn't dented its rise and an IMS poll published by the *Sunday Independent* (30/9/01) showed an increase in support for them in the south, up 2% to 6%. The possibility that, in the not to distant future, Sinn Féin might enter government in the south as part of a coalition is a real one. The question then will be whether Sinn Féin, holding positions of power north and south, will see the ending of partition as contrary to their party political interests, whether they change the establishment or the establishment changes them – only time will tell.

– Cathal Óg McCarthy

(Cathal Óg McCarthy is a sign painter / decorator and has been an INC activist for the past 7 years. He has been a member of the National Executive since 1993 and was National Organiser from 1998 – 2000. He is currently acting Cathaoirleach of the INC)

USA TERRORIST ATTACKS

At the September meeting of the I.N.C. National Executive, the following resolution was adopted: The I.N.C. wishes to express solidarity with the people of America in the wake of the devastating attacks in New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania, which occurred on September 11th, and which resulted in the deaths of thousands. We extend our sympathy to the injured, and our condolences to the many tens of thousands of bereaved.

These attacks have quiet rightly been condemned as a crime against humanity. The New York atrocity in particular, probably struck at every race and nationality that has made that great cosmopolitan city it's home. Ireland too has suffered a number of citizens killed or missing. Irish America has had to bear a terrible tragedy; a shockingly high percentage of those who perished were U.S. citizens of Irish decent.

The deliberate murder of civilians in pursuit of a political agenda whether committed by individuals, by organisations or indeed by states, can never be justified and must always be firmly repudiated.

There is undoubtedly great anger in the U.S. over these outrages, and a clamour for the perpetrators to be dealt with. The I.N.C. accepts the right of the U.S. government to take appropriate measures to protect its citizens and to prevent repeat attacks, as provided for in the United Nations charter and within the framework of international law.

We are however, deeply concerned that these atrocities are being used as a pretext to justify a major middle-eastern and

central Asian war, a war that could result in massive civilian loss of life and a catastrophic refugee exodus. The INC wishes to add its voice to those throughout the world who are calling for caution and restraint at this difficult time.

No to Ethnic Scapegoats

Passions are running high in America and in Europe in the wake of the September 11th attacks, which have resulted in over six thousand dead or missing. As we go to print, huge U.S. and British naval forces are positioning themselves in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf for war against Afghanistan and possibly Iraq...again!

There could be fifty or more Irish citizens among the dead of the New York twin towers attack. There are many harrowing and tragic stories arising from these events. From Antrim to Cork, no county has been left untouched.

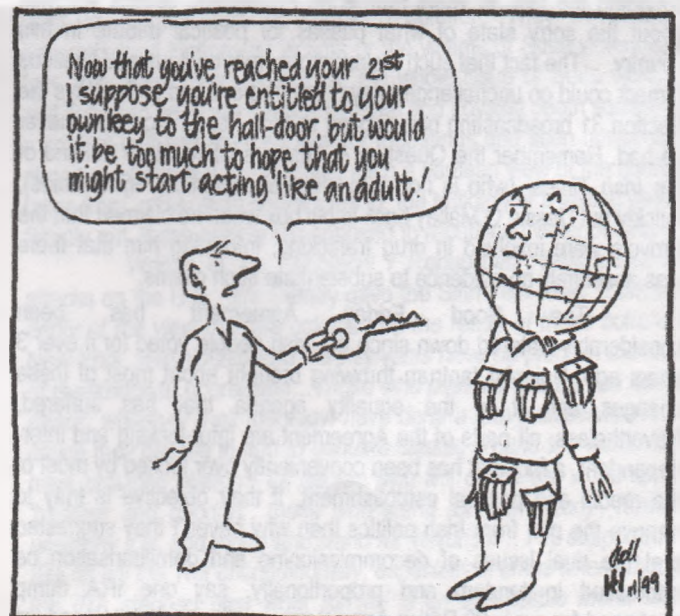
The perpetrators of these attacks were young Arab males of several nationalities, U.S. based, and allegedly belonging to terrorist cells connected with the Osama Bin Laden organisation. It should always be remembered that Bin Laden was very much a creation of the Central Intelligence Agency. There is much talk concerning "Islamic terrorism" and the holy war or *Jihad*.

It is vitally important to note that the U.S. attacks have been condemned by a clear majority of the Arab and Islamic world, both the secular and religious. Bin Laden has few friends apart from the backward regime in Kabul. It should also be remembered that 200 Muslims were killed in the terrorist attack, there was a mosque in one of the World Trade Centres where some 1,500 Muslims came to pray every Friday.

Here in Ireland, there are some 20,000 Muslims, from countries like Algeria, Bosnia, Somalia and Iraq. Most left their homelands to escape war or persecution; some have succeeded in becoming Irish citizens. A good number are highly skilled and multi-lingual professionals, a boost and a gain for our country. It is most regrettable then, that the leaders of the Muslim community here were not invited to attend the "ecumenical service of remembrance and healing" held in the Pro-Cathedral on Ireland's National Day of Mourning.

So far, there have been few reports of racist insults or attacks upon Irish Muslims in the wake of the events of September 11th. However the promised forthcoming war against "international terrorism" could result in outbreaks of xenophobia and targeting of racial minorities.

The Irish National Congress calls upon it's members and supporters to ensure that no word, deed, or threat, directed against members of any racial or ethnic minority who live in our country goes unchallenged.



A QUESTION OF PRIORITIES



- **The body of murdered Catholic man, Ciarán Cummings, is removed from the scene. He was shot twice by loyalists while waiting for a lift to work.**

One thing that has not changed in the past thirty years, the peace process notwithstanding, is the indifference, hostility and ignorant contempt shown towards ordinary nationalists in the six counties by sections of the media in the south. This has been most tellingly illustrated by Dublin media silence in the face of a renewed loyalist murder campaign against Catholic civilians.

Ciarán Cummings was a 19 year-old from the town of Antrim. He was Catholic and working class. On the morning of July 4th, while waiting for a lift to take him to work in nearby Newtownabbey, he was shot down and killed by two men on a motorcycle. This murder was claimed by a loyalist group calling itself the Red Hand Defenders, which is considered by many to be a front for the UDA / UFF. A statement issued by the RHD, admitting responsibility, said that the murder was in retaliation for Antrim borough nationalists having elected two Sinn Féin councillors!

The loyalist statement in itself was a most serious and sinister development and seems to indicate a return to the policy of random sectarian murder of nationalist civilians. Another Catholic man had been murdered several days earlier in Coleraine Co. Derry. Outfits such as the UDA / UFF and LFV have been using the mainstream media to issue public death threats against prominent nationalists and the nationalist community in general.

These two murders are part of an upsurge in loyalist violence and intimidation against the nationalist community, the likes of which has not been seen in many years. Let us now examine how the two Dublin broadsheet dailies dealt with this issue.

On July 5th, the day after the murder of Ciarán Cummings, the *Irish Times* carried a report of the killing on its front-page. The reportage itself was adequate to

the seriousness of the matter. However, there was no editorial concerning the murder of an inoffensive teenager uninvolved in any form of political activity. The silence of the *Irish Times* on this matter is in stark comparison to its persistent agenda of demanding IRA disarmament. Before the Antrim murder, the *Irish Times* had been trumpeting the decommissioning issue 2 to 3 times a week in its editorial columns and in feature articles by pro-unionist spokespersons and columnists. These editorials were used by the British embassy in Washington in pursuit of Britain's propaganda drive in the USA. Following the murder in Antrim, the newspaper waited what seemed to be a decent interval before returning to its chosen agenda.

The *Irish Independent* devoted one sentence to the Ciarán Cummings murder on its front-page, and then relegated the story to an inside page; page 15 in fact, the last news page in a 32 page publication! In contrast page 4 was taken up rather incongruously, with the fallout from the trial in London of the man convicted of the murder of Ms. Jill Dando, the British TV personality! Again, as with the *Irish Times*, there was no editorial.

The *Irish Independent* treated the Jill Dando story with prominence, as if it were a domestic Irish news story. The murder in Antrim – an Irish town – was treated dismissively, as if it had occurred on the West Bank or Gaza Strip!

Incredibly, the only Dublin dailies that bothered to editorialise on the Antrim murder were the so-called Irish editions of the British mass-circulation tabloids; *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror*. These publications are usually noted for their puerile trash and trivia. Nevertheless, they both denounced the teenagers' murder.

Gavin Brett was 18 years of age, he was a Protestant, a school student and a Glasgow Rangers soccer fan. He was a popular teenager and had friendships that crossed the sectarian divide. This was to cost him his life. On Sunday night, July 29th, as he stood talking with friends outside St. Enda's GAA club in Glengormley near Belfast, a car drove up and the occupants opened fire, killing Gavin Brett and seriously wounding a younger youth. This murder was also claimed by the Red Hand Defenders

The murder of Gavin Brett was a firm indication that a loyalist policy of random murder had started up again. Yet once again, shamefully, the two main Dublin dailies had nothing to say editorially. Again, the only Dublin based publication to condemn this teenagers murder was the British tabloid *The Sun*. It is a very sorry state of affairs indeed when the only mainstream publications that seem to be showing any concern for the fate of young nationalists and the victims of pro-British death squads, are the Irish sub-editions of the British gutter press.

An INC Plan of Campaign 2001 – 2005

(1) **Practical solidarity with northern nationalists:** As well as our continuing opposition to provocative sectarian marches by the Orange Order we should also highlight the ongoing inequality of distribution of power resources in the north. We should campaign for the disbandment of the part time RIR and a drastic reduction in the numbers of the full time force. There should also be a review of the firearms licensing system with a view to drastically reducing the number of legally held firearms in private hands. The repeal of repressive legislation, diplock courts and a dramatic reform of the judiciary in the north which should remove offensive, or partisan symbolism and oaths and seek numerical parity between nationalist and unionist judges and senior civil servants. Such reforms should be independent of the Belfast agreement and should not be dependant on its success for implementation.

(2) **Representation for northern citizens in the Oireachtas:** Following on assurances given to us prior to the 1998 referendum by Martin Mansergh, advisor to An Taoiseach, we should seek the implementation of the direct election of five of the Taoiseach's eleven senators by postal ballot. We should press that work be undertaken immediately so that the necessary machinery is in existence in time for the next seanad election possibly next summer. We can also investigate the possibility of the enfranchisement of the northern electorate in Presidential elections. We should write immediately to Dr Mansergh requesting a meeting where we can put forward our views.

(3) **Civil rights and civil liberties:** The INC should campaign vigorously and lobby the Irish government to restore post conflict normality in civil rights and civil liberties by a detailed and fundamental review of draconian and emergency legislation. One method of doing so could be to establish a citizen's forum, which would examine the nature and use of emergency powers in Ireland and compare it to powers in existence in other countries. The fundamental principal should be established that where emergency legislation clashes with civil liberties the onus should be upon emergency legislation to justify its existence. The ultimate objective of this forum should be the repeal of the 1939, 1940, 1972 and 1998 offences against the state acts, the abolition of the special criminal court and a detailed examination of the role of the Garda Special Branch and of allegations of infiltration by foreign intelligence agencies. As well as lobbying each party for a commitment to establish such a forum after the next general election we should also seek their endorsement of a referendum to remove article 23.3.3 from the constitution, which allowed such draconian legislation in the first place.

(4) **Opposition to re-colonisation:** The INC will oppose any official royal visit by the Queen of England until her parliament accepts the right of the Irish people acting as one unit to exercise sovereignty over the island of Ireland. The INC should form alliances with other like-minded anti imperialist groups who will work to highlight her 'reign of shame' in Ireland. We should also work with these groups to oppose recruitment by the British armed forces in the south, re-entry into the British Commonwealth, the introduction of a British style honours system and extension of the British honours system (titles of nobility) into the Irish state.

(5) **Republican and nationalist solidarity:** The INC should facilitate communication, understanding and toleration between various republican and national movements. Division and animosity between republicans only serve British interests. Real differences as regards policy on the national question should be debated in a civilised and fraternal manner.

ALL MOTIONS FOR THE AGM MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE PO BOX BY FRIDAY NOVEMBER 2nd



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE
INC, FILL IN THIS FORM AND
RETURN IT TO:

Irish National Congress, PO Box 2814, Dublin 7.

MEMBERSHIP FEE £10 WAGED / £5 UNWAGED

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Irish National Congress
Comhdháil Naisiúnta na hÉireann

ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING

SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 10th 2001

Club na Múinteoirí
36 Parnell Square

Dublin

Time: 11.30 am