



# THE RECKONING

The INC had intended to bring out a special celebratory issue of *INC News* this Easter to mark the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of An Chéad Dáil Éireann. What stopped us from so doing was the sudden, dramatic global financial collapse, which has affected the Irish state more than most other developed countries.

While the INC does not normally comment on economic policy, we recognise that for many people in Ireland, faced with unemployment, debt, higher taxes and possibly the repossession of their homes, there will be little to celebrate this year.

This economic meltdown has the potential to tear our country apart socially and at the level of the individual. A new vengeful generation has seen its prosperity sacrificed upon the altar of Voodoo economics. Bitter divisions are emerging, some of which are being stirred up by irresponsible media elements.

Supposedly protected public sector workers are being pitted against precariously employed private sector employees. Social welfare recipients are pitted against poorly paid immigrant workers. Behind every statistic lies the human cost in poverty, family breakdown, depression and suicide.

In attempting to overcome this crisis, there are a number of fundamental principles that need to be adopted. Irish republicans and indeed any citizen, who would subscribe to the ideals of An Chéad Dáil Éireann, should be in the forefront of promoting these measures.

There is an urgent need to re-impose regulation over the whole banking and financial services sector, which was gradually stripped away by the 'new right' since the 1970s. There has to be a wall separating ordinary commercial banking and saving from the casino capitalism, high stakes property speculation and gambling on global stock markets.



Above: Members of Dáil Éireann at its first meeting in the Mansion House, Dublin, on 21 January 1919.



The enormous losses reaped by the *three steps forward, two steps back* economic gamble will be paid by ordinary Families and Communities in the form of higher taxes, unemployment and crime rates for years to come.

Those in the financial and business elite who created this crisis must not be allowed benefit from it. The last 30 years has seen the emergence of a new ascendancy class of absentee oligarchs who own huge personal wealth, who either own or have control over much of the media and lecture the public on how the country should be run, yet pay little or no tax here.

The Irish state was openly complicit in this tax evasion, some of these tax fugitives have been appointed as Senators or as honorary Irish Consuls by Irish governments. Just as Ministers and politicians have been jailed for wrongdoing in the past, no oligarch should be above or beyond the law and if fraud or unlawful accounting is suspected, those accused must face extradition and prosecution as necessary.

It is estimated that Irish GNP could fall by 14% by 2010, that unemployment will reach 500,000 by the end of this year, and the value of the average pension has fallen by a third in the last year. Clearly, government policy must ensure that while taking steps to rescue the banking sector, restore confidence to business and protect existing employment, the interests of the poorest and weakest segments of society must be protected rather than the interests of morally challenged property developers and reckless financiers. In particular, the public health service should be defended from further dismantling. Even Adam Smith believed that *"No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable"*.

The global collapse of the Anglo-American neo-liberal pyramid scheme based on deregulated finance capital, a consumerist economy fuelled by an unsustainable borrowing, and a marauding foreign policy which expropriates the world's dwindling natural resources at the point of a gun, is as historically significant as the collapse of communism in the early 1990s. Domestically, this global crisis has been exacerbated by a clientelist political system which in the past traded bus stops and grants for votes but today is applied on a grand scale where political donations and favourable editorials are exchanges for 'soft touch financial regulation' and changes in the tax code. This unscrupulous marriage of convenience between politicians and big business had its annual consummation in corporate tents at the Galway races and elsewhere. The economic warning signals were blithely ignored and those who issued them were advised by our former Taoiseach to 'commit

suicide'. Just as the economic collapse was global, so too must be the recovery. Perhaps what is needed is a 'Marshall Plan' for the third world. As their standard of living rises, so too will their demand for goods and services produced by the Western economies. There needs to be a fundamental rethink regarding the very philosophy behind economics. If, as Marx believed, the economic base determines the political superstructure, this economic collapse is merely a prelude to a dramatic global, political realignment.

Our country is now fighting for its very economic survival; failure to stop the collapse in the public finances would result in us being ruled by the IMF. The next few months, with the onset of winter, will be very difficult. A harsh austerity budget is being predicted for December and there is a terrible anger mounting in the country. The ordinary people are being made to pay for the arrogance, stupidity and hubris of our so-called leaders in business and political life. Let them be made to understand clearly, after this everything will have to change.

## VOTE NO TO LISBON II

On 2<sup>nd</sup> October we will be asked once again to ratify the Lisbon Treaty. Our government claims to have received guarantees on abortion, privatisation, workers rights and our neutrality, but these guarantees aren't worth the paper they're written on. They are political promises – and we all know what they are worth. The Lisbon Treaty remains unchanged. On 2<sup>nd</sup> October Vote NO to Lisbon!





# RTÉ RECRUITS FOR BRITISH ARMY!

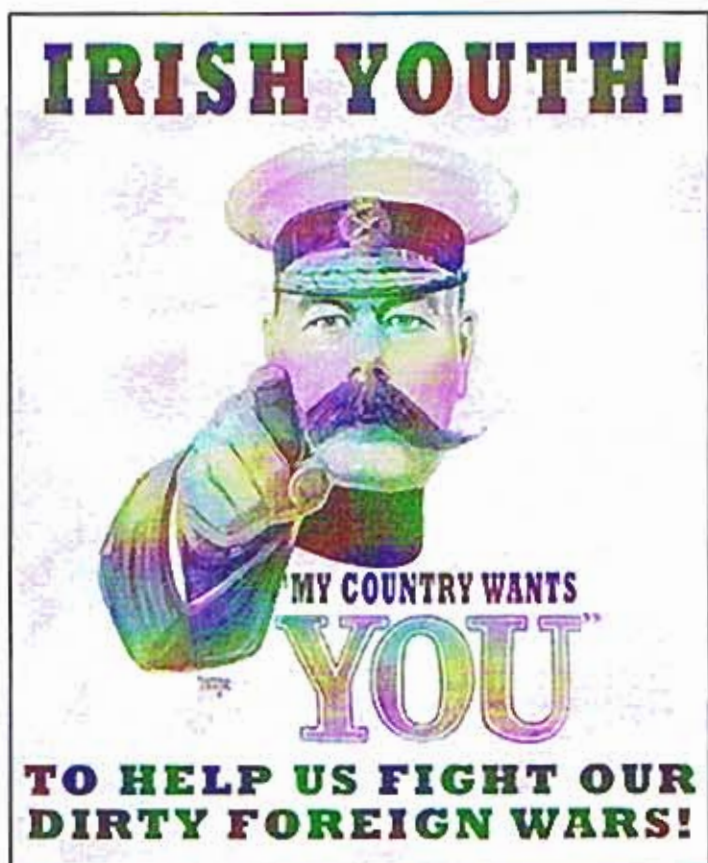
Many RTÉ television viewers will have reacted with a mixture of disgust and incomprehension in response to the now notorious "Nationwide" special programme on December 1<sup>st</sup> last. An RTÉ crew entered a British army barracks, purportedly to make a programme about a "continuing tradition" of Irish people joining the British armed forces. What was in fact shown was a 20-minute, uncritical propaganda piece that came across strongly as presenting the British army as a positive career choice for young Irish people.

The Irish National Congress lodged a formal complaint with the national broadcaster, citing the following reasons:

1. First and foremost because of the appalling record of the British army in this country from 1970 until very recently, a record that needs no retelling here. No self-respecting Irish person or institution should have any direct dealings with the British military given such a record.
2. Secondly, because of Britain's foreign wars and warmongering. The invasion of Iraq was clearly illegal under international law. The present war in Afghanistan, although more complex, is also of dubious legality. The latter war is developing into a classic colonial struggle, which is now spreading into neighbouring Pakistan and threatens to become a full-scale regional conflict involving India also. Is this the type of business Irish youth are to be encouraged to become involved in? Today, even the youth of Britain are not enlisting in sufficient numbers, very sensibly. Are Irish youth now being asked to make up the shortfall?
3. RTÉ has a duty of care towards the people of Ireland, being a publicly funded institution. Due to continued British state warmongering, any Irish person joining the British forces can expect at an early stage to be placed in harms way. Already in the past three months two citizens of the Republic have been killed in Afghanistan. More can be expected. We want to see no more Irish killed, and no more intrusive and unwelcome British military funerals in this state. RTÉ can do its part by ensuring that there will be no more propaganda of this nature, which is now, unfortunately, becoming an issue and a serious problem in the southern Irish mainstream media.

The reply from RTÉ absolutely avoided dealing with the politics of our complaint: "Your letter states that RTÉ has no business being inside a British Army barracks. RTÉ cannot accept this. The programme was a portrayal of Irishmen serving in the British Army. This was done in a fair manner by Tommie Gorman. Viewers were provided by Mr Gorman with an historical context to assess what they heard and the views expressed by the soldiers. We believe the report contributed to a better understanding of the complex relationships between Ireland and Britain and that viewers would have come away from the programme with a clearer idea of why Irishmen have over the centuries joined the British Army."

We replied, stating: "The 'Nationwide' feature should never have been screened in the format shown. When Tommie Gorman and his team entered that barracks, they became compromised from the outset. Can anyone seriously believe that British authorities would ever permit a foreign



broadcasting service access to a military installation to interview their soldiers in uniform without first ensuring absolute control over format and content? The RTÉ crew would have been no more independent than the so-called "embedded" correspondents reporting alongside US and UK forces in Iraq or Afghanistan.

We have to reject the claim that Mr Gorman asked the "appropriate" questions during the course of his interviews. The most obvious question that should have been put to the non-unionist Irish born soldiers was why they had joined an army that had such an appalling record against the Irish people. In addition to that, the commissioned officers interviewed should have been questioned about the morality of Britain's recent wars, particularly the illegal invasion of Iraq. Tommie Gorman failed to ask the questions most Irish people would have expected to be asked. His performance was shameful and obsequious, and reflected badly upon RTÉ. We hope that this type of programme will not be repeated again by our national broadcaster. RTÉ exists to promote a distinctly Irish world view and it should in no way promote British militarism."

RTÉ senior management would be very foolish to allow the showing of any similar item in the future. While privately owned newspapers – such as the *Irish Times* in particular – have been running favourable reports regarding the British army, RTÉ is a publicly owned institution paid for by our mandatory licence fees. The national broadcasting service exists to promote a unique Irish view of the world. However, there are sections of the Irish establishment, who would have our nations youth go off and take part in the un-ending wars of British Imperialism. The spirit of John Redmond is alive and well. The arguments put forward by the INC in our two letters to RTÉ, show clearly why they must be stopped.



# NO GOING BACK!

Over the years the Irish National Congress has earned a reputation for objective and honest assessment of the evolving Irish political situation. Whether people agreed with our analysis or not, most recognised that we were beholden to no party or group and dispensed criticism or praise wherever we saw fit. Because of this, our opinion and analysis have gained a degree of credibility among divergent groups.

One of the fundamental objectives in founding the Irish National Congress was to assist Irish Republicans in constructing a viable peace strategy as an alternative to armed struggle. We expended enormous time and energy in persuading republicans that a peace process would achieve more results in a shorter period than armed conflict ever could. While we have criticised the shortcomings of the 1998 Belfast Agreement in the past, we recognise that it is infinitely better than the pre-existing situation of deadlock and conflict.

In March 2009 two British soldiers and a policeman were shot dead by the Real IRA and Continuity IRA in Antrim and Craigavon. Those responsible for these attacks were condemned by the Deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness as "traitors". If his intention was to placate unionist and loyalist paramilitaries and prevent sectarian reprisals his words were extremely effective. If, however, his intention was to persuade 'dissident' Republicans to lay down their arms his words were ill judged and probably counterproductive.

Decades of sanctimonious and hypocritical condemnation of violence failed to save a single life in the seventies, eighties and nineties, and it is extremely unlikely to save any today. These attacks have been used by sections of the media etc, to undermine the widely held sense of legitimacy of the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence in 1919 and the outbreak of the conflict in 1969. Indeed these killings have been used in an attempt to undermine the long established and internationally recognised right of people to resist foreign occupation and oppression as expressed in United Nations resolutions 3070 and 3103.

The right to resist foreign occupation and tyranny does not stem from the ballot box. The Jews of the Warsaw ghetto were not terrorists because they were a minority. The right of a people to resist arises not from the number of the oppressed, but from the illegitimacy of the actions of the oppressor. An occupied people cannot renounce their right to resist, the only group who can end that right is the oppressor by ending their occupation. To wage an illegal war of

aggression, to occupy a foreign country and terrorise and oppress its people, be it in Iraq, Ireland or any where else is to sow the dragons teeth of the oppressors own downfall.

This being said, a right to resist is not necessarily a right to resist by force of arms. Equally, a right to resist by force of arms is not necessarily a duty to resist by force of arms. The form of any such resistance depends on the prevailing circumstances. Obviously the purpose of any form of resistance is to end the oppression as soon as possible.

We now know that all Republican groups were deeply infiltrated by British intelligence, just as the Provisionals had Denis Donaldson, the dissidents had David Rupert. Such a strategy of divide and rule by pushing apart either extreme was only to be expected, indeed further agents provocateurs may yet be revealed. It is therefore vitally important that Republicans on all sides desist from fratricidal conflict and reflect seriously on the likely outcome of the policies they are pursuing. It would be a great mistake for Republicans or their opponents to mistake patience for cowardice, or pragmatism for treachery. Diplomacy can be a continuation of warfare by other means, and wars of attrition can be fought with more than bullets.

It has long been a classic Unionist political tactic to procrastinate, obstruct and delay in the hope that 'events' would save them. The longer they could delay a reform the greater nationalists frustrations would be, and the more likelihood that this frustration would boil over into violence; this violence could then in turn be used as a justification for preventing further reforms and to provoke a debilitating or fratricidal split between so-called hawks and doves in the Nationalist movement. Equally, an unforeseen external event may arise which has the power to radically transform the political scene in their favour.

It is obvious that Unionism has sought to drag out the Northern peace process for as long as possible by delaying all party talks by demanding that the IRA ceasefire was permanent from 1994-1998. Unionism then repeatedly collapsed the Stormont Executive by demanding IRA decommissioning from 1998-2007. Since then they have sought to humiliate Republicans by obstructing their policies on the Irish language, education, policing and the Maze stadium all in the hope that something will give. Their hope is that the Tories will return to power, Republicanism will split, the Southern economy will collapse and a more naïve and malleable political leadership will emerge among Republicans.





**Above: IRA Volunteers prepare to engage the British Army in South Armagh. (Circa 1990)**

However, despite years of procrastination and frustration, Nationalist Ireland has made slow but inexorable progress over the years. Before 1973 to get any public sector employment in the North one had to take an oath of allegiance to the British Crown. Until 1983 it was still illegal to display an Irish tricolour in the North. Until 1994 Sinn Féin representatives were banned from speaking on radio and television in Britain and Ireland or travelling to the United States of America. Even in 2006 it was unimaginable that Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness would be First and Deputy First Minister in a power-sharing executive. The very concept of having a Catholic or Republican minister is anathema to the very existence of the Northern 'Protestant parliament for a Protestant people'. It is also remarkable that a President of Ireland from Nationalist Ardoyne in Belfast would regularly visit Loyalist areas in Belfast and in turn Loyalists would visit Áras an Uachtaráin in Dublin.

The RIR, UDR, RUC and 'B' Specials, the storm troopers of Loyalist supremacy, have been stood down and the watchtowers are gone. Even the once all mighty Orange Order can no longer treat Nationalist areas of Portadown as its own personal parade ground. Although the Irish economy may recently have taken three steps forward and two steps back it is nonetheless unrecognisable from the 'good old days of British rule' when nearly four million people emigrated and in excess of one million died of starvation.

Since 1969 Nationalist Ireland has gained in confidence and has become more tolerant, prosperous and multi-cultural, and this progress will continue in the future. Demographically, culturally, politically and economically it is inevitable that the influence and power of Northern Nationalists will increase in the immediate future and will continue to do so, just as the influence of Unionism will decrease.

It is likely that North and South will draw closer together as Nationalist influence increases. While unambiguously acknowledging the right of all occupied peoples to resist oppression, the Irish National Congress equally and unambiguously calls on all Irish Republican groups to immediately cease all armed attacks. We firmly believe such attacks only play into the hands of those who oppose Irish unity and are hugely counterproductive, futile and divisive.

Britain and Unionism must acknowledge their responsibilities for recent events. If the peace process is to survive in the long term, power-sharing and all Ireland institutions must be seen to work. This in effect means that Unionism must not be permitted to veto or stymie every reform proposed by Republicans. To do so will unleash an uncontrollable tidal wave of pent up frustrations, which nobody wishes to see.

**– Paul McGuill  
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# JUSTICE FOR THE FORGOTTEN

## RESPONSE TO THE EAMES/BRADLEY REPORT



The Consultative Group on the Past (CGP) was established by the British Government on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2007 to *"seek a consensus across the community in Northern Ireland on the best way to deal with the legacy of the past"*.

The co-chairs were Robin Eames, former Anglican Archbishop of Armagh and Denis Bradley, the first Vice-Chairman of the Northern Ireland Policing Board. The other members of the group were Jarlath Burns; Rev. Dr. Lesley Carroll; Prof. James Mackey; Willie John McBride; Canon David Porter and Elaine Moore.

Justice for the Forgotten was anxious to ensure that the voices of victims in this jurisdiction would be heard. We sought an early meeting with the group in which we left them under no illusion that the Troubles had affected many people south of the Border and that it was essential that the bereaved families and survivors that we represent should have an input into the consultative process.

The report of the CGP was published on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2009 in the Europa Hotel, Belfast amid controversy about one of its 31 recommendations – that an across-the-board recognition payment should be made to the families of all victims of the Troubles. In doing this, they were simply adopting the Remembrance Commission model, which had been established by the Irish Government in October 2003.

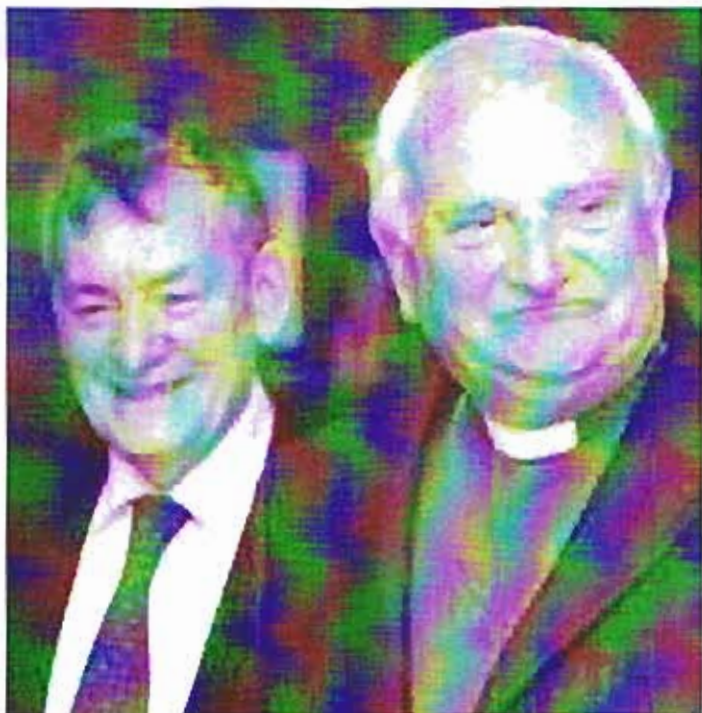
We commend the CGP on this initiative and believe they were making an important statement that hierarchies of victims are unhelpful in moving towards societal healing.

The response of Justice for the Forgotten (JFF) focuses mainly on the proposed Legacy Commission, which we broadly welcome, as we believe it has real potential for dealing with the past. However, we have a number of concerns regarding certain aspects, especially as it applies to the victims of the conflict whom we represent.

The report recommends that:

*"An independent Legacy Commission would be established to deal with the legacy of the past by combining processes of reconciliation, justice and information recovery. It would be headed by an International Commissioner who should act as Chair, with overall responsibility for strategic direction and for supervising the work of the whole Commission. The International Commissioner would also have specific responsibility for addressing society issues. Two further Commissioners would have responsibility respectively for Review and Investigation and for Information Recovery and Thematic Cases."*

In relation to truth recovery, it is envisaged that the Commission would have three strands, similar to the existing Historical Enquiries Team. It would, however, unlike the HET, be independent of the PSNI. There would



Above: The co-chairs of the Consultative Group on the Past, Denis Bradley and Lord Robin Eames.

be a Review and Investigation Unit, which would take over the work of the HET and the Police Ombudsman's Unit dealing with historical cases. The process of information recovery of importance to relatives would be separated from the investigation procedure and would be subject to a distinct process within the Commission under a separate Commissioner. Themes arising from the conflict would be examined, such as specific areas of paramilitary activity and collusion.

The major flaw in the consultation process from the outset was that the CGP was established solely by the British Government, while the Irish Government was excluded. This has manifested itself in the Group's recommendations regarding the role of the Irish Government in the proposed Legacy Commission. Although the Irish Government is acknowledged as a stakeholder, the recommendations in relation to its role are vague, ill-defined and potentially contradictory. It has been widely acknowledged by experts on the subject that the Irish Government must play a full part in any Truth/Legacy Commission if it is to be successful.

Writing in 2008, before the publication of the CGP report, academics Colm Campbell and Catherine Turner, of the Transitional Justice Institute, University of Ulster, stated:

*"A geographical remit limited to the territory of Northern Ireland would omit from the frame the significant violence and human rights issues associated with the Northern conflict that occurred in the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. Second, vesting the legal authority for the Commission solely in British law runs counter to the bi-*



*national (British and Irish) approach that has underpinned the peace process. If the Republic of Ireland dimension is to be addressed, a legal framework will be required that has the force of law in that jurisdiction.”<sup>1</sup>*

At least 133 people were killed in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) - not 113 as stated in the report - and hundreds of people were injured. It is important to recognise that successive Irish Governments and their security forces co-operated fully with their counterparts in Northern Ireland (NI) throughout the entirety of the conflict while other areas of civil society in the ROI also played a pivotal role, notably the media and the churches. For these reasons, the Irish Government should be central to the establishment of any Legacy Commission.

As the recommendations stand, there would appear to be no parity of esteem for victims killed outside of NI. This is presumably the reason why the report singles out the Dublin and Monaghan bombings, as it would not be possible to treat this atrocity in the same way as cases in NI.

However, no reference is made as to how all the other conflict-related deaths that occurred in ROI should be dealt with, including the cases examined by Judge Henry Barron. The report mentions the Barron and MacEntee Inquiries into the Dublin and Monaghan bombings but fails to refer to the three other Barron reports: into the Dublin bombings of 1972/73, the murder of Séamus Ludlow and the Dundalk bombing.

## **THE PROPOSALS OF JUSTICE FOR THE FORGOTTEN**

### **Joint Initiatives**

JFF contends that a joint initiative by both the British and Irish Governments, which was crucial in ensuring acceptance of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement by the nationalist/Republican population of NI as well as the population of the ROI, would also be essential for the success of a Legacy Commission.

### **Equal examination of all deaths**

We maintain that, in order for a Legacy Commission to be effective and acceptable, all conflict-related deaths and not just those that occurred within the territory of NI should be examined equally. There needs to be a level playing-field for all victims of the conflict whether they died in Derry, Dublin, Birmingham, Dortmund or Gibraltar, otherwise there is a danger of a new hierarchy of victims emerging where those who died outside NI are seen as less important than those who died within its limits.

### **Joint Agreements**

In order for this to be realised it will be necessary for a joint agreement to be entered into by both Governments. Similar joint agreements were established and legislation enacted in both jurisdictions in respect of the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains; the International Commission on Decommissioning and the Independent Monitoring Commission. Therefore, there are precedents for such joint legislation by both

Governments, which could be replicated in the establishment of a Legacy Commission.

### **Documents**

The Legacy Commission, once established, should be able to draw on the documents, not just of the Stalker/Sampson and Stevens' Inquiries, but also those of the four Barron Inquiries and the MacEntee Inquiry. The British Government should also release all documents relating to cross-Border bombings that have been withheld from the Barron Inquiries and continue to be withheld.

### **Independence of Legacy Commission**

We believe the proposal by CGP of the appointment of an independent, international Commissioner, as Chair of the Legacy Commission to be absolutely essential. We would argue that the role of the Chair should tend towards greater involvement in the Review and Investigation, the Information Recovery and the Thematic strands.

Policing and justice was one of the most contentious issues during the conflict and it is vital that there should be independent, international oversight of these strands.

### **Imposed reconciliation**

We would argue that to try to impose reconciliation at the beginning of the process would be unhelpful and might also be detrimental to the truth recovery process. Campbell and Turner state that:

*'To task a body to produce both truth and reconciliation may risk subordinating truth to the demands of a nebulous concept of reconciliation.'*

Their fears seem to be borne out where it is stated in the report:

*'The Commission should have the discretion to decide how much information would be made available to the family or put in the public domain bearing in mind the obligations in respect of protection of information and data, its duty to protect life, the interests of national security and the objective of promoting reconciliation'.* (Emphasis ours).

### **Staffing**

In terms of the staffing of the Commission, the report recommends that the Review and Investigation unit should comprise police and administrative staff but makes no recommendation for the staff membership of the other units.

We believe that the staffing of all three units should not be confined to former police officers but should include experts from other areas, such as human rights and transitional justice and also Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) who have, over many years, accumulated experience and expertise in supporting bereaved families and investigating historical cases.

### **Two-sided conflict**

JFF takes issue with the thread running through the whole report of the 'two-sided' conflict. For example:

*'Both sides must somehow be enabled to reach agreement that there was wrongdoing on both sides. This is not a matter of balancing amounts of wrongdoing but of acknowledging that wrong was done on both sides. Only then is mutual forgiveness possible.'*

*...continued overleaf*

<sup>1</sup> Campbell, Colm and Turner, Catherine, 'Utopia and the doubters: truth, transition and the law, (The Society of Legal Scholars), 2008.



We would contend that the conflict should have been described as being three-sided as there were significant violations by state as well as non-state entities. It will be crucial for any Legacy Commission to include the British Government and its agencies as a prime actor in the conflict.

The report notes that there is a perception that [public] inquiries risk presenting an uneven approach to the conflict in placing the police and prison services under particular scrutiny when other aspects of the conflict are not treated in the same way.

Regardless of whether this occurs through a public inquiry or through the process of a Legacy Commission, we would support the position of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission that there is an even greater need to scrutinise the actions of these agencies than those of non-state entities.

The recommendation that, at the end of the Legacy Commission's work, the people of NI, including its political parties, and whatever remnant of paramilitary groups remain, should be challenged to sign a declaration to the effect that they will never kill or injure others on political grounds, is potentially controversial and counter-productive.

Again, the British Government is being excluded from the proposed declaration, despite its role as a player in the conflict. In our opinion, such declarations and commitments would be divisive, would not assist the healing process and would have the potential to undo the work of the Legacy Commission.

## Memorials

JFF would strongly disagree that these 'serve only limited sections of society'. Physical structures can serve far more than that – our own experience bears out the importance of these to bereaved families, to survivors and to the wider communities in which they are placed. JFF has been centrally involved in assisting bereaved families with their procurement of permanent memorials in various locations in the Republic.

**Dublin** – memorials for the Dublin bombings of December 1972 (2 deaths) and January 1973 (1 death); Dublin bombings of May 1974 (27 deaths) - in Talbot Street and the Remembrance plot in Glasnevin Cemetery; the 'Let's Dance' memorial to the victims of the Miami Showband murders in July 1975 (3 deaths);

**Monaghan** – bombing of May 1974 (7 deaths);

**Belturbet** – bombing of December 1972 (2 deaths);

**Dundalk** – bombing of December 1975 (2 deaths);

**Castleblayney** – bombing of March 1976 (1 death).

We personally attended the unveiling of all these memorials and witnessed the absolute relief and joy of the bereaved families that, after so many years of being ignored by successive local and national Governments, their loved ones were at last being officially recognised. Dublin City Council and various County and Town Councils to their credit became involved in the erection and partial funding of these memorials (the core funding for which came from the Remembrance Commission) and whole towns celebrated with the families.



Above: Talbot St., Dublin. Memorial to those who were murdered by synchronised, no-warning bombs in Dublin & Monaghan on May 17<sup>th</sup> 1974.

Below: May 2002, then Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD, lays a wreath at the memorial.



Our view is that memorials are a vital part of healing and we would welcome a garden of remembrance dedicated to all those who died in the conflict as recommended in the report.

## Time is of the essence

In conclusion, it is crucial that the Legacy Commission be established as soon as possible taking cognisance of the passage of time and particularly bearing in mind that 59% of all deaths occurred before 1980. Any undue delay will result in those concerned – bereaved families, survivors, witnesses, investigators and perpetrators – having passed away or become too old and infirm to participate.

– Margaret Urwin

JFF Family Support Centre Manager  
[www.dublinmonaghanbombings.org](http://www.dublinmonaghanbombings.org)

## JUSTICE FOR THE FORGOTTEN – URGENT APPEAL

The current economic situation has led to the withdrawal of Government funding for *Justice for the Forgotten*. This has left us in a serious financial position and we need help to maintain provision of our victims' services and our campaigning work. All donations, no matter how big or small, will be gratefully received and acknowledged. Cheques should be made payable to *Justice for the Forgotten Ltd*. Please send what you can to:

Justice For The Forgotten  
64 – 66 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin 1, Ireland.



# RUSSELL WAS A PATRIOT

Following the second attack on the statue of Seán Russell in the space of a couple of months, demands are now being made for Dublin City Council to remove the statue from Fairview Park permanently.

Councillor Aodhán O'Riordáin (Labour Party) said, "I am outraged that this man is continually honoured in this manner, particularly in light of his controversial past and links with Nazi Germany". Cllr O'Riordáin continued "I am calling on Dublin City Council to immediately take steps to remove this offensive monument".

Curiously enough Cllr O'Riordáin's moral outrage was not evident when the memorial to Queen Victoria was restored and replaced in Dún Laoghaire recently. Queen Victoria was monarch of Ireland during Ireland's holocaust when in excess of one million Irish people starved to death at home or on the 'coffin ships' as they left a destitute Ireland, which was still exporting food to 'mother' England.

In addition to the likes of Cllr O'Riordáin, the bitter journalistic curmudgeons of *Independent Newspapers* not surprisingly launched a number of virulent attacks on those associated with the re-erection of the statue to Seán Russell. This latest attack is a most sinister and worrying development. Graffiti proclaiming Russell to be "Nazi scum" which was sprayed on the statue is blatantly untrue.

Russell, despite the charges of Nazi colluder was in fact prominent in opposing Ireland's homegrown fascists, the Blueshirts, from organising. He was a consistent anti-fascist and encouraged many republicans to go to Spain to fight fascism. These attacks on memorials to Ireland's patriot dead should act as a wake up call to those of us who value our independence, sovereignty and democratic right to choose whom we wish to honour.

In December 2004, vandals claiming to be "anti-fascist" deliberately decapitated the original monument to Seán Russell. For some time now there has been an orchestrated campaign waged in an attempt to force Dublin City Council to remove Russell's statue forever.

Russell was a former IRA Chief-of-Staff who died aboard a German U-boat in 1940, and was buried at sea. He had been returning to Ireland from Germany in the company of his comrade, Frank Ryan, having tried to secure an arms shipment to launch a military campaign against British rule in Ireland. Russell, according to those who knew him, was loyal to a cause, not an ideology. He had no worldview other than a firm commitment to ending British rule in Ireland. In previous years he had made similar expeditions to the United States and the Soviet Union seeking arms. Russell is seen as a weak link because of the universal loathing for the Third Reich, and the revulsion attached to any individual who had dealings with it, even though not endorsing its policies.

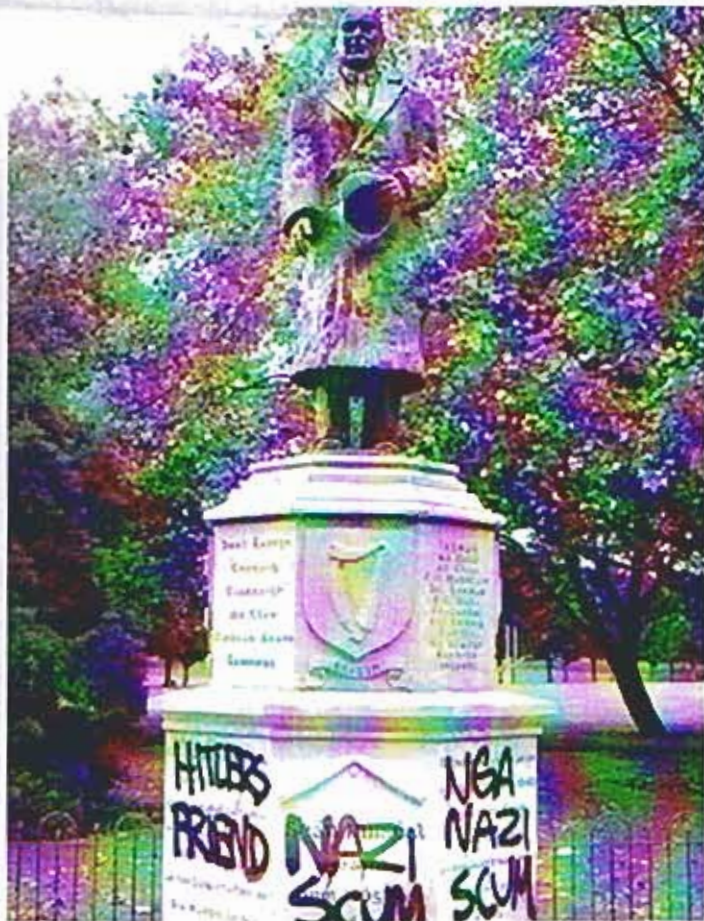
About the same time as Russell was seeking arms from Germany, Avraham Stern, founder of Lehi, the Zionist

organisation in pursuance of a Jewish State in Palestine, 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 Israeli 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 of Israel. Were Stern and Shamir Nazi sympathisers? Of course not.

In an *Irish Times* article on spies in Ireland published on Friday June 6th 1958, Seán Russell was quoted "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".

To label Russell a Nazi collaborator is inaccurate. He is entitled to have not just his statue restored but also his reputation defended. And so it shall. It should be made clear that if the statue to Seán Russell is removed from Fairview Park, then all British monuments and memorials in this state will also be removed.

— Tom Cooper  
Cathaoirleach



Above: The vandalised statue of Irish Patriot, Seán Russell in Dublin's Fairview Park. So-called 'anti-fascists' have repeatedly attacked the Russell monument since its re-erection.



## TRANSLINK ADVERTS UNWELCOME, OFFENSIVE AND PROVOCATIVE

*Translink*, the semi-state transport body in the 6 Co.'s that operates *Ulsterbus*, *City Bus* and *Northern Ireland Railways*, are currently carrying large recruitment adverts on the exterior of their buses for the British army's *RAF. Relatives for Justice*, which represents the injured and families bereaved by the British army have released the following statement.

Speaking on the *Translink* adverts on bus routes throughout republican and nationalist Belfast, *Relatives for Justice* Director Mark Thompson said:

"Obviously this is a commercial decision for *Translink* rather than support for British armed forces. Nonetheless *Translink* have displayed a disregard for the legacy of British armed occupation on our streets that resulted in brutality, torture and murder carried out almost exclusively against the nationalist and republican population with impunity".

"In this context the adverts are at best insensitive especially to those injured and bereaved by the British army many of whom have contacted our offices requesting that we publicly raise the matter with *Translink*."

"The vast majority of people within West Belfast, and other republican and nationalist areas in the North, find the adverts unwelcome whilst others rightly see them as offensive and provocative".

"Additionally, the ads seek to portray the abnormal condition of warfare as somehow normal which is equally offensive given our experience in West Belfast. War crimes like the Ballymurphy Massacre during Internment 1971 are being repeated in Iraq and Afghanistan today by these very same military forces. This is totally unacceptable to our community".

"We would appeal to *Translink* to reconsider their use of buses carrying these adverts throughout nationalist and republican areas in which the British army wreaked havoc and murdered people, including children."

**Editors Notes:** The British army officially killed 367 people during the course of the conflict that included over 70 children. Approximately 200 were civilians, of those combatants killed many were unarmed, others were killed in pre-meditated and pre-planned military operations in which safe and effective arrests were possible yet political and military decisions were taken to execute people.

This contravened international law and the Geneva Convention. The British army's intelligence agencies controlled and directed colluded with illegal loyalist paramilitary groups claiming hundreds of lives across the community.

For more information visit:

[www.relativesforjustice.com](http://www.relativesforjustice.com)

## RECREATIONAL KILLING OF CATHOLICS GOES UNCHALLENGED

Over the long years of the conflict in the North there have been many grotesque murders, including multiple killings, which were carried out by paramilitaries from both sides to the conflict, and indeed many by rogue elements in the security forces.

The murders of human rights solicitors Pat Finucane and Rosemary Nelson were supposedly "*watersheds*" in the conflict. So too was the sectarian murder of Robert Hamill in Portadown, allegedly in full view of a number of armed RUC officers who failed in their duty to protect him.

More recently the casual and random murders of two totally innocent Catholic schoolboys in Belfast and Ballymena, Thomas Devlin and Michael McIlveen, who were both victims of what can only be described as the recreational killings of Catholics, have now been joined by yet another horrific sectarian murder by loyalists of an innocent Catholic. Kevin McDaid, was savagely kicked to death in Coleraine as the climax to celebrations by Glasgow Rangers 'fans' in commemoration of winning the Scottish Premier League title.

If Kevin McDaid had been black, Muslim or Jewish, the British state would have intervened, like they did when the black schoolboy Stephen Lawrence was stabbed to death in London in 1993 by white racists. Following this killing, the British government set up an inquiry headed by Sir William MacPherson, who concluded that the London Metropolitan police investigation into the killing was "*institutionally racist*".

Do the decades long sectarian killings of Catholics not warrant a similar inquiry? Or are the killings of Catholics deemed less worthy of investigation? If this is all eleven years of the Good Friday Agreement has to offer the nationalist community in terms of their safety from sectarian attack, then perhaps we need to re-visit Patten.

The lunatic fringe of loyalism, which has been credited, with the murder of Mr McDaid, has been sustained over the decades by the *Pontius Pilate* attitudes of the British government, unionist political parties, the main Protestant churches, the Northern Ireland Office and the totally inadequate response of the RUC/PSNI to attacks on Catholics.

Claims about the recreational murders of Catholics is not based on conspiracy theories but on British and Irish government instigated investigations which produced the *Stevens Report*, the *Stalker/Sampson Report*, the *Barron Report*, the Joint Oireachtas Committees on Justice, Commissions of Investigations, British-Irish Rights Watch, and many reputable lawyers and human rights groups. All have concluded that Catholics, north and south of the border, have been murdered without mercy, and subsequent British state sponsored investigations deemed totally inadequate.

The criticism of the alleged inadequacy of the PSNI response to events before and during the killing of Mr McDaid warrants a thorough impartial investigation and the INC calls on the Irish government to make clear it's position on this matter through the North/South Ministerial Council, under Strand Two of the Belfast Agreement.

— Tom Cooper  
Cathaoirleach



# Níl = Tá: Conradh Liosbóin, Fírinne Orwell.

"For me, every ruler is alien that defies public opinion." – Mahatma Gandhi.

"The European institutions, but also member states, want to understand what European citizens want. But we are not going to stop. We are not going to come to a halt. We have something to do." – Jose-Manuel Barroso.

"Are we all clear that we want to build something that can aspire to be a world power?" – Romano Prodi.

"Europe opposes Lisbon." – Charlie McCreevy.

Iontas na n-iontas, beidh ar phobal na hÉireann vótáil arís ar Chonradh Liosbóin! Bhí an ceart ag Pat Carey, T.D (F.F), nuair a thuar sé lá na vótála Liosbóin i Meitheamh 12 2008, go mbeadh lá vótála eile ann gan mhoill. Nach fear iontach cliste é Pat, gur thuig sé céard a bhí romhainn amach roimhré? Ba chóir do Phat cur isteach ar phost an Taoisigh, dar liom. Ceist acadúil eile b'fhéidir ná seo: An é seo Conradh Liosbóin 2 nó Bunreacht na hEorpa 4? (Mar is é an cáipéis chéanna é a diúltáíodh ag pobal na Fraince, pobal na hSiltíre agus againne cheana féin).

Cad iad na hathruithe a tháinig ar Chonradh Liosbóin idir an chéad vóta againn (Meitheamh 2008) agus an dara vóta le teacht? TADA. Céard is fiú na "bannaí", dar leo féin, atá faighte ag lucht rialtais? TADA.

Níor tháinig athrú dá laghad ar fhoclaíocht an Chonradh olc, maith ná dona. Dá bhrí sin beidh Comhaontas na Síochána is na Neodrachta (C.S.N./PANA) ag gníomhú sa bhfeachtas 'NÍL' arís. D'éiligh C.S.N. comhghnás (protocol) a scaoilfeadh an tír seo ó chúinsí míleata agus ó chostais míleata Aontas na hEorpa (A.E.), comhghnás atá ag An Danmhairg. Ní hamháin nach bhfuil comhghnás den tsórt san faighte ag rialtas na hÉireann ach níor lorg siad a leithéid. Ciallaíonn easpa chomhghnáis más ea go láidreofar gné míleata an A.E., go dtiocfaidh méadú suntasach ar chaitheachais an A.E. ar airm, armlón agus ar thionscal na n-Arm Eorpaigh, agus go gcuirfear leis an gceangal idir an A.E. agus NATO.

1: I measc na nithe i gConradh Liosbóin a láidreoidh an A.E. i gcúrsaí eachtracha is cosanta tá:

Uachtarán buan don A.E.; Aire Ghnóthaí Eachtracha buan don A.E.; Roinn Ghnóthaí Eachtracha buan don A.E.; Leathnú na *Petersburg Tasks* chun fórsaí míleata an A.E. a sheoladh thar teorainn an A.E. in aghaidh "sceimhlitheoirí" agus "bagairtí seachtreacha"; Comhoibriú Structúrtha a chiallaíonn go mbeidh cead ag tíortha san A.E. mion-chomhghuaillíochtaí míleata a chur ar bun eatarthu féin agus feidhmiú in ainm an A.E.; Nasctar an *European Defence Agency (EDA)* le Conarthaí Aontas na hEorpa.

2: Deir "banna" an Rialtais nach bhfuil iallach ar an tír seo bheith páirteach san EDA ach is ball den EDA muid ó 2004! (Cinneadh a ghlac an Rialtas gan chomhairle na Dála fiú). Cuireadh an EDA ar bun aimsir Bhunreacht na hEorpa (Conradh Liosbóin anois) agus mar aidhm aige:

"Member States shall undertake progressively to improve their military capabilities. The agency in the field of

defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments (EDA) shall identify operational requirements, shall promote measures to satisfy those requirements, shall contribute to identifying and, where appropriate, implementing any measure needed to strengthen the industrial and technological base of the defence sector, shall participate in defining a European capabilities and armaments policy, and shall assist the Council in evaluating the improvement of military capabilities." Art 28.

Dar leis an Rialtas is leor na "bannaí" atá faighte acu mar nach bhfuil a leithéid de rud ann is Arm Eorpach. B'fhéidir nach bhfuil an téarma Arm Aontas na hEorpa ann...fós, ach tá Luathfhórsaí Eorpacha ann (*Rapid Reaction Forces*) agus Díormaí Chatha (*Battlegroups*)<sup>2</sup> Eorpacha ann chomh maith agus is ball í Éire sna fórsaí sin (Arm na hEorpa faoi ainm chleite). Céard is arm ann? Agus cuimhnigh gur ball muid de PFP-NATO chomh maith (gan an reifreann a gealladh)! Níl sna téarmaí *Rapid Reaction Forces/Battlegroups* ach imeartas focal. Aon duine adeir nach Arm na hEorpa atá iontu tá sé dall nó ina ghealt nó ina bhréagadóir. Seo léiriú simplí:

*E.U. Rapid Reaction Forces* = Saighdiúirí

*E.U. Battlegroups* = Saighdiúirí

*NATO Partnership for Peace* = Saighdiúirí

Saighdiúirí + Saighdiúirí + Saighdiúirí = Arm na hEorpa/A.E.

Tabhair faoi deara gur "military neutrality" an téarma atá ag an Rialtas sna "bannaí", mar dhe. Tá Neodracht na hÉireann i bhfad níos leithne agus níos doimhne ná "military neutrality" (Bréagnaíonn míúsáid Aerphort na Sionainne "military neutrality" ar aon chuma). Mar a luaigh an Dr. Karen Devine san Irish Times roinnt míonna ó shin: "Research based on the 2001/2002 Irish Social and Political Attitudes Survey (ISPAS) shows that the public's concept of neutrality...reflects an active concept of neutrality...a positive neutrality. Successive Irish governments' concept of neutrality...is referred to as "military" neutrality. However, the aforementioned surveys show that only 2% of people conceive of neutrality this way."

Léiríonn a bhfuil thuasluaite nach bhfuil an Rialtas (ná formhór an aicme pholaitiúil) ar aon aigne le pobal na hÉireann maidir le céard is brí le neodracht, fiú amháin gan trácht ar céard is fiú an neodracht. Is cuid fíorthábhachtach dár n-oidhreacht í an neodracht, ó Wolfe Tone<sup>3</sup> i leith. Is cuid lárnach í dár gcultúr pholaitiúil, frith-impiriúlach, poblachtánach ó bhunaigh Séamus Ó Conghaile agus a chomrádaithe *The Irish Neutrality League*, 1914.

...ar lean thar leathanach

<sup>1</sup> "Battlegroups could be used to go to war. Why did the E.U. create the battlegroup? It is not just to help to rebuild a country. The Battlegroups are not for building schools." – Jan de Hoop Scheffer, Rúnaí Ghin. NATO.

<sup>2</sup> The Spanish War le Wolfe Tone, 1790. Athfhoilsithe ag Cumann na mBan, 1915 agus ag PANA, 2006. Ar fáil ó PANA ar €3.



Tugtar droim láimhe don neodracht chéanna (agus neodracht na dtíortha eile san A.E., An Ostair, An Fhionlainn, An tSualainn) i gConradh Liosbóin. Ní luaitear an téarma "neodracht" ar chor ar bith. Is é an díol trua é gurb é ár Rialtas féin atá ag teip orainn i leith na neodrachta. Molann Comhaontas na Síochána is na Neodrachta/PANA bheith dílis dár neodracht trí pé tacaíocht gur féidir leat a thabhairt don bhfeachtas 'NÍL'. Beidh C.S.N./PANA ag feidhmiú mar eagraíocht ann féin agus mar chuid den bhfeachtas *Campaign Against the E.U. Constitution/C.A.E.U.C.*

Seo mar a chríochnaigh an Dr. Devine (D.C.U. Humanities and Social Sciences):

Henry Kissinger once observed: "No foreign policy – no matter how ingenious – has any chance of success if it is born in the minds of a few and carried in the hearts of none." His insight illustrates the problems faced by advocates of the Lisbon Treaty's Common Security and Defence Policy that overrides, rather than accommodates, the foreign policy of neutral states.

– Feargus Mac Aogáin,  
Coiste Stiúrtha  
C.S.N./PANA.

[www.pana.ie](http://www.pana.ie)

## A LOT DONE...MORE TO DO!

The late 1980s were difficult times in Ireland for nationalists and republicans. The conflict in the North continued unabated, clocking up a heavy toll in terms of deaths, injuries and incarcerations, yet at the same time, there was absolutely no space for the kind of dialogue that might lead to any possible resolution.

This hopeless situation had been created and nurtured by some politicians and sections of the media who were convinced that a resolution to the conflict could be served by simply denying spokespersons from named organisations, what Margaret Thatcher referred to as "the oxygen of publicity".

The strict application of Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act in the Republic, namely, the banning of interviews with spokespersons from named organisations, including Sinn Féin, would have been bad enough, since under the order only a censored version of the most important story in Ireland could have been told by RTÉ. But the real situation was far worse than that. Encouraged by the in-house thought police the atmosphere in RTÉ became so corrosive that anything that could be judged nationalistic was kept off the airwaves.

This extended to items as "dangerous and subversive" as Paul Robeson singing the ballad *Kevin Barry*.

It was to counter such shameful and guilt-ridden attitudes that a group of concerned citizens gathered together in 1989 to found the Irish National Congress with the goal of promoting peace, unity and justice in Ireland.

A National Executive was formed and to my total surprise I found myself elected Chairperson. I was very surprised because I had never been involved in such an undertaking before, while many other committee members had a wealth of experience. For the record, that first committee was as follows:

Robert Ballagh (Chairperson), Caitríona Ruane (Secretary), Tom Cullen (Treasurer), Anna Barron, Nora Comiskey, John Doyle, Richard Greene, Oliver Kearney, Nicky Kelly, Bernadette McAliskey, Eugene McCartan, Patricia McKenna, Rita O'Hare and Fr. Des Wilson.

I was honoured to serve as chair for 10 years and during that time I made many good friends and, needless to remark, a few enemies, though not from the ranks of the INC!

Also, I am extremely proud of the excellent work that was done by the Irish National Congress during those difficult times. I remember the support we gave to the Reclaim the Spirit of Easter campaign in 1990 and 1991, which contributed to the success of that endeavour.

We helped organise the Cullyhanna Inquiry, which played a significant part in exposing the malevolent role of the British Army in the North.

One of my own favourite undertakings was the assistance we provided to the communities along the border in their efforts to re-open the border roads that had been closed by the British Army. The Irish National Congress also ran a major campaign to defend Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution, which even if it failed to prevent change, at least ensured an acceptable compromise.

And finally and most importantly I believe that the Irish National Congress played an important role in preparing the ground for the peace process and the present political dispensation.

So, to paraphrase Fianna Fáil, a lot done, but, of course, a lot more to do. Today, even though the situation has changed quite dramatically from the dark days of the late 1980s, I believe that a non-party political organisation like the Irish National Congress still has an important role to play. I wish it well in this task.

Beir Bua!

– Robert Ballagh

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE INC THEN  
FILL IN THE FORM BELOW AND RETURN IT TO:  
Irish National Congress, PO Box 2814, Dublin 7.  
Membership Fee: waged €10 / unwaged €5

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