



INC NEWS

Summer 2002

Comhdháil Náisiúnta na hÉireann

PO Box 2814, Dublin 7.

NEW ERA NEW CHALLENGES

As expected the recent general election in the 26 counties resulted in five Sinn Féin TD's plus a small number of nationally minded independents being elected to Dáil Éireann. The Irish National Congress welcomes the election of these new republican and nationalist representatives, and we look forward to working with them in pursuit of common national objectives. There is much work to be done in the legislative field.

To begin with, we would like to see a start being made towards dismantling the police state apparatus in the 26 counties. The Special Criminal Court and the Offences Against the State Act must now be abolished. There should also be serious moves made to provide for direct representation for six county citizens in the Oireachtas.

It is to be hoped that from now on, any legislation relating to the national question that is enacted by Dáil Éireann will reflect the interests and needs of the Irish Nation rather than being enacted due to the demands and diktats of the British state and its Irish apologists.

Having said that, let us now extend warm congratulations to INC members, Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, (Sinn Féin) elected in Monaghan for a second term; and also to newly elected Dublin deputy, Finian McGrath, a former Leas-Cathaoirleach of the INC, who stood as an independent. Well done, both of you.

Mary-Lou McDonald our former Cathaoirleach, polled well in Dublin West, but was not elected this time, keep at it Mary-Lou; better luck next time.

In the six counties too, major political change is about to happen, but here it is fraught with the ever-present danger of a descent into all-out ethnic warfare. As the INC News goes to press, the reality for many northern nationalists is the threat to life and property posed by the ongoing loyalist pogrom, particularly against isolated communities such as the Short Strand in Belfast. A pogrom that both the British and Irish political establishments largely choose to ignore. There is now however, a looming political reality that soon nobody will be able to ignore. Later on this year, the British administration will publish the results of the 2001 Northern Ireland census. This will be a significant



Former INC Leas Cathaoirleach, Finian McGrath TD together with former INC Cathaoirleach Mary Lou McDonald pictured here at the protest against the Orange Orders "bi-centenary" in Dublin, May 2000 with current Leas Cathaoirleach Tom Cooper.

historical milestone, for it will signal the beginning of the end for the squalid little six county statelet as we know it. What the census is going to reveal is that the six county's population is now moving towards a 50-50 population balance in terms of the crude sectarian headcount. Since the racist and supremacist Stormont regime depended for its legitimacy and hegemony upon a continuing Protestant/Unionist majority, it's days are now clearly numbered. That type of regime can no longer be re-imposed right across the six counties. That's the good news.

However, it is no exaggeration to say that we are now facing a very dangerous end game situation. The Belfast Agreement was supposed to bring peace, security and equality before the law, together with the prospect of peaceful co-existence between unionist and nationalist communities. Nevertheless, this is proving too much for unionism and some sections of the British state apparatus, who are determined to topple the institutions set up under the agreement by a sustained campaign of fermenting crisis after crisis. On the ground, in the eastern and northern part of the six counties, loyalist street gangs and militias are waging war on nationalists, with a ferocity that has not been seen since the 1970's. This violence is a struggle for the control of land, space and territory. We may well be seeing the start of unionist/loyalist attempts to carve out a secessionist rump statelet, and bring about the forced expulsion of Catholics in unionist controlled districts. A recent lead article in the Belfast daily *Irish News*, claimed that the UDA in Larne Co. Antrim (pop' 20,000) were plotting a renewed terror campaign aimed at expelling the 5,500 catholic population. There are reports from around the six counties that both the UDA and UVF are preparing a new pipe-bombing onslaught against

vulnerable nationalist civilian targets. Up to now, nationalists and their political representatives have behaved with incredible restraint and maturity in the face of the most blatant provocation. It is vitally important that they continue to do so. There is a recognition all round, that the loyalists are trying to goad republicans back to armed conflict. It is important that this tactic does not succeed. However, the bottom line has got to be that vulnerable communities must be defended by whatever means are thought appropriate to the local situation.

For republicans and nationalists in the twenty six counties, the challenge is to ensure that the Irish government and state institutions are kept under pressure to pursue Irish, rather than British or Unionist agendas, as was unfortunately the case in the past.

The past four years have been difficult for the Irish National Congress. In 1998, our structures effectively folded and our very existence was in doubt. Since then, our activist base has existed as a small grouping, meeting regularly and carrying out activities. The one thing that has sustained us throughout is the support given by you, our members and sympathizers. Without it we could not continue. The INC Executive is committed to rebuilding the organization as an independent non-party nationalist / republican lobby campaign. Once again, we thank you for your support over the last twelve years, and we look forward to your continued support.

WRITE FOR INC NEWS

With a view to stimulating debate, the INC News invites its readership to submit articles concerning the future of Irish republicanism. Articles should be no longer than 1,500 words and posted / emailed to the address printed below.

Send your letters / articles to:

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

NB: Letters should be typed or clearly written – that means **BLOCK CAPITALS**. The INC accepts letters and articles in both English and Irish.

Your Letters

A Chara,

The AGM of the INC was held in the Teachers Club on Saturday 10 November. For me, not having been to an AGM for many years, it was a little like going back in time -but, as several speakers pointed out, so much has changed since then. Then censorship was rife, and the INC was one of the only nationalist voices heard on the media.

Now, the INC has to find its voice again -for, although censorship in the direct form that it took, is ended, there is still resistance in the media to messages it does not want to hear. One speaker instanced the discourtesy with which Catriona Ruane was treated by a well-known talk show host when raising the plight of the Colombia 3. In fact, as always, there was some discussion and concern about media agendas. In that, not much seems to have changed since the early days. However, what was particularly highlighted at the AGM was the need for more involvement by INC supporters in the activities of this independent organisation - much-needed at this time when Republicans in particular do not always speak to each other and suspicion abounds. Part of the excellent 5-year plan drawn up by Paul McGuill tries to address this disunity. If there can be an organisation which bridges the gaps, and particularly one which is free to speak for political status for all political prisoners, the INC is it. History is a strange beast, and no one can say when a strong independent voice like the INC will not be sought out again. But there must be that voice, regardless of whether it appears to be needed or not. Its continuance depends upon its supporters and particularly those who fall into the younger age bracket. I believe that there are a large number of nationalist and republican people out there for whom the established parties, whether they are members of these parties or not, do not fully represent their principles and aspirations. This should be the INC's voice -to represent fully those ideals, and to do that regardless of what any other party or organisation does. Lunch-time networking threw up many questions -about the future of Ireland, allegiances to flags, emblems, anthems, federal potential solutions, etc, etc. - Interesting questions which it would be of value debating. Praise is due to the small group of people on the National Executive who have kept the INC going in the leanest of times with the minimum of funding. The attendance at this AGM must signal that the interest is there, it is also to the credit of those who produced recent editions of the newsletter who have helped to stimulate this interest. There are so many issues, many of them human rights issues, which the INC has raised over the years. It has taken a principled stance on the political events of our time. The highlighting by key speakers of the Columbia 3 and Turkish Hunger Strike issues at the AGM is an illustration of the value of the INC. It deserves our support, be it in a small way at local level, turning up for events the National Executive organises, writing letters to newspapers on issues, etc etc.

Is Mise,

Rita Ní Ragháil
Co. Wicklow.

The INC – A View From The North

I suppose I knew that moving away from the town I loved as well, as Phil Coulter did, would involve a degree of trauma. When I left Derry in the seventies to study in our national capital I expected to miss the mammy's apron strings and to have some initial adjustment problems in my new environment. But nothing could have prepared me for the total sense of alienation I felt during my first months in Dublin.

Coming from a war zone, in what was then a part of the national territory, I expected to find some shared understanding of the conflict affecting the daily lives of my community at home. Coming from a society in turmoil, where a high level of politicisation was the norm even among schoolchildren, I suppose I naively expected a student-type revolutionary fervour, a desire to overthrow injustice and right the wrongs of centuries among my fellows. Failing that, maybe even a polite passing interest in the issues, which at the time, don't forget, had cost the lives of some of my acquaintances, and the freedom of many others. But there was none. There seemed to be no common thread of understanding of the daily realities of life in the six counties in those terrible times. Instead, there was disengagement, a carefully fostered apathy and indeed ignorance, which was as unassailable as it was incomprehensible.

I was not, of course at the forefront of struggle. But my personal experiences of tear gas and riots, of the anti-internment marches being batoned off Magilligan Strand, of watching my father weeping with frustration and anger on Bloody Sunday, of visiting school friends in Long Kesh, all these made me certain that to use the word "terrorist", without attempting to understand why, was a lie.

To some of my fellow students I was an interesting oddity, a bit touchy on the National Question, but harmless enough. To others, however, I was an interloper, tainted by association with the men of violence, rocking the boat of the Republic with the unmannerly insistence that it was our birthright too.

During the hunger strikes I went to marches along with other northerners, or with friends from the Palestinian community. They knew the story all right!

By and large, the decent and generous people I encountered in my time living, working and socializing in the twenty-six counties regarded the North as one would the dark side of the moon, remote, incomprehensible, dangerous and without hope. There was a veiled scepticism of accounts of discrimination, gerrymandering, state terror, collusion and repression. A wee hint or two that second class citizenship was a small price to pay for good roads and the glories of Empire. If we had only appreciated how well off we were, and hadn't had the temerity to ask for civil rights, none of this need have happened. The calumny, perpetuated by the "Indo" and RTE that we, the people off



The McCloskey clan and INC friends at the 30th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday in Derry this year.

whose backs the freedom of the Southern State was achieved were responsible for the continuing conflict, was broadly accepted. The struggle for self-determination was reduced to a mere tribal squabble, the acting out of some medieval religious wrangle long since resolved by the rest of the developed world. And of course, through all of this, Britain, our long-suffering neighbour looked on in exasperated incomprehension.

The citizens of the Free State regarded the road to the Republic as ending at their stop. Ireland ended at the Border, and we in the North would do better to get used to the fact.

Of course I was aware of people of great courage who challenged this analysis, often at great personal cost. But in those dark days of censorship and disinformation, their voices seemed faint indeed.

I was aware of the work of the INC almost from its inception, and through the campaign for the defence of Articles Two and Three, first became a member. I will never forget the first AGM I attended, when for the first time, I met people from all walks of life, from all political backgrounds, and from all parts of Ireland, who continued to regard the partition of our country as an affront to be challenged.

Their enthusiasm and commitment is at times difficult to understand. I live under British occupation, as do my children. For me, the struggle for national independence is fundamental to the achievement of a just and peaceful future for us all. Yet within the INC I met people who work tirelessly and courageously, without seeking political or personal advancement, and without any expectation of direct benefit in their own lives. Answers on a postcard please?

This organisation has in the past, and more importantly, continues to provide a framework wherein like-minded people can meet, share ideas, pool expertise, and campaign on issues of mutual concern. There is no line to toe, no whip to take, no baggage to carry.

There is no doubt in my mind that much of the INC's early work contributed to the awakening of informed debate around the national question which took place in the early nineties. Further, I believe that it played an important

role in the battle against censorship and in creating a climate in which the present peace process could develop. And that process, with all its bitter pills and broken promises is where we are now.

The success of Sinn Féin in the recent elections would have been unthinkable a decade ago. It is, hopefully, a barometer of the renewed awareness among ordinary people of the centrality of the national question to the peace and prosperity of this country.

And what now for the INC? The last newsletter spoke of rebuilding the organisation. Has it a continuing role in the "new era"? Can it contribute to the struggle for freedom, justice and peace in Ireland today?

It is my opinion that the answer to these questions is a resounding yes. It seems that now, perhaps more than ever, there is a need for an all Ireland, independent, non party-aligned forum for all republicans. We should foster and maintain communication and discussion among ourselves. We should forge partnerships with other groups who share our aims. We should continue to educate ourselves and others about the issues which affect sovereignty and freedom. We should continue to challenge human rights abuses, wherever they occur. We should oppose neo-colonialism and revisionism in all their many guises. We must keep the vision of Tone, and the principles set out in the proclamation of 1916 before us. There is much to be done. The work of winning the peace is everyone's responsibility. It's too important to be left to the politicians. We all have our part to play. Beir bua.

STUFF ABOUT LEOPARDS AND SPOTS!

At dawn on Easter Saturday morning, seven land rovers drove into one of the steep little streets leading from the Lone Moor down into Derry's Bogside. They stopped outside the house where the Kearney family live. Declan, who incidentally used to serve on the INC's national executive, was in bed with his wife. Their two children aged six and two slept in the next room. Because the old RUC is no more, and we now have a new, accountable and bad apple-free police service, nine officers, dressed in full riot gear smashed down the door with sledgehammers, dragged the couple from their beds, refused to allow them to comfort their hysterical children, ransacked the house, confiscated personal papers and computer files, and hauled Declan off to Lisburn, where they asked him a few questions of a very general nature, before releasing him several days later without charge. This was a piece of pure street theatre, which received a very high media profile. The press briefings bore no relationship whatever to the facts. The general effect was to blacken the work of the prisoner network, without producing one shred of evidence. The episode was designed to deflect attention from the undoubted special branch involvement in the recent "break-in" at the most secure part of the most secure cop-shop in Western Europe, Castlereagh. Meantime, the Kearney's address, and pictures of their house front, as well as personal details have been splashed throughout newspapers and television for the convenience of any Loyalist group who care to avail of the information. Thank God things have changed!

Cúnamh is an organisation, which was established as a community-based facility to help those traumatised by the years of conflict in our society. It is hoped that by helping heal the wounds of the past that people might be better able to move on to share what we hope will be a brighter future.

Cúnamh works with many diverse client groups, and in recent times, the focus of the work has been with the Bloody Sunday relatives. These people, who have suffered so much at the hands of the state, and whose courage has been an example to us all, have found emotional support and practical help from Cúnamh's trained staff. They regard the organisation as providing a haven from the emotional turmoil, which was their daily lot at the Saville Inquiry. It was a place of safety, of support, a place where they could bring their hopes and fears in complete confidence.

That is, before our new, accountable, squeaky clean and bad apple-free police service trashed the office, and stole papers and computer discs containing information of the most personal and confidential nature. As I write, these have not been returned.

This violation of these peoples right to privacy, this total undermining of an organisation dedicated to supporting them through this most traumatic legal battle is an outrage. Can the leopard change its spots? Or can you fool some of the people without even trying.

— Anne McCloskey

(Ann McCloskey is a GP, living and working in Derry. She has been a member of the INC since 1992 and joined the National Executive last year.)

WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON?

"Now, if you were operating with us, and you knew the score then, that when we asked you for something, you knew what was coming next, you're not fuckin' stupid.... Brian had been involved a brave while himself.... He knew what the score was... I mean if we asked him details on a Republican, he knew it wasn't to send him fuckin' postcards ... like I mean, they're not passing us documentation to sit in the house and read it. They're passing us documentation because they know what's going to result afterwards. Know what I mean?"

— Pat Finucane's murderer Ken Barrett speaking about information he received from British agent Brian Nelson.

Barrett had been filmed secretly by the BBC for a Panorama special investigating allegations of collusion between loyalist paramilitaries, the RUC and the British Army. Over the past 30 years, the British government has banned over 130 programmes, such as *Death on the Rock*, which showed the British state as engaging in illegal and terrorist type activities. It now seems to be changing its tack and is attempting to show that any collusion that took place was between "rouge elements" and loyalist paramilitaries. History shows us otherwise; from the "reprisals" of the Black and Tans to Derry's Bloody Sunday and the Widgery whitewash, the British state has always controlled the actions of its minions.

Open Letter to the Queen of England

May 13 2002

Dear Elizabeth,

I am writing to you as a mother to a mother. Anniversaries are important to all of us. You are here in Belfast today as part of your own anniversary celebrations. This coming September there are two anniversaries which are very painful for me and my family.

On September 4 1992, my son Peter left our home to visit his sister who lived nearby. It was a sunny carefree morning. Peter was 18 years of age. All children are unique but as the only boy in a family of four he occupied a special place in my heart. He never came back. Within minutes he lay shot and dying at the back gate of his sister's house. I had lost a son. Two young children had lost their father.

Two soldiers of the Scots Guards Regiment, Mark Wright and James Fisher, were tried and convicted of his murder. The judge found that they were aware that Peter posed no danger to them and had no justification under law for their actions. The court found that the two soldiers had concocted a story and tried to blame the victim. They were sentenced to life imprisonment.

On September 2 1998 the two soldiers were granted early release from prison.

They rejoined their regiment and were transferred to the Irish Guards. According to their commanding officers they might well be promoted. Two Army Boards, each including one of your senior cabinet ministers, ruled that they could remain in your Armed Forces despite their murder convictions. They have remained members of your Armed Forces since the day and hour of the murder.

Thousands of soldiers have been dismissed for taking drugs, getting involved in brawls, drunk driving and other crimes. According to your Government and the Ministry of Defence the murder of my son was a less serious offence than any of the above. It was 'exceptional'. Because he was Irish. The regulations, which allowed this to happen, are called the 'Queens Regulations'. Because of their convictions Wright and Fisher are considered unfit to drive a taxi, adopt a child or own a gun. Yet they are deemed fit to serve in the British Army.

You are Colonel-in-Chief of the Scots Guards and the Irish Guards regiments. They form part of the Household Division. Their role is to protect your palaces, your castles and, most importantly, your family. As you celebrate your anniversary and we await ours I will leave you with two questions...mother to mother.

Is it a source of pride to be Colonel-in-Chief of a regiment which harbours the convicted murderers of my son? Is it a source of pride to be head of state of the only democratic country in the world that rearms convicted murderers and welcomes them into the ranks of its armed forces?

The next time you leave Buckingham Palace look closely at the faces of those who are guarding your family.

Jean Mc Bride

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION

An International Day of Action is planned for Wednesday, 4th September 2002, the tenth anniversary of the murder of Peter McBride. In Dublin, the INC will support any event being organised in support of the McBride family. This event will be discussed at our quarterly meeting on August 17th. We would urge all our members and supporters to attend any event being organised. Further information from: The Pat Finucane Centre, 1 West End Park, Derry, BT48 9JF. Telephone: 048 71 268 846 Fax: 048 71 266 453 Email: pfc@www.serve.com



www.serve.com/pfc

Opposite: Jean McBride holds a picture of her teenage son, Peter, who was murdered by British soldiers in Belfast city's New Lodge area in 1992.



These centre pages have been set aside for a debate about what is the best way forward in the North of Ireland. We hope that such debates will become a regular feature of INC News.

The Path To Irish Nationality

In political terms the Irish national question arises from the incapacity of the Irish people to form a polity with sufficient coherence to thrive in prosperity and harmony, either separate from or as part of a merged British Isles. In other words, the antagonisms within Ireland between catholic and protestant have been too great to enable a joint Irish nationality to develop.

This has been so since the privatisation of the land by the Plantation of Ulster and by the Cromwellian and Williamite land settlements. The legitimacy of protestant ascendancy – land and law monopoly – was consequent upon and contingent upon the legitimacy of catholic dispossession and proletarianism. The attempted catholic reversal of this circumstance and the attempted protestant prevention of such a reversal have been the dynamic of Irish history for centuries. The resultant antagonisms have rendered impossible the attainment of a united Irish nationality that would have sufficient coherence to fulfil the near century-and-a-quarter old preference of the British state for an agreed self-governance for all Ireland.

The politico-economic profiles of the catholic and protestant clan-type fractions of Irish society have been mutually formed by this antagonism so that the relationship of catholic and protestant is contrariwise and complementary (i.e. fractions that when combined precisely equal one.)

For a joint Irish nationality to develop in Ulster, or in Ireland overall, this antagonism must be extirpated root and branch. For this to happen the collective protestant interest has to feel entirely at ease with a majority catholic situation. But this cannot be while the perception persists all-pervasively among catholics that the protestants have consistently unfairly excluded them from land, law and livelihood – by plantation, penal laws, pogrom, Stormont discrimination etc. for unworthy motives like greed, malice and ascendancy.

Of course, at the heart of protestant political culture is not a hankering for ascendancy; on the contrary rather, there is a collective insecurity of tenure – a 'siege mentality'. A vicious circle of protestant insecurity, catholic exclusion, protestant ascendancy, catholic resentment, renewed protestant

insecurity – has formed a perpetual motion machine of instability and self-ungovernability.

The antidote to exclusion / ascendancy – any exclusion and any ascendancy – is the extirpation of the Williamite / Plantation legacy by a land nationalisation program with equal benefit to all together with a cross community power sharing arrangement in law making and enforcement. The antidote to protestant insecurity is protestant self-determination. This would mean the overriding of the present constitutional position of Northern Ireland by a locally enacted Stormont law requiring a 66% to 75% majority in any plebiscite involving any projected merged Ireland.

Such a provision would satisfy the requirements of equity on several grounds. Firstly, it would be the application of the principle of power sharing – cross community consent – to the basic constitutional question. Secondly, the constitutional position of Northern Ireland has to be considered in the overall Irish context as part of the 1920 partition arrangement, because the protestants, in highly adversarial circumstances, if the provision suggested here were *not* implemented, could end up with no share of control anywhere in Ireland. Thirdly, for such a provision to be enacted in the first place a corresponding 66% to 75% majority would likewise be required.

Would such a scheme conflict with the often-strident 'nationalism' of northern Catholics? Not a bit. Catholic 'nationalism', especially in the north, is a mere legitimising veneer, a flag of convenience, for a catholic Jacobinism whose entire strategy in recent decades, far from trying to get an imperialistic Britain *out*, has been to try and get a reluctant, flustered and open-handed Britain and its army *in*, and to keep them in as coerced or cajoled auxiliaries of the catholic cause in its ambition of overruling local Protestant power.

In summary therefore, the only path to Irish nationality passes under the arch of protestant self-determination.

– Christopher M. Hussey

(Christopher M. Hussey is a writer / publisher and historian living in Dublin. His argument on the Irish question is elaborated in his book *For Protestant Self-Determination: the key to the Ulster question*)

"The basic fear of the Protestants in Northern Ireland is that they will be out bred by the Roman Catholics. It is as simple as that."

- Captain Terence O'Neill, Belfast Telegraph 5th May 1969.

I do not question Mr. Hussey's sincerity in seeking a lasting solution to the Irish Question, nor do I disagree with his diagnosis of the root cause of the problem being Protestant feelings of insecurity, however, I do disagree with his suggested solution, that being a 75% majority threshold in any plebiscite on unity in the north along with simultaneous land nationalisation and power sharing in the mean time.

The policy of land nationalisation is original and radical, drawing from the tradition of James Fintan Lawlor and Michael Davitt. However, I believe it should stand or fall on its own merits and not be traded off for other fundamental rights. The policy of a weighted majority I believe is fundamentally flawed, as it is the principle of being out-numbered by nationalists that unionists object to, not the proportion. It is inconceivable that any transition to unity would be any more peaceful when Unionists are a 25% minority rather than a 49% one.

I believe he vastly over-estimates the importance of undoing the Cromwellian land confiscation's for 21st century nationalists. The abolition of the property qualification for the franchise in 1918 played a more important role than the 19th century land acts in settling the land question. Nationalists seek equality of rights not equality of property.

I also think a more primordial fear than dispossession lies at the heart of the unionist siege mentality, a fear that dares not speak its name; that nationalists could not possibly forgive and forget and what unionists did onto others shall be done onto them. This fear is common among colonial populations around the world and would only be reinforced by the 75% majority threshold. What should be pointed out is that this fear of revenge is irrational and without foundation. If a child refuses to go to his bedroom because he fears 'the monsters that live under the stairs' you do not reassure him by moving into a bungalow. However, there is a responsibility upon nationalists to ensure that these fears are irrational and without foundation therefore it is our duty to forgive, forget and embrace our Northern Protestant brothers as equals. The enemy of Republicans is not an empire of evil, but the evil of

empire. We must constantly be on our guard not only against tyrants beyond our shores but also for the potential tyrant within our own hearts.

The key to unlocking the unionist siege mentality is ultimately in their own hands, in the mass self-realisation that unity is not a zero sum game, that their true long term self interest is not the same as the indefinite perpetuation of their short term self interest. Each community must realise that the other community has a right to reside on this island forever and if we are to do so in peace and genuine security we must do so in equality. To accept hitherto inferior nationalist "Gibeonites" as equals would be the first step to accepting nationalist votes as of equal value to unionist ones, which may result in unification. A united Ireland will not be an economic, moral or cultural paradise but it will lift unionisms siege mentality, absolve their guilt complex and give them something they have never had before, a new Irish national identity.

- 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)

Christopher M. Hussey's book, *For Protestant Self-Determination: the key to the Ulster question*, is available from the author at:

**24 Shandon Drive,
Phibsborough,
Dublin 7.**

(price €7 including post +packaging)

"A treatise on the resolution of Ulster's historic antagonisms, on the attaining of Irish nationality, on the centrality of the land question in Ireland's affairs, and on the nature and interrelationship of Irish 'nationalism' and Irish 'unionism'."

e-mail: cmhussey@hotmail.com

MENDACIOUS OBFUSCATION

For those of us who embarrassed our government by voting no to the Treaty of Nice last year, fear not, there will soon be a chance for redemption. Our lovely government is giving us a second chance to get it right. So before anyone starts whinging, I had better explain the title.

Mendacious: lying; inclined to be untruthful.

Obfuscate: to darken; to obscure.

These words, defined above and when combined to form the title phrase, aptly describe the approach the government and the Yes Campaign has taken to the forthcoming referendum on the Treaty of Nice. A good example of this was when An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, addressing the Irish Forum on Europe, said: "All other member states have by now either ratified the Treaty of Nice or are very close to ratification and if Ireland fails, chairman, to ratify the treaty before the end of this year the European Union will face an unprecedented and unpredictable crisis." This is untrue. Some countries may yet refuse to ratify. We have the Danish precedent with their rejection of the Maastricht Treaty (they got a protocol). So, what unpredictable crisis would occur if the people say "NO" again? The European constitution could not be amended to facilitate the Treaty of Nice with all its sinister implications for European democracy and a new treaty would have to be negotiated. Hardly a crisis!

The government has identified neutrality as the main concern of the electorate when rejecting Nice last time round and has come up with the sham and legally non-binding Seville Declarations on Irish neutrality and European defence to allay this perceived concern. Nice has nothing to do with neutrality and little to do with defence; it is about the militarisation of the EU and the creation of a European army, which could be deployed thousands of miles from Europe's borders. To avoid a Supreme Court challenge to the constitutionality of the same question being put twice we are now being asked to give one answer to two questions. The government has inserted an addendum to the original question, which would keep Ireland out of a common defence arrangement in the event of a yes vote. The spin they are seeking to put on this is that by voting yes to Nice you are voting yes to neutrality. This is another example of mendacious obfuscation.

Believing it has neutralized the neutrality issue; the government is now focusing on European enlargement. But those who say the Treaty of Nice is about EU enlargement to include the 12 Central, Eastern and Southern European applicant states, need to tell us what is in the 72 pages out of 80 that do not refer to them. The material in the Treaty dealing with enlargement is primarily Declaration 20 and Protocol A at the end. The declaration sets out the "common position" of the existing member states on their desired allocation of weighted votes and Euro-parliament seats in an enlarged EU of 27 members. This is merely a statement of political position. It is not legally binding on the applicant states. The ratio of votes and seats to populations, which

Declaration 20 proposes for the applicants, contains a number of anomalies and inequalities between the newcomers and the existing members. They will almost certainly have to be re-negotiated for some of the applicants in their accession treaties - e.g. Hungary and the Czech Republic - if these are to be acceptable to their parliaments and peoples.

No date has yet been set for admitting any applicant state. As former Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, has said: "EU enlargement is always five years into the future!" It is not true to suggest that the Treaty of Nice is legally necessary to permit the accession of the 12 Central, Eastern and Southern European applicants. However it is true to say that the Treaty of Nice seeks to relegate these countries to the third division of the EU when they do join. Ireland would be relegated to the second division, leaving an elite of eight or so countries to make all the important decisions. So much for democracy and equality between nations. British Prime Minister, Tony Blair would like to take things even further and declared recently in the House of Commons that he would like to see Britain, Germany and France become the effective rulers of Europe, creating a new *imperium* and leaving the rest of us with just the right to be ignored.

I am somewhat confused by our governments stated belief that Nice is a good deal for Ireland, the EU and the applicant states. Things become even more confusing when you consider what members of the opposition, who are now pushing for a yes vote, had to say when the Treaty of Nice was first debated in the Dáil on December 13th 2000:

Labour leader Ruairi Quinn: "(Nice) was a disaster. It is an appalling setback. As a result, not only will Ireland's interests be damaged, but those of every small state because the concession made by the Taoiseach and others, which he could have blocked, means that he has irreparably damaged the role and function of the commission."

John Bruton, then leader of Fine Gael: "This is one of the weakest negotiating outcomes achieved by an Irish government in the European forum since Ireland joined the Union. At a time when the European Union is being enlarged to take in a lot of small countries, what sense does it make to increase the voting strength of the big countries Very little. That is a very bad day for Europe."

Jim O'Keefe, then Fine Gael foreign affairs spokesman "I have no doubt that the outcome at Nice was achieved at a very considerable cost to this country. Perhaps the real loss is the dilution of our voting strength at Council of Ministers level."

So what has changed about the Treaty of Nice since then? Absolutely nothing, and the fact that our government is willing to put that very same treaty before the people again, barely a year after it was rejected, makes me think that we don't so much have European partners as we do European masters. Vote NO!

Cathal Óg McCarthy

(Cathal Óg McCarthy is a sign painter / decorator and has been an INC activist for the past 8 years. He is currently Cathaoirleach of the INC)

LOYALIST DECOMMISSIONING

The IRA's act of decommissioning last October seems to have defused eight years of media and political hysteria over decommissioning. It also has highlighted unionist hypocrisy over the issue as despite dozens of loyalist murders in this period they rarely, if ever, call for loyalist decommissioning.

Magill magazine of June 1998 estimated that loyalists possessed a minimum arsenal of 80 sub machine guns (some home made) 74 assault rifles, 33 shotguns, 674 assorted handguns and 185 grenades. Using this figure and subtracting weapons found in loyalist areas since then I calculate loyalists posses a minimum arsenal of 18 shotguns, 614 handguns, 70 assault rifles and 69 sub machine guns.

Most early loyalist weaponry were stolen from gun clubs and UDR bases. Billy Hanna, the UVF organiser of the 1974 Dublin bombings, stole 83 SLRs and 21 sterling sub machine-guns from a UDR base in North Armagh in October 1972, 69 weapons were later recovered¹. Robert Nelson stole 180 guns from 5 UDR's base in Derry in 1975 but all were later recovered. In 1987 Coleraine UDR base lost 140 rifles, 2 light machine guns and 30 pistols, again all were later recovered. While most of 10 UDR's armoury in Belfast² was also stolen some were later recovered. Raids such as these were greatly helped by the fact that many loyalist paramilitaries were also members of the UDR. In 1972 the UVF bought £600 worth of rifles, submachine-guns and ammunition from Mervyn Hall of the Parachute regiment³. It is also believed that Loyalists stole weapons from the forensic science laboratory and were loaned and given guns by members of the RUC in Mountpottinger RUC station⁴.

Loyalists were also armed by their sympathisers in Ontario. Between 1979 and 1986 right-wing extremist William Taylor and British born former Canadian army reserve officer Howard Wright sent about 100 colt commando rifles, 100 Ingram and MAC 10 sub machine-guns and 100 magnum handguns to John Bingham of the UVF. Other Toronto businessmen had also shipped M1 carbines and sten-guns to loyalists in the early 1970's⁵.

Loyalist paramilitaries also received a small consignment of Uzi sub machine guns from Israeli

intelligence in 1983⁶. But perhaps the most infamous loyalist arms smuggling operation was the shipment of 206 VZ58 Czech assault rifles, 94 browning 9mm pistols 536 grenades and 4 RPG7 rocket launchers from South Africa in 1987⁷. South African intelligence, BOSS, obtained the weapons from Israeli intelligence, Mossad, who had captured them from the PLO. British agent and loyalist paramilitary Brian Nelson procured the weapons from the South Africans in return for the proceeds from a Portadown bank robbery and Shorts blowpipe and starstreak surface to air missile technology⁸.

Not all loyalist arms buying missions were successful. In April 1972 UDA leaders, John White and Charles Harding Smith, RUC officer, Robert Lusty and former B Special, John Campbell were charged with trying to smuggle £100,000 of weapons from England⁹. In 1989 three Ulster Resistance members were arrested in Paris while trying to buy arms from South Africa. In 1993 a large shipment of Polish arms allegedly for loyalists was discovered in Teesport, England but this was more likely an MI5 stunt¹⁰.

Loyalists most regular source of weapons are from sympathisers in Lancashire and Strathclyde. It is estimated that in the early years of the conflict loyalists smuggled between 30-40 weapons a year¹¹. On 26 July 1995 PUP spokesman Lindsay Robb was arrested while trying to buy pistols and sub-machine guns in Glasgow. While in April of that year a Mr. Lindhop was arrested in Durham for his part in smuggling a wide variety of 40 weapons to Hollywood in Co. Down. Loyalists also get weapons from neo-nazis, and organised criminals around Europe. On the 29th November last year UVF man Stephen Harbison was arrested in Spain with a pistol, two sub-machine guns and drugs.

The continued existence of this loyalist arsenal endangers the peace process and raises questions about their commitment to it. If peace is ever to be assured decommissioning must be multilateral including the weapons of the British army, RIR, Police, loyalist and republican paramilitaries as well as the 138,727 legally held firearms in the North, most of which are in unionist hands.

— Paul McGuill

6 Martin Dillon, *Stone Cold*, page 69-70

7 Magill, June 1998.

8 Peter Taylor, *Loyalists*, pages 190-192, Bruce, *The Red Hand*, pages 169-171 and Cusack & Mc Donald, *UVF* pages 220-3

9 Boulton, *The UVF 1966-73*, pages 159-160.

10 Cusack & Mc Donald, *UVF*, pages 224 & 226-8.

11 Steve Bruce, *The Red Hand*, page 159.

1 Jim Cusack & Henry Mc Donald, *UVF*, pages 104-5.

2 Bruce, *The Red Hand*, Pages 217-18.

3 Boulton David, *The UVF 1966-73*, page 153.

4 Dillon Martin, *The Dirty War*, pages 266-267.

5 Jim Cusack & Henry MC Donald, *UVF*, pages 208-215.

CLEARING THE DECKS?

British intelligence and loyalist paramilitary fatalities

One startling statistic to arise from recent loyalist paramilitary violence is that in the five years since the PIRA's July 1997 cease-fire, no fewer than 30 active or former loyalist paramilitaries and their associates have been killed since that date and all but four have been killed by inter loyalist violence.

Loyalist Fatalities 1997-2002		
Date	Name	Group
07/07/97	Brian Morton	UDA
25/10/97	Glen Greer	Ex-UDA
27/12/97	Billy Wright*	LVF
19/01/98	Jim Guiney*	UDA
10/02/98	Bobby Doogan	UDA
14/03/98	David Keyes	LVF
07/04/98	Trevor Deeney*	Ex-UVF
03/07/98	William Paul	Ex-UVF
17/03/99	Frankie Curry	RHD
01/01/00	Denver Smith	PUP
10/01/00	Richard Jameson	UVF
19/02/00	David Mellwaine	LVF
19/02/00	Andrew Robb	LVF
21/08/00	Bobby Mahood	Ex-UVF
21/08/00	Jackie Counter	UDA
23/08/00	Sam Rocket	UVF
28/10/00	David Greer	UDA
31/10/00	Tommy English	Ex-UDA
31/10/00	Bernie Rice	Ex-UVF
01/11/00	Mark Quail	UVF
17/12/00	James Rocket	UDA
07/01/01	George Legg	Ex-UDA
13/03/01	Adrian Porter	LVF
12/04/01	Graham Marks	UVF
27/05/01	Stephen Manners	Ex-UVF
30/11/01	Charles Folyard*	Ex-UDA
11/11/01	Glen Brannagh	UDA
12/12/01	William Stobie	Ex-UDA
04/01/02	William Cambell	UDA
*Killed by republicans		

This figure may not at first glance appear to be significant when viewed against the tidal wave of violence directed against northern Catholics in the same period, but when we consider that between 1966-1999 only 144 loyalist paramilitaries were killed we begin to realise that nearly 20% of all loyalist paramilitary fatalities occurred since the last ceasefire.

While all of these killings may be explained away as ideological feuds between the UDA, UVF and LVF, or personal vendettas between individuals, it is also possible that British Intelligence used this anarchic opportunity within Loyalism to liquidate some of its former assets before they became embarrassing liabilities. One way to prevent skeletons in the cupboard from being discovered is to ensure that dead men tell no tales.

William Stobie, an RUC special branch informer since 1987, had embarrassed his former handlers by claiming that they allowed Pat Finucane to be killed and had called for a public enquiry into the case. Frankie Curry had given a newspaper interview about murders in which he was involved prior to his killing.

There have also been other mysterious deaths of prominent loyalists in this period which have been explained away as accidents. Chief among them is the death of Robin (the Jackal) Jackson's right hand man RJ 'Bob' Kerr who died in a mysterious gas explosion at his mobile home outside Newry on 8 November 1997. Intriguingly Pat Farrell, a big-time Newry drug dealer and friend of Kerr's, had been shot dead by his girlfriend in Drogheda on the 12th September 1997 the same day a crude LVF bomb was discovered in the town. Another curious case is Stephen Mc Cullagh a loyalist who fell to his death while jogging on Cavehill mountain in Belfast on 6th February 2002. The previous day he had been arrested for drink driving, while in custody he claimed to have information on the UDA killing of postman Danny McColgan yet, despite this he was released without being questioned.

Serious questions also need to be asked about the role of the Irish National Liberation Army in the December 1997 shooting dead of the notorious loyalist mass murderer Billy Wright by INLA inmates inside the high security Long Kesh prison. Wright's father, who is demanding an independent public inquiry into his sons killing, is alleging British state collusion. There is a widely held view, which maintains that the INLA has been heavily infiltrated by British intelligence since the early 1980's, and that its operatives have been used unwittingly as instruments of the British state in the execution of loyalist figures that the British wish to remove from the scene. Similar allegations were made in 1982, concerning the INLA killing of high profile loyalist, John McKeague.

Past cases of collusion such as Albert Baker and Brian Nelson have demonstrated how loyalist paramilitaries have been used by British intelligence as deniable and dispensable cannon fodder throughout the conflict. In order to prevent embarrassing kill and tell stories emerging, MI5 seems to be weeding out some of its former plants, perhaps to be replaced by a new generation.

A Picture Speaks...

ETHNIC CLEANSING, BRITISH STYLE

Loyalists attack the Short Strand while the British army stands idly by. The Short Strand is a nationalist enclave of 3,000 people, surrounded by 60,000 loyalists in East Belfast. This area has been under siege for over two months and residents are cut off from essential services such as the post office and banks. A concerted effort is being made to drive Catholics out of this area, loyalists regularly parade with banners demanding "Taigs Out". A compliant media are happy to report British propaganda as fact and describe this siege as "clashes between rival factions". Where similar loyalist enclaves exist in nationalist areas, like West Belfast, such incidents do not occur.

— Picture courtesy of the *Andersontown News*.



The PSNI / RUC help loyalists to erect a controversial arch in the mixed area of Glengormley. Erection of the arch at this time was illegal as the judicial review was still in progress and the court had reserved its judgement in this case. Surely, an impartial police force would not have colluded with such a partisan and provocative action, heightening community tensions. As Shakespeare said "A rose by any other name..."

— Picture courtesy of the *Andersontown News*.

Parting Shots? Lurgan, Collusion and the RUC

As the curtain falls on the old RUC serious concerns remain concerning specific allegations of collusion in loyalist paramilitary murders particularly in the Lurgan area.

These concerns have re-emerged following the recent murder of investigative journalist Martin O'Hagan by the LVF/RHD in Lurgan on the 29 September 2001.

It was O'Hagan who first introduced his loyalist contact, Jim Sands, to Sean Mc Philemy and Sands' information formed the basis of the exposé on collusion 'The Committee'. One of this book's most startling allegations was that the head of the Lurgan RUC station, Inspector Alan Clegg, was a member of the 'Inner Force' and had colluded in the murder of republican Sam Marshall outside Lurgan RUC station as he went to sign his bail conditions on the 7 March 1990.

In subsequent libel actions Mc Philemy was represented by Lurgan solicitor Rosemary Nelson who also represented the Marshall family in their demand for an inquest into Sam's death. Following repeated threats to her life by members of the RUC she was murdered by an uncharacteristically sophisticated LVF/RHD car bomb, on 15 March 1999 amid allegations of RUC collusion.

Given the historical precedent of loyalist murders carried out by RUC Inspector John Nixon in Belfast in 1922, nationalist concerns seem well founded. If such another scandal is to be exposed and future crimes prevented the north's Police Ombudsman, Nuala O'Loan should investigate evidence of collusion in loyalist murders in the Lurgan area and the existing examination of the Rosemary Nelson murder by Colin Port should investigate possible links with the O'Hagan and Marshall killings as well as the Sands' allegation that the RUC in Lurgan is 90% 'inner force' it is also time for Inspector Alan Clegg to be suspended or moved to other duties while allegations concerning him are investigated.

INC Summer Raffle

The INC has traditionally held two raffles annually; Easter and Christmas. The proceeds from these raffles go towards producing *INC News*. We could not finance the newsletter without them. This year we are holding a summer raffle and the first prize has been donated by a Dublin INC member. The prizes for this raffle are:

1. An autumn weekend break for two people with either Iarnród Éireann or Great Southern Hotels, to the value of €350.
2. A summer food hamper.
3. A bottle of spirits.

With this newsletter you will receive a booklet of (6) raffle tickets. One booklet is €5. If you would like to participate in this draw, please send your completed stubs and money to: I.N.C. P.O. box 2814, Dublin 7. The draw will take place at the Teachers Club in Dublin on Saturday, August 17th.

The winners of this raffle will immediately be notified either by telephone or letter.

Winners of the first prize will receive two brochures, and will be invited to choose a weekend break from either brochure. Typically, the Great Southern break offers two nights bed and breakfast, and one dinner. The Iarnród Éireann break usually involves return rail travel, and two nights B+B. The prize is for two people sharing a double room. For the winners of the second or third prizes, their prize will be delivered to anywhere in Ireland.

Christmas Raffle Winners 2001

The following were the raffle winners:

1st Prize (Hamper): Ticket number 7417 – Paul Conroy, Dublin.

2nd Prize (Christmas Cake): Ticket number 4632 – J. Hill, Derry.

3rd Prize (Bottle): Ticket number 4950 – C.B. Mac Cárthaigh, Limerick.

Quarterly Meeting – August 17th

Last November, at the INC AGM it was decided to organise quarterly meetings for any member or supporter of the INC who might wish to attend. The purpose of these meetings is to build up our activist base and directly involve more people in the work of the INC. the first such meeting was held in Dublin on February 26th. As expected, the numbers were not great. Nevertheless, it was good to see the return of some old faces and some new ones too! It was a good meeting though and we are determined to keep holding them every few months. Ultimately, the aim is to build a nationwide network of branches, but we have some way to go yet.

Our next quarterly meeting will take place in the Teachers Club, 36 Parnell Square, Dublin on Saturday August 17th at 2pm. the meeting will probably last for two hours and all are welcome. We will also be holding the draw for the INC summer raffle.

These meetings are not policy-making gatherings. Policy can only be adopted or changed at the AGM. We envisage holding an AGM sometime in October; all INC members will be notified by post.

Finally, we would strongly advise anybody travelling to Dublin for the quarterly meeting to check with us before travelling to confirm that the time and venue have not been altered due to some unforeseen circumstance:



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

Name.....

Address.....

e-mail.....

Irish National Congress
Comhdháil Náisiúnta na hÉireann

QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY

AUGUST 17th 2002

Club na Muinteoíri

36 Parnell Square

Dublin

Time: 2pm