



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

IRA linked to US arms smuggling plot.



Charles Bennett — A Roman Catholic murdered by the IRA

The news, that there were close links between one of those charged with smuggling guns from the USA to the IRA in Ireland and Sinn Fein, came as no surprise to Ulster Protestants. It did, however, come as a welcome item of information to press upon those pundits who line up to badger us for not taking a proverbial 'step of faith' and trusting Sinn Fein when it says that it and the IRA are committed to peace. Four people have been charged at a court in Florida with the attempt to mail guns to Ireland. They are Siobhan Browne, Anthony Smyth, Conor Claxton and Martin Mullan. Mullan was an assessor on Sinn Fein councillor Martin O'Neill's nomination papers in the 1997 Ballymoney Council election. Any doubts that the IRA was behind the arms smuggling were removed by the further disclosure in a newspaper that Conor Claxton has business links with a

senior IRA man.

The IRA in a statement pointedly did not deny involvement in either the shooting of Roman Catholic taxi driver, Charles Bennett, 22, murdered on 30th July in Belfast or the US gun smuggling.

While these revelations of Sinn Fein/IRA duplicity come as no surprise to Ulster people, doubtless it will leave Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, with more than a little egg on his face.

He tried to convince Unionists earlier this summer that his latest peace deal would see the IRA delivering up their guns within weeks of the deal being signed. He spoke of a tremendous break-through, a "seismic shift" in Republican attitudes. This was a fallacy as is now more than evident. His confidence most likely resulted from secret talks with the IRA as was alleged in The Sunday Independent newspaper. However, Blair has again been conned by Republicans. Since Blair had promised in April '98 that Sinn Fein would never be allowed into a Northern Ireland Assembly Executive unless the IRA first began to decommission, this new downgraded form of the same broken promise failed to impress anyone. Blair is not the first British Prime Minister to make and break promises to the Ulster people. It has to be remembered that John Major stated that Sinn Fein would never be allowed even to enter talks until a sufficiently lengthy period had lapsed after IRA disarming. That was gradually watered down until we are now being pressed with Sinn Fein membership of an Executive while the IRA not only remain armed but are continuing to arm and to use their arms in the murder of citizens.

David Trimble did right, for once, to refuse Tony Blair's so-called 'Peace Deal.' It was a scandalously fraudulent document which no individual, never mind the holder of the highest political office in the land, should have attempted to foist on a free people.

The problem with Tony Blair is that he has begun to take seriously the fantastic publicity regarding his charisma and ability that pours from his own office.

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In truth, he is a political spiv, whose promises are as shallow as a spoon and will soon be seen to be such by the British public he has so far deceived. When that happens, he will go the way of all liars.



The cartoon is from the *Times* newspaper of London and it sets forth the shamefulness of the appeal Blair made to Ulster. It is clear that not only the Unionists of Ulster saw the Prime Minister as a deceiver.