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Sinn Fein/IRA continues to dictate terms



Gerry Adams votes at Sinn Fein conference

Sinn Fein/IRA is going to attempt to outflank Unionism by complying with its demand for a pledge of support for the police, but only after secret deals with London have reduced the Police Service of Northern Ireland to little more than an adult version of the "Boy Scouts", presenting little threat to the ongoing criminal activities of Sinn Fein/IRA.

Proof of this may be seen in a speech by Gerry Adams as he sought to steady his party members. He was speaking at a republican rally commemorating the death of two IRA men in 1957, when they were shot as they attacked Brookeborough RUC barracks.

The two men who were shot were Sean South and Fergal O'Hanlon. That Adams should be celebrating the actions of those who were engaged in rebellion and murder is comment enough on the total lack of any change of attitude toward law and order within Sinn Fein/IRA.

Adams has been reported as saying that he saw no contradiction in honouring the attack on an RUC barracks fifty years ago, while at the same time commending Sinn Fein's policing proposals.

He told the crowd outside Brookeborough that it was now the right time to get involved in policing (Impartial Reporter, 4/1/07).

If Sinn Fein/IRA are now prepared to support the police it is clear that it is not because they have changed their views from the days in which they openly engaged in terrorism and murder, but rather because they know the policing arrangements in this land have changed and that in favour of Sinn Fein/IRA!

The regime of law and order that Sinn Fein/IRA will sign up for will be one with a "built-in blind spot" as far as illegal republican activities are concerned.

Here is more of what Adams said at the republican rally. Recounting the story of the 1957 attack on the RUC station, Mr Adams said Republicans had been right to take up arms. "The IRA were entirely right to embark on the Border Campaign in 1956. In 1962 when they called an end to that campaign that was their right and judgement. Just as it was the right and the judgement of the IRA in more recent times to bring an end to its armed campaign.

We have all lived through the days of sectarian and political policing. The violent excesses of the RUC and their surrogates in the unionist death squads have touched every person here.



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progress!

Our approach has to be about ending all of that. Ignoring policing is simply not an option." He said there had been "significant progress" on key policing and justice issues since the Good Friday Agreement and this offered a basis for a new beginning to policing.

"This strategic initiative presents a massive challenge for republicans. But like all republican initiatives, it is risky. The Brookeborough raid was risky. Struggle of any kind is risky." He said that it was the responsibility of all Republicans to engage in the debate.

"Republicans have never lacked courage. The courage to take up arms like Sean and Feargal in their time and countless other men and women in our own time. The courage to confront injustice and discrimination. The courage to seize an opportunity for peace."

code

Adams' message to his supporters, though coded, is plain enough. Their tactics had changed, though the objective was the same.

The system of policing now in place was one that republicans did not need to fight but rather take over and control.

Evidence

Evidence of the changes in the area of law and order that Sinn Fein/IRA has sought and obtained is seen in some recent announcements.

One has to do with the future involvement of the security agency, MI 5. It is to have no part in the policing of Northern Ireland. Sinn Fein/IRA claims this as a victory and as a concession to them.

Even the Belfast Telegraph, no friend of hardline unionism, could see the significance of Tony Blair's announcement.

"A pledge by Tony Blair on the operation of MI5 has boosted hopes that Sinn Fein will finally support policing in the North.

The British Prime Minister said the secret intelligence service would operate separately from the PSNI and would have "no role whatsoever" in civilian policing.

Sinn Fein issued a positive response to Mr Blair's comments, with the party's security spokesman Gerry Kelly saying Mr Blair's proposals had gone a long way towards his party's goal of achieving a new beginning to policing.

During negotiations with the British government over Christmas, Sinn Fein had argued the PSNI and security services must have distinct roles, because agencies such as MI5 had had a malign influence on policing in the North."

In its editorial of January 11th, the Belfast Telegraph said:

"Only those who have a detailed understanding of how MI5, the UK's internal security service, works can say whether the Prime Minister's assurances on its new role in Northern Ireland will be effective. Clearly they are designed to placate Sinn Fein, and ensure that there is sufficient distinction between MI5 and the PSNI to allow republicans to support the police, but there will be continuing doubts about accountability until there is experience of the system."

Only those anxious to hide activities that are contrary to national security would campaign



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for or welcome such a move!

Even the Republic of Ireland newspaper, the Irish Independent publicly ridiculed Blair for his cowardly concession to Sinn Fein/IRA. “For a political leader like Tony Blair, who appears ready to stand on his head in order to persuade Sinn Fein to endorse the PSNI, this particular offer which Sinn Fein are being asked to sign up to — a separation between MI5 and the police force — is simple enough.

Not so with Sinn Fein. Smarting from a series of revelations about infiltration last year and earlier, the organisation needed to show some kind of tough achievement in respect of the British intelligence work that has consistently outsmarted the organisation.

The British security forces succeeded in bringing it to its knees well before either decommissioning or the eventual ending of all military action. The bluster, the pomp and ceremony, the tediously protracted ruminations of the organisation over whether to meet, when to meet and what to do, now have this curious little postscript about the dreaded MI5.

Its malign influence on policing in the North was cited by Sinn Fein, along with that of other agencies, as the need for separation. Yet the supposed malignancy was the product of the ruthless and often highly effective terrorism of the Sinn Fein organisation over three decades. Which came first? The spread of the tentacles of security? Or the spread of Provisional IRA terrorism?” (13th January 2007).

Plastic bullets

Another announcement which brought Sinn Fein/IRA comfort was that made by the Chief Constable of the PSNI on Friday January 12th. One news report said: “Sinn Fein has welcomed comments by PSNI chief constable Hugh Orde acknowledging problems with the use of plastic bullets in Northern Ireland.

The widespread use of these weapons at demonstrations during the Troubles is a major cause of republican distrust in the police force.

Mr Orde said he did not want his officers to have to use them again.”

Litany

The litany of concessions to Sinn Fein/IRA continued with yet another announcement. It was the announcement of the scrapping of the Assets Recovery Agency.

In our Burning Bush of December 2006, we highlighted how that the illegal activities of the IRA's multi-million-pound border crime empire had been laid bare. Handwritten ledgers from the home of top Provo Thomas ‘Slab’ Murphy, the former ‘Chief of Staff’ of the IRA, had been seized during a joint PSNI/Gardi raid.

It is understood that the records contain precise details of massive smuggling and counterfeit operations.

The records pinpoint how the IRA sold millions of pounds of illegal goods to members and criminals for distribution.

Officers from the Irish Criminal Assets Bureau can hardly believe their good fortune at finding the meticulously kept ledgers, which give the clearest insight ever into the Provos’ on-



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going racketeering empire.

It is hoped that these immaculately maintained records will enable the Irish Republic's Criminal Assets Bureau to levy a tax bill of maybe £5m against Murphy.

The records clearly indicate the cost of goods brought into the IRA's 'stores' and the price received for the contraband goods, when they were offloaded on both sides of the border. They reveal how the goods came into the IRA's possession and were then sold on to its members and criminals for distribution.

The majority of the transactions show smuggled fuel being ferried from the Republic into the IRA's control at Murphy's farm in Ballybinaby, which straddles the Armagh/Louth border.

identity established

Because they're handwritten and not formulated on a computer, handwriting experts may be able to pinpoint the identity of the person who maintained the records, and tie them into the IRA's crime operations.

Up in smoke

The prospect of any charges being brought against Murphy by the PSNI has now gone up in smoke with Tony Blair's announcement that the Assets Recovery Agency, which cost £60m to set up and aimed to reclaim ill-gotten gains from criminals, is to be scrapped.

The Sunday Independent of 14th January carried a report on the matter. "IRA criminals in south Armagh knew that the North's Assets Recovery Agency was to be abolished, days before it was officially announced, the Sunday Independent can reveal.

The agency had been set up - after the success of Criminal Assets Bureau in the south - to trace the millions laundered by crime gangs and paramilitaries.

It has specifically targeted cross-border smuggling and illegal diesel washing by IRA members.

This has led to the belief that the surprise move was part of a deal between the British government and Sinn Fein, to secure Sinn Fein/IRA support for policing in the North. When the agency is abolished, it will make it more difficult, if not impossible, to investigate the financial affairs of senior IRA figures, like Thomas 'Slab' Murphy.

The support of Murphy, who was under active investigation, and of other terrorists-turned-criminals, is seen as essential in getting Sinn Fein/IRA figures in south Armagh to sign up to policing.

It is now likely that Murphy will be saved from further investigation.

The official announcement of the abolition of the agency came a day after Prime Minister Blair issued a statement on the role of the intelligence service, MI5, in the North. Sinn Fein hailed the statement as a "major victory".

The announcement that the Assets Recovery Agency was to be "merged" with the Serious Organised Crime Agency in London was a surprise to other political parties.

However, according to well placed sources in south Armagh, news of the imminent closure, announced on Thursday, spread throughout the area last weekend.

Yesterday, the Fine Gael Senator Brian Hayes called on the Government to say if the closure was part of a "desperate deal" to get Sinn Fein to recognise the PSNI and enter government with the DUP.

He said: "I cannot understand why both governments seem to be playing such a high-wire



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strategy with the Provisionals. For the British government in particular, this news points to wanting to do a deal at any cost. It sends out wrong signals and is a sign of weakness. Any dilution of the Assets Recovery Agency or any merger with a UK agency would not only be damaging to the fight against organised crime in Northern Ireland, it would be damaging to the fight against organised crime on the island of Ireland. We need closer co-operation between the ARA and CAB. Both governments are trying to do this desperate deal which will compromise our security and damage efforts to take on organised crime.”

Suspicious

The Observer newspaper reported that Downing Street rejected claims that the announcement of the abolition of the Assets Recovery Agency was timed to win republican support for policing in Northern Ireland.

Republicans in South Armagh - one of the regions on which the ARA focused in its efforts to recover the proceeds of organised crime - say they were made aware that the agency was being dissolved before the official announcement was made last week.

Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary David Lidington described the timing of the ARA’s dissolution as ‘very suspicious’. It came about just days before the Sinn Fein leadership met in Dublin to plan a historic conference on policing.

It adds up to betrayal

All in all, it must surely be seen by even the most war-weary Ulster unionist that the so-called “new day” that the St Andrew’s Agreement was supposed to usher in is nothing more than that day of Sinn Fein/IRA’s triumph so long sought by them and so long frustrated by the loyal and diligent stance of former generations of Ulster loyalists.

This current Sinn Fein/IRA campaign commenced in the late 1960s with a call for the closure of the Stormont parliament and the disbanding of the Ulster Special Constabulary and continued with a similar call regarding the UDR and finally the Royal Irish Rangers and the RUC. Sinn Fein/IRA seems bent on celebrating their victory with the re-opening of Stormont on their terms to which Unionism has shamefully acceded.