



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

The spy caught spying on those for whom he was supposed to be spying!



Sinn Fein/IRA leaders, Martin McGuinness and Gerry Adams flank Denis Donaldson.

In a place where political farce is commonplace, the “Stormontgate” spy case has rivalled the best of the comical interludes over the past 30 years! It was in October 2002 that the police raided the offices of Sinn Fein in Parliament Buildings, Stormont. As a result of the arrest of three men, including Mr. Denis Donaldson, 55, who had headed Sinn Fein’s administration office at Stormont, Northern Ireland’s power-sharing executive collapsed. The Ulster Unionist Party under David Trimble were in coalition with Sinn Fein and the highly unpopular arrangement could not take the strain of such an exposure of treachery on the part of one of the coalition part-

ners. Since the arrests, the police have recovered hundreds of pages of stolen government documents. Mr. Donaldson later confessed at a Sinn Fein news conference that he had been a British spy for over 20 years!

Donaldson was considered one of the most dedicated of Sinn Fein’s members. Denis Donaldson was famously photographed arm-in-arm with the IRA’s greatest icon, Bobby Sands. The photograph later was broadcast around the world when Sands died on hunger strike in May 1981.

After a 30-year rise to the highest ranks of the IRA, Donaldson’s status within republicanism is now that of a Judas. Born and reared in the staunchly republican Short Strand in east Belfast, Donaldson was a childhood friend of future senior republicans such as Jim Gibney and Seanna Walsh, the man who publicly announced the disbandment of the IRA earlier this year. In 1971 Donaldson was jailed for four years in Long Kesh on explosives charges. After his release from prison Donaldson became a key strategist in the development of Sinn Fein in the mid-1980s. However, he was also a senior IRA intelligence officer who travelled extensively throughout Europe, South America and the Middle East, building up contacts with the likes of the PLO and ETA. He said: “I was recruited in the 1980s after compromising myself during a vulnerable time in my life. Since then I have worked for British intelligence and the Royal Ulster Constabulary/Police Service of Northern Ireland Special Branch.” His acknowledgement is his own death warrant, for the IRA, despite it having supposedly ceased from all forms of criminality, will hunt him down and kill him. That is the central doctrine in their terrorist creed!

Denis Donaldson’s house in West Belfast is apparently abandoned, with informed sources saying there was no prospect of him returning to Ulster or the Republic of Ireland because of the risk of being killed. Scotland has also been ruled out as a bolthole. other spies
Newspaper reports indicate that Denis Donaldson is not the only highly-placed spy within



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

IRA/Sinn Féin's ranks. It is widely reported that one of the party's best known figures passed information to the Garda, the Irish police force, leading to the most severe blow ever inflicted on the IRA. In May, 1987, eight members of the IRA's East Tyrone unit walked into an ambush while trying to blow up the police station at Loughgall, Co. Armagh. The unit was led by Jim Lynagh, a ruthless and feared IRA operator, who was known to be an opponent of the "unarmed strategy" which was then being pursued by the IRA and Sinn Féin's leader Gerry Adams.

It is believed information was passed on to the RUC about the impending raid. Lynagh's unit was heavily armed and it was known they would not give up without a fight. The British Army placed a unit of SAS men into a hedgerow opposite the station. They waited until the bomb was set off before ambushing the IRA men and killing them all — as well as an innocent passerby. The Garda's senior Sinn Féin informant also passed on information about other IRA operations in east Tyrone, leading to the killing of several other IRA men. Two other key members of Sinn Féin in the North who have been at the centre of activities since the 1970s are also being talked of as police informants, following the revelation of Adams's aide Denis Donaldson. These two other figures have been close to Adams for decades and both are public figures to some degree but not elected members of Sinn Féin. Donaldson's admission stunned the Provisionals' membership on Friday and led to a bout of internal recrimination and finger-pointing and also resulted in the other figures being openly branded within republican circles. However, it is felt that to save further embarrassment, the other informants are likely to be allowed to remain within the Sinn Féin Party though with no access to the leadership or involvement in central decision-making. The whole affair has shaken the confidence of Irish Republicanism and will make it difficult for the party to maintain the appearance of cohesion for which is famed.

Though the public will not see any of the internal eruptions and upheavals going on within IRA/Sinn Féin, the wisdom of the old saying that 'when thieves fall out their knaveries come to light', will doubtless be recognised. Sadly, it is all too clear that the British Government does not come out of this affair smelling of roses! Just how much information gathered by security forces through their spies was suppressed in order to preserve such beings as Donaldson, even when it cost the lives of security force members, is not likely to be known until that day when the secrets of all men shall be revealed (Romans 2:16).