



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

“Pat Finucane was in the IRA”



Sir John Stevens and the Chief Constable, Hugh Orde, at the launch of the “Steven’s Report.”

So said a man who ought to know, in a national newspaper, *The Daily Telegraph*, of April 18th. That man is Sean O’Callaghan, one-time high-ranking member of the IRA, a former head of the IRA Southern Command, now turned “peace-campaigner.”

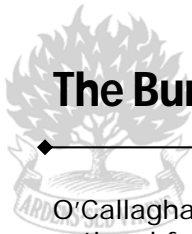
The article comes in the wake of the publishing of the report by Sir John Stevens into alleged collusion between security force members and loyalist terrorists. It is alleged that Pat Finucane, a Belfast solicitor, was a victim of this collusion.

Sean O’Callaghan ought to know what he is talking about and expressly states the basis of his claim

that Pat Finucane was an IRA man and not the legal “angel” and civil-rights campaigner he is made out to be, by those determined to do as much damage to Northern Ireland and its people as possible. Pat Finucane was just another example of those two-faced republicans who by day demanded all the rights that the law affords a law-abiding citizen, but who by night waged a criminal and terrorist war against the state from which they demanded those rights. Like his counterparts among the Muslims living in the West, he believed that he had the right to use the freedoms of British democracy in order to destroy British democracy.

In his article, Sean O’Callaghan said: “I knew Pat Finucane reasonably well. I first met him in 1980 at a high-level IRA finance meeting in Letterkenny, Co Donegal. The meeting took place in a private room above a public house. Also present were Gerry Adams, the now-dead Tom Cahill, Pat Doherty (now the MP for West Tyrone) and several others. Adams and Finucane arrived together in the morning and left at lunchtime. Did Finucane introduce himself as a member of the IRA? No. Did anyone present describe him as such? No. It was, however, exclusively an IRA meeting and quite clearly, without doubt, understood to be so by all present. That is the evidence of my own eyes and ears and I stand by it today as I did yesterday and as I will tomorrow.”

Sean O’Callaghan says in the article that Pat Finucane should not have been murdered and in that he is, of course, correct. “Of course Finucane should not have been murdered, and if it is proved that anyone played a role in that murder they should pay the price. But he was not the blameless, innocent “human rights” lawyer beloved of nationalist Ireland and the quasi-liberal chattering classes in the United Kingdom.” But he also says of Finucane’s murder in 1989: “Twenty-six soldiers and nine policemen were murdered that year. Very few people were ever convicted and they will not be now; that is the brutal reality. The murder of Finucane, however, dominates the headlines and all the other disgusting acts scream out their silence, forgotten, it would seem, by all but close family. In death, Finucane has been wrapped in a halo. He inhabits a superior moral place, a finely honed weapon to wage war by other means against the British state and the Unionist people of Northern Ireland.”



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O'Callaghan's article gives an insight into the working of the IRA which ought to prove educational for many interested in the affairs of Northern Ireland. "He came to visit me several times in Crumlin Road prison in Belfast, where he spent much of his working life acting as a trusted conduit between the IRA prisoners and the leadership on the outside. Finucane wanted to represent me, but expressed no interest in my legal position. All he wanted to know was what I had told the police, and there is no doubt in my mind as an individual that he was acting as an IRA member and exploiting his own legal position for the benefit of that organisation. When an IRA member was arrested, the first person to gain access to him was usually a solicitor. The organisation on the outside was often desperate to discover if the prisoner had made any statements incriminating himself or others, had provided information on arms dumps or future IRA operations or even had been turned (persuaded to be an informer - Editor) by the security forces.

This was where an individual solicitor such as Finucane was invaluable to the organisation. He was different to many other lawyers who held strong political views. The renowned Belfast solicitor Paddy McCrory was undoubtedly a staunch republican, but he was a constitutionalist who demanded the highest standards from the state and never believed that the law was a weapon to be exploited by a terrorist organisation. Pat Finucane was first and foremost an IRA volunteer, and he exploited his position ruthlessly to wage his war on the state. In Crumlin Road (prison), I once explained to him that I had admitted the attempted murder of a UVF member from Portadown and went into some detail. When I finished he looked at me with contempt on his face: "And after all that, you missed him." Hardly what you would expect to hear from a peace-loving man who believed in the primacy of law. The last occasion I met him was in Crumlin Road about 27 hours before he was murdered: I was, in fact, the last prisoner he spoke to. Pat Finucane was an effective agent for the IRA. Who knows what "punishments" were exacted by the IRA as a result of his activities? How Pat Finucane would laugh at his continuing effectiveness." The murder of Pat Finucane was more directly the result of the British Government's determination to "go soft" on Irish republicanism and hold in check the security forces when they could have quickly dealt with the terrorists. If there was collusion, it was a reaction by some in the security forces to the unnecessary and wicked exposure of themselves and civilians to the continued murderous activities of the IRA.



Pat Finucane

For a further article on Pat Finucane visit www.victims.org.uk. The Editor.