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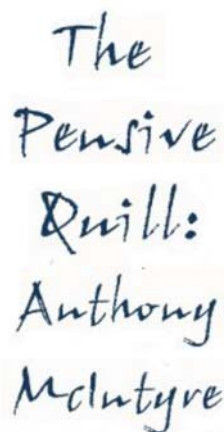
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INVERTEBRATE JOURNALISM

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 2013 AM [15 COMMENTS](#)



Recently [I penned a piece about the evident institutional bias at the Irish News](#) whose physical layout and positioning of a news item disclosing detail not favourable to its perspective was a woeful distortion of balance. Not a word either that I am aware of from the NUJ chapel at the paper protesting such blatantly tendentious manipulation of the layout. Were union members involved in the typesetting? If so did they not find such distortion unethical?

It is not that the chapel is mute about matters that prick its interest. It has shown Olympian sprinting skills when it comes to racing off to complain about something that has offended the editor.

Seemingly it is a chapel that worships at the altar of the management.

Immediately upon my ban from the NUJ by its bombastic Ethics Council a journalist from the paper rang me for my thoughts which didn't really amount to much other than I would hardly notice the suspension. My reasoning was simple. When a union, steered by a leadership not inoculated against the back seat driving folly of the Ethics Council, buckles to Leveson's demand for state regulation of the press, I very much subscribe to the view, 'if the National Union of Journalists won't defend journalism, [what's the point of it?](#)'

And so it was in this vein that I told the *Irish News* that I considered the ban an act of censorship, which the paper both sought and endorsed. I also expressed the view that the ban was comparable to being denied membership of the igloo builders of the Sahara. Perhaps, I reckoned, there were as many building igloos in the desert, as there are people in the Ethics Council protecting journalism from state regulation. The paper did quote me fairly enough. It didn't carry all I said but media never does, nor can it be expected to. And as it didn't manipulate what I said out of context I had few grounds for complaint, or none that I was prepared to bring before those upstanding ethical denizens of the Ethics Council.

I did, however, happen to find out later that despite the sweet talk from the *Irish News* on the phone a member of the paper's NUJ chapel was, on the day following its reporting of my suspension, tattling to the Ethics Council. It was wrongly alleged that I was making 'frankly libellous comments about the members of the Ethics Committee' on this blog. *I say Sarah, old girl, the rotter is scurrilous, and frankly my dear he doesn't give a damn.*

Nor do I 'frankly' give a damn in the slightest what Sarah thinks, when she does, on anything.

Dearie me and my oh my, heaven save us from the profanity of an independent thought. What that had to do with the chapel I am not quite sure. That it was so eager to write 'Dear

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ANTHONY MCINTYRE

There is no coming
to consciousness
without pain
- Carl Jung



LINKS

Boston College
Subpoena News

The Irish Republican
Movement Collection

Newshound

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John Murphy

Maryam Namazie

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Rushlight Magazine

July 1981

Vol Joe O'Connor - Ten
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Good Friday: The Death
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The Americans

The White Queen

Saving Private Ryan

Enemy of the State

To The Top of the
Mountain

Europa Blues

Many Waters

Bad Blood

The Blinded man

READING

Battle At Oldbridge,

Sarah's letters came as no surprise to me. I wasn't even disappointed with it. As Nietzsche knew so well, those born to crawl will never fly. The kiss-up kick-down ethic seems to have considerable purchase within that particular chapel of the NUJ. In any event there is nothing that I said about the Ethics Council that I could not stand over. I have said it since its farcical hearing in Belfast and will continue to say it. The Ethics Council is a bastion of journalistic wankerdom. And what?



Former IRA volunteer and ex-prisoner, spent 18 years in Long Kesh, 4 years on the blanket and no-wash/no work protests which led to the hunger strikes of the 80s. Completed PhD at Queens upon release from prison. Left the Republican Movement at the endorsement of the Good Friday Agreement, and went on to become a journalist. Co-founder of *The Blanket*, an online magazine that critically analyzed the Irish peace process.

COMMENTS



Click Image to Enlarge & Read

As the reader can see - which the letter writer does not want you to see - is the claim that I was not behaving towards Allison Morris as the paper thought I should. And the point is? I no more have to respect Allison Morris than she has to respect me. Unlike the supine NUJ chapel at the *Irish News*, I don't happen to think that is some sort of journalistic crime for which a member of the union should be sanctioned. Then again my views on ethics and those of the people at the *Irish News* would seem to be radically different and now seem to clash frequently enough. While I have a consistent 'put up with' attitude to its views they seem to take a 'shut up' response to mine. Not a very rewarding experience trying to shut me up.

One of the complaints is that I published Allison Morris's 'confidential' complaint to the committee (just as I am doing here with the chapel's 'confidential' letter to the same committee). So, what the chapel wanted was secret evidence that the public would not have access to, old style Soviet anonymous denunciation. The concept of secret evidence is enough to send most journalists' noses twitching. [Not the UDM type lot](#) who populate the *Irish News* chapel!

The chapel of course praised the committee for the professional work it did in finding against me. Now, there are many things I am prepared to accuse the Ethics Council of but [professionalism](#) does not figure among them.

Beano Niblock

A Guide to the Silence of the Irish Other World, Sean Mac Eachaidh

Heart Shaped Box, Joe Hill

Cruel Britannia, Ian Cobain

The Wrong Man, Danny Morrison

In The Footsteps of Anne

Legion Of The Rearguard, Martyn Frampton

The Beginning Of All Things, Hans Kung

The IRA and Armed Struggle, Rogelio Alonso

Ray of Hope, Andrew Lees & Ray Kennedy

LISTENING

T Rex

Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes

Billy Joel

Pink Floyd

Norah Jones

David Bowie

Leonard Cohen

Led Zeppelin

Lynard Skynard

ELO

*a little of this,
a little of that*



FOLLOW

Not only has the *Irish News* chapel prostrated itself before the Ethics Council it has also exhibited bovine conformity to what it thinks the editor/bishop wants, leading me to suspect that the virus of co-option has been cause for rejoicing rather than resisting. Just as under a regime of old style corporatism, the chapel has been co-opted into the church of the management. These supposed NUJ colleagues at the paper for reasons yet to be plausibly explained wanted to see me done over at a time when I was immersed in fighting what was one of the [biggest source protection cases](#) in recent years — in order to what? Spare the feelings of the person who arguably set the whole thing in motion?

Few journalists ever expect much in the way of support from management when it comes to the issue of defending journalism or source protection. There is the odd occasion but it is rare. It is a business to management, not an ethical vocation. The institutional instinct is purse protection and sources be damned. Management is the weakest link when faced with a challenge from authority and is likely to buckle first when confronted. This is one reason journalists have a union — to protect their interests and those of their sources against the instincts of management. Is the invertebrate NUJ chapel at the paper so devoid of autonomous standing that it can think of nothing more progressive than tugging the forelock to management? Is it incapable of conceiving of anything more radical than slavishly exercising its self induced powerlessness against the journalist protecting sources and not against those who endanger them?

If so, it is a chapel in the wrong church.



Posted in: [Allison Morris](#), [Censorship](#), [Irish News](#), [NUJ Ethics Council](#)

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15 comments:

Daniel McArdle says:

2:40 PM, August 31, 2013

Yawn yet again Anthony! Ffs tell the people about the time u (means you in young peoples terms not Clifford Peeples terms) run around the Murph with poster about Carol.

I get an Anthony McIntyre story everyday the last one was off a senior Republican who said Anthony do Ur wack on someone else's back McIntyre. Also you need to explain why Pastor Pipe Bomber is your new found friend and keeps linking ur [Zzzzzzzzzzzzz](#) website on his facebook???? Think Republicans need to know if societies are funding your website When you give speeches at gravesides. (take ur hat off next time) Well Hugh Jordan and Clifford Peeples are in the circle with you now and how long do you think Loyalist will stick with Pipe bomb pastor when they know ur record ?"

The Laughing Killer" the laughing stock of Republican ism- weirdo, stalker, tabloid tout, hunger striker about kids that's not yours, fucked out of the Murph, obsessive of women, journalist???, sleeping tablet, predator, collaborating with Loyalists, 20 euro on top of ur bru (exclude the pastors money and the Sunday world money) crazy cat women wife (only used her for access to america), I have a back pain, suspicious phantom blogger, creep, predator oh I said that already!, money enforcer! I actually laughed at ne when I heard it, Owen Pattersons biaaach! Need I go on looser? that this won't be posted because of the truth? So I will add it to other

Reply

[Ardoyne Republican wrote...](#)

Notice my name has been mentioned a few times on TPQ a few times in this debate/discussion a chairde....! don't wish to become involved in this...

[Continue >>](#)

[Alfie Gallagher wrote...](#)

It is troubling that a major Northern newspaper is desperately trying to stifle reasoned scrutiny of the outrageous behaviour of one of its...

[Continue >>](#)

[larry hughes wrote...](#)

Journalism, or what passes for it today enables the west to tell the world black is white and to be amazed when people begin to see through...

[Continue >>](#)

[Fionnuala Perry wrote...](#)

Mackers, It still must stick in your claw. All you have come through and been up against and you have to entertain this dribble. Depressing!

[AM wrote...](#)

Nuala, you can only be guided by what you believe in. And for you that has been a mainstay. Abuse goes with the turf.

[Fionnuala Perry wrote...](#)

Mackers, Sad to say I have to agree. But we are what we are and we will continue to be that inspite of the mud slingers from whichever circle.

[AM wrote...](#)

Nuala, the circle that can be ruled out is the circle we used to be in. That is more a circus.

[AM wrote...](#)

Fionnchú, small wonder they say Marxism is the opium of the Marxists. Some tend to be religious when it comes to god Karl. What put me off Marxism was...

[Continue >>](#)

[AM wrote...](#)

STEW has left a new comment on your post "NOT CENSORED BY THE IRISH NEWS"; Daniel/Fido, if there is an article to be published in the any of...

[Continue >>](#)

[AM wrote...](#)

The next comment to follow has been slightly edited

[Fionnuala Perry wrote...](#)

Apologies for the typo should have said in Republican circles. Republican circles I'm starting to wonder what that even means anyone?

[AM wrote...](#)

TPQ reserves the right to edit comments if they are deemed personally abusive. The attempt by

• *Libelous comments will not be published. Do not abuse the Anonymous facility or your posts will no longer be published.*

POPULAR POSTS



The Weird World of an Irish News Journalist


Tonight The Pensive Quill carries an opinion piece by Guest Writer Paul Campbell on journalists and online shenanigans The Weird

World ...

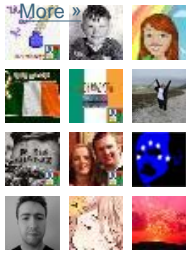


Take it Down from the Mast

In the wake of last night's anti internment rally some Belfast Felons Club Officials have taken to complaining about the fact that

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republican sites and my social media- I would like a snapchat of you when u see this I'm danSfy-mcA please send me it! (Its a young thing get hip not hip replacement). Waiting for one of your many names to comment about this.

larry hughes says:

3:29 PM, August 31, 2013

I was going to comment on the terrible standard of journalism in both researching and verification of material and the gutless acceptance of the government line on both local and international issues. But dear Lord almighty, it looks like one of the Irish News trainees has got on here and let loose ahead of me.

What a mess. Maybe locked in a flat somewhere with 48 beers?? At 2.40pm!IMPRESSIVE!!

Daniel,

Eventually you will recover from the shame, embarrassment and sheer self loathing after reading what you wrote there. If not, then you are just genuinely ill. I you need to talk to a fellow 'Sufferer' think I have the number somewhere.

[Reply](#)

Kev O'Higgins says:

5:21 PM, August 31, 2013

I have been a member of several Unions over the years, some better than others. They all shared a basic purpose though, protecting the interests of the workers against abuses of the bosses.

The NUJ seems almost unique in that it is used as a vehicle for members pursuing complaints against each other via it's offices and possibly being a tool for bosses to use their employees' membership to pursue their interests against Union members.

Most unusual but then again the Unions I belonged to had workers with shared interests while it seems the NUJ has members with competing interests that can use the Union as an arena to fight those divergences.

It must be a extremely difficult situation for Union officials to be in, where they are not protecting workers against employers but adjudicating on spats between members.

[Reply](#)

itsjustmacker says:

5:24 PM, August 31, 2013

Daniel:

You type and spell like a child.

I would be really curious to know your actual age.

Do you have a bee up your backside? , you seem to have a big chip on your shoulder , you must be really hurting within by posting such childish pathetic crap.

Anthony:

Looks like nothings changed!.

[Reply](#)

Daniel McArdle says:

[Reply](#) M, August 31, 2013

one o...



No Choice But to Take It: RFE interview with Richard O'Rawe

TRANSCRIPT: Radio Free Éireann interview with Richard O'Rawe, author of Blanketmen

Radio Free Éireann WBAI 99.5 Pacifica Radio New Yo...



Reporting to London

Back in March a person describing themselves as 'a former director of publicity for Sinn Fein' filed a report to someone in London. It ...

INSO
NOT CENSORED BY THE IRISH NEWS
ACTION REQUEST : TELL THE IRISH NEWS HANDS OFF THE INTERNET LC/0070000730 4 September 2013 PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL – NOT FOR ...

I Have a Right to be Angry

Carrie Twomey with a piece she put together for Facebook venting her anger at what she considers unethical behaviour on the part of the Iri...



Are you being Gagged?

For about a a week now I have been nonchalantly anticipating two letters: one from the Ethics Council of the NUJ and the other from a c...

Making a Bad Situation Worse

Guest writer Mick Hall who blogs at Organized Rage with some thoughts on the Syrian conflict and the type of loyalties it engenders. I ...



Invertebrate Journalism

Recently I penned a piece about the evident institutional bias at the Irish News whose physical layout and positioning of a news item...



Peace Processing the Memory of Conflict: Radio Foyle interview with Dixie Elliott

BBC Radio Foyle Breakfast Monday 19 August 2013 Programme Host Enda

McClafferty (EM) interviews former IRA Volunteer Thomas "Dixie"...

I am a child! Maybe u are now creeping after me?

frankie says:

5:55 PM, August 31, 2013

Daniel, two things to say to you. One is [this](#)..

Mark Twain once said *It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.*

It's good advice.

Reply

AM says:

6:00 PM, August 31, 2013

Kev,

this is one of the problems. There has to be some way to solve internal disputes in any union. It just seems that in a union of journalists secret denunciation and censorship are the last things that should be facilitated.

Reply

AM says:

6:08 PM, August 31, 2013

We have allowed Daniel his say, incoherent as it may be. He is as entitled to contribute here as much as the next person. If he continues in current vein we will allow him the space over at Bates & Wilkes Central where he can join like minds. It is as fair as we can be, and we have already set a precedent for it. Anybody wanting to read him can go there and we will keep the normal pages free for discussion. If anyone thinks it is the wrong call and his views are views rather than the a hate rant feel free to raise it with us.

Reply

AM says:

9:54 AM, September 01, 2013

Kev,

the trade union movement in general I have been told tends to view the NUJ like a student union. It does not attribute the gravitas to it that the NUJ feels it merits.

How the Irish News chapter's sneaky way of doing business reflects on the union in general I do not know. Demanding a 'confidentiality' status for denunciation or secret evidence is so far removed from the spirit of open inquiry and robust transparent journalism, that I am sure the chapter will have some difficulty in trying to explain its actions. And in demanding confidentiality for the Morris correspondence it was also demanding that its own tattling be kept confidential also.

All sort of blown out of the water now.

And of course they can rush off another confidential letter to the council which if I get my hands on you will also see displayed on the blog.

Reply

aragman says:

9:57 AM, September 01, 2013

Reply agrammatic Poem for Danny Mac.

Manacled Idler;
A Cellar Midden,
A Call Reminded:
Canard, Mild Eel !
Carnal Meddle I -
Daniel McArdle!
Male Narc Idled,
Male Clad Red, In
Lard Malice Den.
Cad Mandrel Lie,
Cad Mandrel Lie.

Dixie says:

2:48 PM, September 01, 2013

danSfy-mcA...

Dan I could say I'm SFY but you'd likely know that in this case I'm only being sarcastic.

The fact is, you've left quite a mess on this blog and given that Mackers was considerate enough to let you do so, one would think you'd have the good manners to tidy up before you post your...erm, next thesis.

Or should I have spelt that faeces?

No matter - in your case both have the same meaning anyway.

Reply

AM says:

4:58 PM, September 01, 2013

From Kev Higgins: part 1

I return to the comments on this topic with a real sense of disappointment that you and other nimble minds contributing to this blog have been so effectively derailed from discussing substantive issues raised by what is clear trolling serving no purpose other than deflection from matters that should concern any Trade Unionists or advocate of free speech.

I care little for the barely comprehensible contribution from the self admitted child who from the outset attempted to destroy the potential for discourse on what is a genuinely concerning demonstration of the descent into darkness by the NUJ in this individual case. A case that so ably reflects much larger failings across much of the Trade Union 'movement'.

We seemingly see a demonstration of a larger subscription block within a Union attempting to influence the decisions of an officer element in the Union on its deliberations in a dispute between individuals.

The method they sought to use would be called tittle-tattle if we were talking about a dispute over a playground football foul but it relates to reputations and livelihoods and is of an import that should result in ignoring the irrelevant hostile rantings of a self admitted juvenile.

When a component of a Union seeks to round on an individual and influence opinions whilst a dispute is ongoing there is something very wrong.

In any Union I've been a member of each individual is a comrade. A comrade joining an organisation with the aim of ensuring the weakest member receives the protection of the broader membership against those that would seek to exploit or abuse.

Here we see a block within a Union seemingly uniting to ensure the weaker, an individual, in a dispute is as disadvantaged as possible.

This and the reaction of Union officials and staffers is of relevance not just in your case but across the NUJ and then the Trade Union movement as a whole.

Reply

AM says:

5:00 PM, September 01, 2013

From Kev Higgins: part 2

Most Unions have moved past Stalinist practices that some entryists may have sought, the idea of a block within a Union seeking to have a group denunciation of individuals kept private but still influential on outcomes is clearly unacceptable but is apparently ongoing. That is a matter of concern for any Trade Unionist that values justice and equality.

When a group within a Union reliant on subs seeks to cast out an individual the less moral within the hierarchy may consider that the subs of the many outweigh the subs of the one.

That is clearly why the transparency you have called for and given in your case is so important.

Unions are top heavy with staff and membership is often seen as a pointless outlay for little return in this wage freeze world. Members and subs are the slop that fills a central trough.

The fact a 'chapel' or any organisational unit within a Union would seek to have its denunciation of an individual kept as secret is contemptible. How else could any other units or 'chapels' oppose the massing of forces against one soul if the only group permitted awareness of factional opposition are the attacking faction?

The situation you found yourself in - facing not only your accusers, supported by their bosses position but also Union comrades who were financially

Reply ed/depandant on that consensus and then an expectation that your

accusers could remain faceless and nameless was and is abhorrent.

This is the situation that deserves discussion. It impacts on not just you. Not just the NUJ.

And frankly facilitating a childish rant or total irrelevance that deflected from these important topics was ill judged. Yes, people have called Master McArdle on his barely coherent diatribe - the result is still a subject of importance has been diluted so far it is not being addressed at all.

A suspicious mind would suggest that was the intent. A right mind would now ignore the boy popping wheelies to impress the big lads on a wall. Accept he went over his handlebars and landed on his face and get back to discussing what is a demonstration of the rot not just within a 'chapel' of the NUJ, not just the NUJ but the entire Union project. A project so many rely on to prevent the most terrible buggerings from the most unscrupulous bastards.

AM says:

11:56 AM, September 02, 2013

Part 1

Kev,

Thanks for a considered comment. I don't necessarily agree that it has acted as an effective derailment, although I am open to persuasion. It might even have brought more attention to the article given that people have a good laugh at that sort of drivel. And as I was saying to a friend last night I have always taken in stray dogs, being one myself. So when some old Fido turns up miaowing, pretending to be a cat and in need of a home, I allow them a bit of straw which they sometimes make into a straw man rather than bedding down in the discussion.

And frankly facilitating a childish rant or total irrelevance that deflected from these important topics was ill judged.

Perhaps. It is trolling which we normally push aside. We tend to throw them all over to Bates & Wilkes Central. Then whereas I seek to protect others from hate rants I don't invoke the shield law when it comes to me. I initially said it would go straight to Bates & Wilkes but Carrie said to leave it so that everybody could see the degeneracy at play.

Nevertheless, people have commented on it to me, for the most part taking a position similar to your own on it, both in relation to what was said earlier and on this occasion, pointing out his seeming hatred of children. So, we gave him his shot, he took it, hit himself in the foot and has continued hopping around and yapping like an enraged dog since. We will take the advice on board. I accept that it contributes nothing to the debate and is just intellectually embarrassing. I suppose as Mark Twain said, 'never argue with a fool, onlookers may not be able to tell the difference.'

We seemingly see a demonstration of a larger subscription block within a Union attempting to influence the decisions of an officer element in the Union on its deliberations in a dispute between individuals.

That would very much seem to be the case. It was underhand. It pushed what was arguably the management perspective rather than the journalistic one. I don't for one minute believe the journalist they were secretly lobbying for in the hope of securing a verdict against me was under any threat whatsoever as a result of anything that appeared on this blog. Were I to feel she was under threat it would never have been carried. Citing 'threat' in this circumstance is in my view the same as citing 'offence' in other circumstances – it is a useful device to stifle critique. This is why management at the Irish News is so eager to have us shut up shop in relation to the paper.

In particular it does not want people to read [The Weird World of an Irish News Journalist](#)

Reply

AM says:

Part 2

Key,

when you talk of comradeship in the NUJ, the chapel at the Irish News immediately thinks 'comrade editor.' It is a characteristic best encapsulated in the UDM attitude of **yes, yes, yes Ian MacGregor, no, no, no Arthur Scargill.**

If the NUJ chapel at the Irish news had valued justice and equality, it would have posed questions to management about the events leading up to the Boston College subpoena given that it has led to a serious source protection case that made it all the way to the steps of the US Supreme Court. There was sufficient in the public domain including sworn affidavits to allow the chapel to make its case. The chapel would also have raised tough objections about the seriously unprofessional act by management in marginalising coverage of the appeal outcome to the corner of a page. Have we any record of a complaint, even a secret one?

The problem for some of the people involved in this is that the wealth and power behind them leads them to think they can get their own way. And when they come up against a force as determined as ourselves the blustering and bullying flounders on the rocks.

And we intend to continue making matters transparent. We have more to say on this matter. This is why the editor of the paper is desperate to gag us, a pointless endeavour.

The fact a 'chapel' or any organisational unit within a Union would seek to have its denunciation of an individual kept as secret is contemptible.

The chapel knows this and for that reason had to write another secret letter complaining about the secrecy of the first being breached. If secrecy was required on the grounds of safety I could live with it. That wasn't the case here. Secrecy was the shield employed to ward off the ridicule that would have erupted had anonymous denunciation been made public.

The situation you found yourself in - facing not only your accusers, supported by their bosses position but also Union comrades who were financially attached/dependant on that consensus and then an expectation that your accusers could remain faceless and nameless was and is abhorrent.

Yet it always works against them. More people now know about the details of the case than would have done, had the chapel behaved with some integrity.

Accept he went over his handlebars and landed on his face and get back to discussing what is a demonstration of the rot not just within a 'chapel' of the NUJ, not just the NUJ but the entire Union project. A project so many rely on to prevent the most terrible buggerings from the most unscrupulous bastards.

We are up for that.

[Post a Comment](#)

GOOD FRIDAY



Good Friday, The Death of Irish Republicanism is available at these online outlets:

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Barnes and Noble;
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BELFAST BOOK LAUNCH

Good Friday: The Death of Irish Republicanism was launched on the 5th of November, 2008, at the Linen Hall Library in Belfast.
Guest Speaker: Tommy Gorman

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