Back in March a person describing themselves as ‘a former director of publicity for Sinn Fein’ filed a report to someone in London. It seems the writer unilaterally took it upon himself to function as the NUJ Ethics Council’s Belfast agent, tasked with filing reports to London. I cannot say for certain that his letter was merely the latest in a line of reports to people in the British capital, although the balance of probability would tend towards the writer having previous form.

The Belfast agent complained that I had suggested on this blog that he was a snitch. I’ll not criticise him too harshly for that. What I found strange is that he tried to show Sarah Kavanagh of the NUJ that he was most definitely no such thing by ... snitching on me. Sarah, Sarah, I’m not a snitch and I’m snitching here to prove it. The logic sort of escapes me, and if Sarah has any cop-on it will have escaped her too. What it does do is reinforce the ‘lions led by donkeys’ characterisation of the relationship between some Provo leaders and the volunteers on the ground.

Perhaps it is just my imagination but am I wrong to sniff the scent of collusion between the actions of the NUJ chapel at the Irish News who tattled to Dear Sarah, and the ‘former director of publicity for Sinn Fein’ who also went a-squealing to her? Both letters were written on the same day; the former publicity director's in the morning followed by the chapel's a few hours later. Both were eager to point out to Sarah how I had said ghastly things about either her or the Ethics Council. And both praised the same council for having taken action against me. Coordination, collaboration, or coincidence?
Not that I care in the slightest about the content of their Miss, Miss, he’s pulling faces ... again letters. It is what curtain-twitchers do. But it seems they want to stand behind their curtains out of view so that they can avail of the cover of confidentiality while lifting the phone about those they take umbrage at, much like those trying to catch a guy leaving home in the morning to do the double. At all times nobody is to know the source of tales being carried to London.

Their actions would have been more palatable had secrecy been vital on some grounds not yet spelt out: public interest, personal safety or whatever. It is doubtful that anybody reading the rating letters would arrive at the conclusion that any of these extenuating factors applied here. They were sneakily penned with a view to underhanded lobbying, meant never to see the light of day: For London’s Eyes Only.

The ‘former director of publicity for Sinn Fein’ has his own website where he maintains a diary of things he did on a lot of his days. He appears to leave out the days that he is reporting to London. We know he reports because we have caught him — but he never writes about it on his website. A reader would never know that the NUJ’s self-appointed Belfast agent might have a penchant for reporting to London. He doesn’t record that type of thing. On the 29th of March this year, although he was with practiced hand scribbling a report to London, he failed to disclose it to his readers. Anyone taking a look at his website for that date will find no entry in it; he didn’t write, ‘Today I reported to someone in London about Mackers.’

If readers don’t take my word for it, they can view a copy of the letter he hoped would secretly fortify the case against me so as to hobble my appeal. Fortunately, the Ethics Council was in no position to stand over that secrecy so it provided me with a copy of his letter. Even it has not yet signed up to the secret evidence clause of the British courts; but for that I would not be able to share it with the readers. And share it I shall. If anyone thinks they are going to submit secret evidence against me in the hope of producing a Diplock type verdict, and expect me to share the secret, then I am going to disappoint them. So here you go.

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
The ‘former director of publicity for Sinn Fein’ has long sought to influence the public debate around the Boston College archive in favour of the British state’s perspective. On discovering the existence of the archive he asked the college to view its contents. At whose behest I am not sure, but what the time line does show is that following his failed attempt to gain access to the archive, the British moved overtly and the subpoena was subsequently issued.

What we can establish is this: two of the people involved in lobbying the NUJ to sanction me, at a time when I was fighting a source protection case backed by the NUJ leadership, were working in clandestine fashion to compromise the vital confidentiality of the archive.

Now as these strands all weave closer together a picture is emerging to suggest that there is something rotten in the state of Danmark. We are on the trail of something sordid. When we find it, as we will because we are good at this sort of thing — 55 Hours and all that — we will share it with you; just as we shared the Belfast agent’s secret report to London with you.

Watch this space.

— Ciaran Barnes, —

Reposted in: Allison Morris, Boston College Subpoena, Censorship, Ciaran Barnes, Irish News, NUJ Ethics Council

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31 comments:

**Robert** says:
7:50 PM, September 02, 2013

Anthony,

The ‘magnitude’ and ‘frequency’ of all of this simply leaves one drained.
Sordid doesn't even come close Anthony, what a devious, vile man. The Party must still see something in him for he was in Tyrone at the weekend speaking at a Sinn Fein commemoration for the Drummakilly Martyrs. When I heard the "lions led by donkeys" analogy Big Brian Mullin and brothers Gerard and Martin Harte were the first people who sprung to mind. Selfless Volunteers who served the cause so well, "running to Miss" I dare say never came into it with these boys. Plainly there's still a serious grudge held against ye but I doubt that'll keep you awake at night. An out and out scoundrel. After the Hungerstrikes when The Party began contesting elections he was the man sent down here to liaise with 'the locals'. From what my father tells me he thought we knew nothing down here, in his worldview he and his ilk were the lions while we were the donkeys. I'd say the vast majority of republicans in Tyrone would think again before taking advice from the likes of Danny Morrison again.

What a low life.

I would not hesitate to say, "He is worried about anything being said about himself.

There are those who Know, and, Those who don't want to know.

I place myself in the , "I know"

Ding dong merely the bells are ringing throughout the house.

Agent tied to a chair.

Agents asking questions.

Which one is the mouse!
Dixie says:
9:44 PM, September 02, 2013

The problem with The Mad Hatter is that he has a habit of getting into the ring with people who are not only capable of fighting their corner but can deliver a killer of a left hook.

The Mad Hatter can't really be compared to a boxer who has fought well past his prime because he never was in his prime to begin with.

The old joke: He spends so much time being counted out they put ads on the soles of his boots!!

Mackers once again the theme from Rocky for you mo chara...

Reply

AM says:
10:02 PM, September 02, 2013

From Mick Browne

"Broadsword calling Danny Boy, Broadsword calling Danny Boy, come in Danny Boy....."

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-UM4U77oDEY

Reply

Dixie says:
10:18 PM, September 02, 2013

I can see his eyes upon us...

Reply

larry hughes says:
11:08 AM, September 03, 2013

Tattle-tale, dear oh dear, 'if the hat fits'.

Not much left to say about that.

Reply

michaelhenry says:
1:32 PM, September 03, 2013

I have always held the view that the snitch who stayed out of the ditch was among those that give the names of Volunteers to boston and told what jobs those Volunteers were responsible for back in the day-the proof is in the pudding and those givers of names took big spade-fulls-

Reply

Dixie says:
4:06 PM, September 03, 2013

michaelhenry your half-baked attempt at throwing out the 'tout' smear (snitches in ditches)holds no clout with anyone outside of Adamsism.

"those that give the names of Volunteers to boston and told what jobs those Volunteers were responsible for back in the day..."

Has to be the most idiotic statement I've heard yet in regards to this.

Reply and explain to your likes that those who left their testimonies on tape
were dedicated and brave volunteers who wanted their stories left for future generations is like trying inform sheep that they are nothing more than food for humans.

The sheep will merely look back and baa, then continue eating grass.

It seems that anyone who exposes the dirty past deeds of certain members of PIRA are branded 'touts'. Not even a victim of rape and abuse is spared this label, as is presently happening on certain forums.

It would seem that the leadership of SF have taken lessons from the CIA and MI5 in the smear department...

All whores in sewers.

**Kev O’Higgins** says:
9:59 PM, September 03, 2013

One wonders if the Comrade reporting to the Ministerium für Journalistensicherheit - Jasi (Ministry for Journalistic Security) wielding the shield and the pen realises a policy of Zersetzung (corrosion) is only truly successful when the victim is unaware of the attempted to 'switch them off'?

Is the Comrade noted in the preceding piece even an active member in the Ministry or acting as a self appointed freelance Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter (google that one yourself)?

**gerard hodgins** says:
10:15 PM, September 03, 2013

is like trying inform sheep that they are nothing more than food for humans.

The sheep will merely look back and baa, then continue eating grass.

Dixie.

first laugh i've had in a long time, you've a way with words dixie. and unfortunately, so true.

**Snowtorch** says:
12:15 AM, September 04, 2013

Michael, given that your party has not only called on people to give information to British forces of occupations paramilitary police force many many times, but that Sin Feins's Gerry Kelly has publicly supported the use of informers - where do you stand on the use of informers?

Also on the subject of informers now that Padraig Wilson & Co will face charges of (P)ira membership etc, as supporters of the British rule of law here in the six counties will your party be calling for charges to be brought against Martin McGuinness?

Despite McGuinness informing on himself by admitting he was a member of (P)ira, what's strange for such a 'staunch republican' he didnt even break under interrogation or torture at the hands of the British, he gave the information away willy nilly, when many others held their tongues and still spent years in British hellholes. Although McGuinness does admit he ran away and hid in 1974.

Should McGuinness face the full weight of the (British) law for what your party would state are illegal activities.

**p.s.** (If I was a shinner I'd be concerned about his trustworthiness after all he did violate the oath he took when he was sworn in! God knows what else
Should McGuinness face the full weight of the (British) law for what your party would state are illegal activities

Yes....Everyone else seems to be facing 'due process'...Personally pre 1998, chalk it up to the blues and give everyone (Republicans, Loyalists and State forces) a by ball. Sooner or later that's what's going to have to happen.

Then there is a better chance of the sectarianism getting stamped out.

Where do you stand on the use of informers 

If you are talking about Republicans telling Republican tales then I am opposed to it-but I would support a member of the community who wanted to report about drugs use to the PSNI-you might be different but that's your choice-

Will your party be calling for charges to be brought against Martin 

What charges are these then-

He gave information away willy nilly 

Like what-he had Immunity under the Bloody Sunday Inquiry and no charges were brought against any Volunteers from Martins Testimony-

Does admit he ran away and hid in 1974 

I have seen him on the news and public life over the last 35 years-he was not hiding that well-

Fought for 4 years or so till 1974-i would not run down any Volunteer for fighting then-unlike yourself-what year did you run away-

Those that named Volunteers in Boston did violate their own-some-thing which you don't seem to have a problem with-

I doubt sincerely sectarianism will be brought to an end the loyalists are loyal to only one rule that is to keep their outdated monarchy pure and free from Catholics.

If or eventually when that law is updated then you would find that the loyalists would not feel so British.

It's a sad statement sectarianism starts at the highest level of the law and flows down to the streets.

If the law was changed and Catholics were once again allowed to marry into the royal family you would see Ulster's loyalist on a rampage as that is their claim to support their distorted belief.
You can't really blame them for fighting as they are the royal family's storm troopers and the queen never seems to bothered that her subjects are more than willing to keep trampling on her lesser subjects in her name.

Until the law is rectified nothing or little will change it will remain an orange state where it is the birth right to defend a protestant monarchy. There should be no support for sectarianism and it is one issue both communities should work together on. If we leave it up to the politicians they will gladly have us at odds in order to serve themselves!

Personally, monarchies are out of touch and don't belong in the modern world.

Anthony,

I think Danny the man of many hats and his whimpering along with the Irish News moaning is beyond rational understanding. This issue should have been over after they refused to make an appearance. I see Fido and his Mistress are at it again a disgraceful way for a reporter to behave considering she is so concerned with ethics.

It seems the objective is to shut the quill down?

I remember 4 or 5 years ago this was a quiet wee corner where you could square off and banter away. Now it seems that some unhappy campers over exaggerate the power of a small blog and have probably brought more readers along in their attempts to silence the quill.

Feel to love says:
7:05 PM, September 04, 2013

Correct Frankie that mcguinness should be done, it is a pity that Irish republicans are relying on the brits to bring about a justice for the Irish, because the Irish cant do it themselves. How many rules of the green book were broke by the scum that have tried to bring the Irish down because of so called Irishmen/women. They would have us prostrate and reaching to kiss their hand in subservience. No way, they are traitors and I will never let anybody ever tell me different. Likewise I will never let an opportunity pass to kick that scum in the balls when it arises.

Reply

AM says:
7:08 PM, September 04, 2013

Michaelhenry,

you wouldn't seriously agree with people reporting pot smokers to the cops would you? What about people doing the double? I think the point being made to you is that Martin calls for people to inform on republicans doing the exact same things as he did for decades. He actually said that people who do that sort of thing should know the score - the penalty is death.

Reply
Dixie says:
10:42 PM, September 04, 2013

Lets cut out the bullshit...

For a man who was a high ranking member of PIRA and who spoke on behalf of the IRA several times in 1972 on TV he was never interned, hooded, put away by several supergrasses nor had attempts on his life by loyalists.

In fact google Operation Taurus...

Reply

itsjustmacker says:
2:23 AM, September 05, 2013

McGuinness went to court in Derry charged with being a member of the IRA, He denied he was a member and was found not guilty!!!!!!!!!!!.

Makes you think , we were told to say nothing and not to recognise the court. So why did he recognise that same court!!!!!!!!!!!.

When I think of all the Blanket men, The Hunger Strikers , and he had never seen the inside of the kesh , nor any Gaol.

Maybe MH could explain that one, was he a Brit at that early stage, just like he is now?.

Reply

larry hughes says:
10:39 AM, September 05, 2013

itsjustmacker

I think their actions prove what they are down the decades. The reality is they are 'popular' which was their target destination. The fact they are popular makes me consider the mind-set of the population. They do say you get the politicians you deserve. Food for thought?

Reply

Francis Devlin says:
1:20 PM, September 05, 2013

Mackers since you're posting 'confidential' correspondence with the NUJ, why not throw it all on the line as it were. Why don't you post the contents of the email you set to the Chairman of Cliftonville FC demanding he sack Fido Murphy? If we're talking snitches that's a pretty underhanded thing to do, considering it was you who dragged the poor sop into your spat with Alison Morris in the first place so lets get it all out in the open. Or what about the emails between you and your new found pal Clifford the pipe bombing pastor Peeples. Launching character assassination on someone you deem the enemy and then passing details on to loyalists to finish off your dirty work for you. Wherever would you get that idea from?

You and Carrie seem indignant with rage that Fido would have the cheek to answer you back and however feebly defend himself, but then that's the thing with playground bullies, they don't like it when the little kid stands up and takes a swing back. We've already established that Carrie is very, very angry. The nature of her attack on Morris who dared to complain to an irrelevant body about her husband was highly personal in nature but now she's upset that young Fido is fighting back. But then take comfort that at least he's not colluding with loyalist death squads. Although he did make a badly spelt, gramatically incorrect point, on the same week when the papers were full of the truly heart wrenching story of Fiachra Daly's young family still homeless and now without a father because of the greed of you and your pal Tom McFeely what were you doing? Ranting about the NUJ/Irish news nicking on you. When you were drawing down a big fat wage helping line the...
moralizing from you then. Notice no debates or discussions on the quill about that. Carrie should take comfort that at least her children have a father and a roof over their head, Stephanie Meehan is not so lucky. Times like this its probably just as well you're an atheist and don't believe in divine retribution. When you were orating at gravesides did you for one second think how our old comrades would view you now, colluding with loyalists, working for a developer to part people from their life savings. When the Societies were asking you to speak do you think any of them considered how the Sunday World gets so much information on its members. Were on earth would they be getting all this detail? How can we establish a link between the SW and someone close to the societies, if only we had a clue who the snitch was, maybe Hugh Jordan knows you should ask him next time you're talking to him. Reporting to London? I tip my hat to you Sir for you truly are the man with the neck of the finest brass.

---

**Kev O'Higgins** says:
3:32 PM, September 05, 2013

Anthony,

I've mentioned before that I'm partially to allegory to make a point. I'll resort to this again to opine on Francis Devlin's contribution.

We used to have a puppy but unlike Firinne I never particularly wanted one. We could not get this obstinant beast house trained.

Once we had company and were sharing the craic while unnoticed the animal sneaked into the room and then dispensed the most foul smelling turd behind the sofa.

Now it was impossible to ignore this horrendous stench, and it was immediately drawn to my attention by my guests. However, they did not decide to stand around the turd, to discuss it's constituency, origin or odour.

No, they ignored it and allowed the owner to clean up the obnoxious parcel whilst they continued with the talk that had brought them visiting.

So in conclusion - someone has just dispensed a foul turd on your blog. I'll leave you to clean it up as I've no interest in discussing faecal matters.

---

**Tain Bo** says:
4:38 PM, September 05, 2013

Francis Devlin,

just out of curiosity as your comment seems to be all over the place are you Fido's manger or representative? Don't you think “the poor sop” can voice his own opinion without you throwing a pity party for him? He seems quite willing to sling insults an active willing participant in the back and forth but definitely not a victim.

Has he been relegated to the subs bench as you now appear to be center forward with your well informed misinformation granted a little easier to comprehend though riddled with the quality of sensational tabloid rubbish?

I don't mind you having a go at Anthony or his wife what I do find very disturbing is your unfounded allegations that he somehow in your world colludes with Loyalists' rather than the fact that the loyalists are none too pleased with the Irish News and were happy with Anthony's piece on calling the paper spineless.

You infer he colludes with loyalist death squad’s that is very dangerous language and you should know well that a smear like that could put the man's life in danger.

You speak of character assassination as if you are ethical as you rip through not only Anthony's character but also his wife’s.

Granted you sound a little brighter than Fido but aren't you just pissing over his piss on the same corner of the street with a stronger stench hoping that other mad dogs get a whiff and foam at the mouth believing your inaccurate allegations.
You join the ranks of those who exaggerate the power of this blog and if I didn't know better I could state you and others would like to see it closed down and giving your collusion with loyalist death squads it would not be a stretch to suggest one way or the other would be a sufficient result.

**michaelhenry** says:
5:44 PM, September 05, 2013

it'sjustmacker-

" he denied he was a member and found not Guilty "

Did you want to say he was a member back then to the court-he would have got a number of years if he did-maybe that's the main reason you are cross-

" So why did he recognise that same court "

The policy was changed in the 70s-thousands done the same-are you going to have a go at all of them-

" Nor any Gaol "

Again-check your so called facts out-

**Snowtorch** says:
6:09 PM, September 05, 2013

It's good to see that you personally don't support the use of informers against republicans, what's the chances of your Cumman at the next Ard Fheis calling for a motion of no confidence the Sinn Fein leadership for their support of the use of informers by the British forces, under all their guises?

And it was ok for J118 to break his oath because the Brits gave him immunity, that answers a lot of questions, thanks for the clarification!

As for the charges, under the regime that J118, you and your party support J118 violated British law in the occupied six counties, unless you would agree that the British claim of jurisdiction across the occupied six counties is illegal?

Would you agree that the british claim over the six counties is illegal?

I would and as such I would say that those who are administering British rule in Ireland are supporting the illegal occupation of a section of our country, so do you support the illegal occupation of the six counties?

I'm sure you could ask Francie Molloy for some clarification on how to administer British Rule in Ireland if you needed it.

As for your claim that people named volunteers in the Boston tapes, who named who? Would you care to point out who was named and when?

If you are refering to the late Dolours Price naming Gerry Adams, sure Gerry was never in the IRA or are you saying he was?

**Dixie** says:
7:46 PM, September 05, 2013

michaelhenry claimed:

"The policy was changed in the 70s-

ands done the same-are you going to have a go at all of them-"
That nonsense, I was sentenced in June 1977 over a year after McGuinness and we weren't allowed to recognise the court then.

That spin was put out to cover up for McGuinness - thousands my arse are you really that daft?

itsjustmacker says:
9:24 PM, September 05, 2013

MH:
I'm sure you just sit and make things up, or, you know sfa.

Thousands done it?.

well I'm glad I'm not one of those thousands.

Dixie is 100% correct, and, you state the rule changed! , at which army council did that occur, they forgot to inform the volunteers ,and to hand out green book amendments ,Another McGuinness trick maybe! Are you enjoying your British Salary MH , I'm sure you are , I don't hate anyone , but , I feel a little sadness for all Shinner.

gerard hodgins says:
10:11 PM, September 05, 2013

*the policy on recognition of courts changed in 1983.

*mackers, why you allow such unsubstantiated and deeply vitriolic comments about yourself, carrye and the kids is beyond me. belief in freedom of expression does not necessarily entail allowing an anonymous poster to engage in such projectile vomiting. ... just an opinion.

Tain Bo says:
11:00 PM, September 05, 2013

Gerard,

I can understand your comment but I do feel Anthony made the right call by posting what amounts to a backhanded threat. As unfounded as it is if he hadn't carried it then he would be guilty of censoring one of his critics. A catch 22 damned if he does and the same if he doesn't.

An interesting bit with the similar line of loyalist death squads has appeared in a few other places with Fido howling at the moon pointing at Anthony being the Sunday World's source. Devlin was here defending Fido but going by the same language elsewhere there would appear to be more than one unhappy person(s) spreading the same manure.
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