

Dissent Against Dissidents



Dissident Republicanism has once again raised its ugly head. Since the 1997 IRA ceasefire several minor Republican groupings have stood against the current strategy in place since the Good Friday Agreement, as promoted by their once erstwhile comrades in Sinn Fein. The two main dissident groupings are the *Continuity IRA* and the *Real IRA*. A third group which styles itself *Óglaigh na hÉireann* was originally thought to be a CIRA splinter but it now appears these three groups may be working together while other dissidents, growing dissatisfied with lack of progress in the peace process, have been joining the ranks including former Provo bomb makers whose level of sophistication is serious cause for concern.

CIRA is fronted by *Republican Sinn Fein* (not to be confused with the mainstream Sinn Fein) which split from the Provos way back in 1986 and considers itself the 'true heir' of Irish republican values. RIRA is fronted by the *32 County Sovereignty Movement*, formed in 1997, and also considers itself the real face of historical Republicanism. Neither group has any significant popular support. In the 2007 NI Assembly Elections *Republican Sinn Fein* won just 2,500 votes on an abstentionist platform. Neither group offers any cogent political analysis but styles themselves on the type of outmoded romanticism long since dismissed by mainstream republicanism.

What then gives these groups the basis to continue to justify an armed campaign? The recent shooting of Ronan Kerr was not so much because he was a cop but because he was a Catholic cop seen to be legitimizing the peace process. The motivation was clearly sectarian. A 500lb bomb left on the Belfast-Dublin road in April has been called an attempt at 'another Omagh', and is further evidence of these organisations callous disregard for human life. The motivation is desperation, a perennial attempt to create a 'spectacle' which might drag loyalists back into a war and return us all to the dark ages. Meanwhile Gerry Adams, who once 'justified' similar actions, has offered to enter dialogue with the dissidents.

While it is fair to say that the PSNI continue to intimidate certain communities and that the peace process itself is an entrenchment of sectarian values, there is no justification and no mandate for these gangs to inflict their egos upon us. Organise! has made its position clear on all sectarian groupings and on the cops, who as henchmen of the State are perpetrators of capitalism but we also need to remind ourselves that there is an alternative vision to both the State and these terror gangs who offer nothing but misery and gravestones; one that brings workers together in common cause rather than the empty politic of one that rends them apart.

Pee O'Neill



Staking a Claim

The Falls Road in Belfast on Sunday 24th of April saw Republican Sinn Fein, Provisional Sinn Fein, the Irish Republican Socialist Party, the Workers Party and Eirigi all out to honour Ireland's patriot dead and stake their claim to be the true heirs of the Easter Rising of 1916. The smallest pretender to the throne, the Republican Network for Unity went to Dundalk to state their case.

All of the above believe their organisations are the legitimate heirs of armed force republicanism, some claim that they are actually the legitimate government of Ireland (self appointed until a properly constituted government can be elected after Irish 're-unification'). Claims are staked that the state they wish to establish will, of course be socialist and anti-sectarian while all of these organisations have singularly failed to break with sectarianism and all conform to a nationalist vision of the future that is in itself sectarian. Never-mind that their various armed and electoral campaigns are based on and reinforce sectarianism.

How is this sort of double-think possible? Its really quite easy when your view of sectarianism is that it is something that them there Brits, unionists, prods and nasty huns do on us poor wee taigs. Perhaps that's a wee bit hard on the sticks, they do try their best to break with sectarianism.

In Dublin Mary Lou accused the Free State traitors of trampling on the Proclamation, in Drogheda and Dundalk Uncle Gerry complained that they had given away Ireland's

economic 'sovereignty', something of a myth in these days of truly global capitalism. In Belfast Gerry Kelly attacked those who would usurp and sully the name of Óglaigh na hÉireann.

The Itps announced their new levels of political maturity evidenced in their standing in elections for the first time in 30 years. And in getting their members to dress up in black trousers and white shirts for the occasion. Very sharp lads.

Eirigi talked of a cycle of defeat and re-ignited armed struggle. They also myopically put working class Protestant opposition to republicanism throughout the troubles down to goading by people like Paisley.

RSF, who proclaim themselves 'the soul of Ireland' gave us more of the same.

In Dundalk the RNU talked about committing themselves to the (very scant) socialism of the Proclamation and ended with a quote from the mentally unstable Catholic nationalist Pádraig Pearse promising to renew the fight.

So what are they all claiming and was there actually some sort of revolution begun in Ireland in 1916 that was actually socialist at all? We are reprinting a slightly amended article by Jason Brannigan that looks more critically at the creation myth of modern Irish republicanism as well as drawing some uncomfortable conclusions for those who still attempt to marry the doctrines of nationalism and socialism.

Jesse James

