



An Chartlann Náisiúnta **National Archives**

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Conversation with Paddy McGrory
Belfast, 17 December 1990

Articles 2 & 3:

He articulated, in particularly forceful terms, widespread nationalist concern in Northern Ireland at the debate on Articles 2 & 3. In doing so, he offered the caustic comment that he could understand the Workers Party's search for respectability in the South - particularly in the light of Official IRA activity in recent weeks in Belfast which signalled the possibility of a renewed feud between the Officials and the Provisionals in the Markets area.

He was, however, bitterly disappointed at the stance of the Fine Gael Party which he felt displayed an unbelievable naivety about Northern Ireland. Changing or even deleting the Articles would not receive so much as a thank-you from the Unionists. They would simply pocket the concession and immediately move on to the next grievance. He recalled that some years ago the Unionists had a practice of making fiery speeches about Article 40 on the special position of the Catholic Church. When that Article was deleted, he had not heard "so much as a squeak of appreciation" from the Unionists.

He found the suggestion that Articles 2 & 3 were somehow used by the IRA as a justification for their campaign to be particularly absurd. In his practice he has represented hundreds of members of the IRA over the years. Never once has he ever heard anyone mention Articles 2 & 3 or indeed the Constitution which, in any event, they view as "a Free State document" and refuse to recognise its validity in any shape or form.

For nationalists, the tone of some of the speeches in the Dail clearly signalled their possible abandonment by the South and this had deeply angered many nationalists in the North. As an example, he mentioned that Brian Friel (a close personal friend) had phoned him earlier and had sounded off in particularly virulent terms about his sense of betrayal. [comment: I heard similar strong comments from every nationalist I met in Northern Ireland this week.]

Brooke Speech:

He had been very impressed with Brooke's "neutrality speech" of 9 November which he felt was bound to stimulate further debate within the republican movement. He speculated at some length on the capacity of the republican movement to respond in an imaginative way to the speech. In his view, Gerry Adams


is one of the few people in the movement with a long-term view and with a capacity to think in an imaginative way. However, McGrory feels that Adams is very much constrained by the "Army" and is unable to make any significant move without the approval of the IRA.

Sandy Lynch:

McGrory is representing Danny Morrison who is still being held on remand facing charges relating to the imprisonment and attempted murder of the RUC informer, Sandy Lynch. (Ten others have also been charged in this case, including some senior IRA figures.) During the cross-examination at the preliminary hearing, Lynch revealed (to the obvious consternation of the RUC officers present) that he had been working for the RUC for 7 years. It was obvious to McGrory that Lynch was not supposed to have revealed that he had been working for the RUC for such a long time. It was also obvious from Lynch's demeanour in Court that he now fully identifies with the security services and not with his family or background. He displayed "not even a flicker of emotion or reaction" when his father shouted to him from the public gallery. McGrory commented that he had seen the same psychological transformation in some of the supergrass cases - most notably in the case of Harry Kirkpatrick.

According to Morrison, Lynch made a number of interesting revelations during his "interrogation" at the hands of the IRA, including the fact that he had been warned earlier in the week that he would be lifted by the IRA and was coached by the RUC as to what he should tell his interrogators. This had caused quite a few raised eyebrows within the IRA as it clearly implied that the RUC had another very senior source within the movement. It continues to be a mystery to the IRA as to how the RUC were able to pinpoint the house in West Belfast where Lynch was being interrogated. The IRA appear to have used the same house in the interrogation of Joe Fenton, another RUC informer murdered by the IRA in February 1989. [comment: It has been apparent over the past year, from the significant number of arms finds and raids on bomb factories (where a number of people have been caught red-handed) that the RUC may have a number of well-placed informers within the IRA in Belfast.]

Lynch named two other senior IRA figures (Kevin Mulgrew from Ardoyne and a well-known gunman with the unlikely name of Scapotici) as being responsible for his kidnapping & interrogation. Both are currently on the run.


Brendan McMahon
Anglo-Irish Division
20 December 1990

cc A/Sec Gallagher
Counsellors A.I.
Secretariat
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