

CONFIDENTIAL

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From: John Holmes
Date: 13 December 1996

PRIME MINISTER

SEAN O'CALLAGHAN

Good stuff.
Is he going to US?
7/15/12

You will recall that Lord Cranborne mentioned to you the valuable publicity we are getting from this ex-IRA terrorist. I attach a few examples of his stuff from the media. The most interesting is the interview with Peter Snow on the top. As you will see, he is firm that we should be very careful about any new IRA ceasefire, which he believes will happen before the election. He is convinced that the IRA have no intention of giving up the option of violence, that Sinn Fein's objective is to put pressure on other nationalists to screw concessions out of us, and that Sinn Fein aim to displace the SDLP as the main representatives of nationalism in Northern Ireland.

This is not far from our own analysis, although I would argue that people like Adams have probably now realised that violence will get them nowhere, and that negotiations are the only way forward - but even they may still want to retain the option of going back to violence and could not persuade others to give it up for good even if they wanted to.

As Cranborne suggested, O'Callaghan is most use to us if he does not have our finger-prints on what he says and does. But we may be able to give him some behind the scenes help, eg in the US. I am looking into this.

John

JOHN HOLMES

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PETER SNOW TALKS TO SEAN O'CALLAGHAN

First, I asked him when he'd begun to turn away from the IRA.

I was beginning to question the whole thing and get seriously worried about it. And one night, sitting in a flat at 11 Milk Street in Monaghan Town and a news report came on - an RUC woman had been killed in a bomb explosion in Bangor. And in the flat were about eight members of the Provisional IRA from East Tyrone who were on the run from Northern Ireland. One of them who subsequently became Chief of Staff of the IRA, and was Chief of Staff of the IRA through most of the peace process, turned around to me and said: "I hope she's pregnant and we get two for the price of one". And I couldn't cope with that. My Republicanism was of the sort of romantic sort. I hadn't been brought up with that kind of squalid hate and bitterness and bigotry.

It took you as a romantic Republican quite a long time to discover that the IRA were pursuing a sectarian war, didn't it?

I think that in a sense it did. And I mean I take the responsibility for that. It wasn't really until I went to Tyrone in May of '74 and then, by August of '75, I had left the IRA.

How do you think your release will be received by the relatives of the people you killed?

I'm not sure. All I can say is that when you murder people, or you hurt people badly, you have to take the responsibility for it. I've tried to in a practical way make sure that other people don't get killed and other people don't get injured. Nothing that I can do and nothing that I can ever say is going to console or make amends to the relatives of people that have been murdered. And it's something that I want to be very careful about, and I don't want to cause any offence to the families or the relatives in any way.

How vigorous a debate do you think there has been going on and is now going on within the IRA, and within Sinn Fein about the relative advantage of pursuing a violent or a political campaign?

The leadership of the Republican Movement, the people who straddle the political party Sinn Fein, and the Military Wing the IRA, have been the leadership of the Provisional IRA for many, many years now. Extremely determined, very hard and very ruthless.

Let's be quite clear about this. Are you saying that people like Gerry Adams and the other leaders, are you saying that we are wrong or right to see people like Gerry Adams as trying to persuade the men of the IRA who would want to remain committed to a violent campaign trying to persuade them to pursue a peaceful cause?

I don't believe for one minute that Gerry Adams is seriously trying to persuade anybody in the IRA to pursue a peaceful course.

So what about that ceasefire in 1994?

The ceasefire was particularly planned. I had been saying to people for a year before that ceasefire was called, that they would call a ceasefire, it would last for at least a year, the object of the exercise was to portray the British Government and Unionists as utterly intransigent. But the central note was to embed themselves within Irish Nationalism, to radicalise Irish Nationalism, to become part of the Nationalist family. And in that way, they eventually hope to supersede the SDLP as the voice of Northern Ireland's Nationalists. If that were to happen, then bloodshed on a scale that we have never seen before in Northern Ireland will be the inevitable outcome.

And what do you think about the prospect of another ceasefire?

The leadership of the Provisional IRA and Sinn Fein, the people that call the shots, people we know quite well - we see them on television, we hear them on the radio, read them in the newspapers all the time. Those people will want to call a ceasefire at least three months before the British General Election. And the object of that exercise will be to put maximum pressure on the SDLP to enter into an electoral arrangement with them. In the event of an IRA ceasefire, if the SDLP refused to go into an electoral arrangement with Sinn Fein, I believe that many Northern Nationalists will not forgive the SDLP's refusal to maximise the Nationalist vote.

How do you think the Government should respond then to another ceasefire by the IRA?

If the IRA call another ceasefire, then I believe the Government should take as much time as is absolutely necessary. They should listen to the advice from the RUC and from the intelligence agencies. They should be very, very slow to make any immediate moves towards them. The hard reality, the real hard reality is that the leadership of the Provisional Movement see the problem in Ireland as the Unionist problem. They have no wish to enter into accommodation with Unionism. They want to force the British Government to abandon Unionists who they feel can then be dealt with.

Yes, but now when John Major says that he has no intention of accepting - he said yesterday - that he has no intention of accepting another ceasefire that isn't genuine, are you satisfied that he can find out whether or not a ceasefire is genuine? Can he be, in a sense could he be fooled again?

I don't believe that he's going to be fooled again. They were fooled the first time. I - my own belief is that it's quite obvious in Northern Ireland - and there were punishment beatings today, there'll be punishment beatings

tomorrow, there'll be punishment beatings next month. The IRA is not going to disavow violence permanently, short of victory. And anybody that believes otherwise, whether it's John Hume or John Major or anybody else - is going to make a very grave error.

Can I just be clear about one thing you're saying there? Are you saying that the leadership of the IRA, people like Gerry Adams, they're not persuaded that they can win the unity of Ireland or whatever else they want without a violent campaign? Is that what your effectively saying? They recognise they can't win it by peaceful means?

They recognise that absolutely. I mean the power of terror, the anticipation of terror, the willingness to use terror, the ability to be able to do it, are all powerful weapons. Now these people will not surrender these options. The Provisional IRA don't give up options lightly. What they're trying to do is to put maximum pressure on Nationalist leaders to go to the British Government and get concessions for the Provisional IRA. Not concessions for themselves. Concessions for the Provisional IRA. And the Provisional IRA are quite happy with that arrangement.

And if I'm clear in understanding, you don't believe that the IRA ceasefire can ever be genuine. From what you said, by definition, it can't be genuine. Is that right?

I'm convinced of that, yes.

Let me ask one final question. You're talking to us now openly like this, what risk do you believe you're running of reprisals by the IRA? Revenge killing?

There wouldn't be any doubt in my mind and most people I think would accept this, that the Provisional IRA would kill me given the opportunity. They would

like to kill me.

Sinn Fein refused to comment on Mr. O'Callaghan's comments but I'm joined now by the SDLP negotiator, Mark Durcan.

'Jackal' leaves jail but refuses new identity

by Liam Clarke

SEAN O'CALLAGHAN, the IRA's most wanted man after turning from terrorist to police informer, has been released from jail having served just eight years of two life sentences for murder.

O'Callaghan, once known as the "Jackal" for his terrorist crimes, has rejected a new identity, money and a place to live from C14, a secretive section of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, which specialises in arranging new lives for former informers and agents. "I want to be in nobody's pocket, I need the freedom to make my own decisions," he said.

He will be in danger of being killed by an IRA hit squad for the rest of his life for informing on the movement for a decade. According to his handler, a senior detective, O'Callaghan was "the most important intelligence agent in the history of the Irish state".

Speaking from a secret hide-out this weekend, O'Callaghan said: "I recognise there is a possibility that I will be caught and killed. They can get lucky but I hope I know enough about them to stay one step ahead. Nothing in life is certain for anybody and this is a threat that I will have to live with."

O'Callaghan was released from Maghaberry prison, near Lisburn, Co Antrim, where he had served his sentence in a special unit, isolated from the rest of the prison population. Amid tight security, a white van slipped out of the gates on Thursday driven by a senior prison official: it carried O'Callaghan who, after killing twice for the IRA, turned on the organisation and betrayed its secrets first to the gardai and later to MI5.

His release date was only settled last Monday when the Queen signed a form of royal assent reducing sentences totalling 539 years to just eight.

Normally there are two years of pre-release schemes for prisoners serving life sentences in Northern Ireland, weekends at home and detailed training to help inmates adjust to the outside world. However, in the case of high-ranking informers such preparations are considered too risky.

This weekend O'Callaghan, 42, used his new freedom to launch a vitriolic attack on the IRA and to make an impassioned plea for peace.

"I hope to use the time available to me now to tell the world

the truth about the IRA. I will go on doing that for as long as it takes. Extreme nationalism is the seedbed of fascism. Provisionalism is no different. That will simply never change," he said.

"As the IRA's influence increases, civil war looms closer. Everybody in his right mind wants peace. I wish for peace with all of my heart, but cuddling up to the IRA will not bring peace. For 26 years they have butchered and tortured, lied and cheated, and got away with it. They will not change until decent Irish people, acting together, tell them enough is enough.

"Let us bring the whole bloody nonsense to an end. Let us make it clear to Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness [the Sinn Féin leadership] that enough is enough. The government and people of the republic, acting in concert, can force the IRA to back down. We can make good and honourable peace with the decent Unionists of Northern Ireland, but first we will have to make the IRA bow to the democratic will."

O'Callaghan's extraordinary double life was first revealed by The Sunday Times four years ago when it emerged that he had foiled an IRA plot to murder the Prince and Princess of Wales during a visit to the Dominion Theatre in London in 1983. The royal couple were meant to die in what would have been the most audacious assassination in the IRA's history. If both the Waleses had been killed, Prince William would have been left an orphan and heir to the throne at 13 months old.

After joining the IRA at 15, O'Callaghan had become a hardened terrorist, committing at least two murders and countless other crimes. But he became disillusioned with terrorism and secretly joined the fight against the IRA. He sabotaged the theatre bomb plan by arranging to be named as a wanted man and slipped back to Ireland leaving no time for a replacement to be found.

In 1984, five years after turning informer, O'Callaghan's information led to Martin Ferris, his closest associate in the IRA, being arrested on board a trawler with seven tons of weapons. The following year he left Ireland and settled in the

home counties. He offered his services to the police, who put him in contact with MI5.

His handlers freely admit that he took the lead in most of his schemes and that the personal strain on him was immense. "His motives seem to have been a mixture of guilt for the killings he carried out and the pleasure he took in a secret

life. It was largely up to him what he did and passed on," said one.

In 1988, O'Callaghan gave himself up amid reports from Ireland that he had "misused" IRA funds. At Belfast crown court in 1990, he admitted a series of terrorist crimes and was sentenced to a total of 539 years. He pleaded guilty and re-

fused to be legally represented. O'Callaghan, from Tralee, Co Kerry, murdered Eva Martin, of the Ulster Defence Regiment, in a rocket attack in May 1974 and Inspector Peter Flanagan, who was shot in a pub in Omagh in August the same year. There was no mention at the trial of his key role as an informant whose co-operation

with the security services saved many lives.

Today O'Callaghan is working on three books — a novel, an autobiography and a collection of the poetry he has written in prison. He also plans to continue to attack the IRA through newspaper articles and television and radio appearances.

The repercussions of his actions as an informer will always be with him. Ferris, who he sent to jail for eight years, is now a member of the IRA army council and is believed by the security forces to be eager for revenge. His bitterness at O'Callaghan's release will be doubly galling because Ferris was for a long time O'Callaghan's protégé, being fed

information which eventually led to Ferris's own imprisonment.

"Ferris never realised that in effect he worked, through me, for the security forces for six years. That is something he will find very hard to bear," O'Callaghan said.

Another dangerous adversary with every reason to bear a grudge is Angelo Fusco, who in 1980 shot dead Herbert Westmacott, an SAS officer, in Belfast. Fusco escaped from jail and was only recaptured because O'Callaghan organised his safe house and then told the gardai where it was.

"I remember serving drinks at a prisoners' dependants' fund benefit in Kerry and looking at seven women and thinking 'I have put all your husbands in jail'," he recalled. Today all seven families may want their revenge.

O'Callaghan is believed to be the first prisoner in the Northern Ireland prison system to refuse the help of a new identity. The normal package, which he is expected to reject, is a house in Britain, about £50,000 in cash and a contact number in case of difficulties, all of which he has rejected.

"As far as I am concerned it has never been about money, it has been about taking responsibility for my own actions. I am quite happy with the way things are," he said.

8.12.96

MURDER WITH THE FATHERS' HELP

From the prison where he is serving life, Sean O'Callaghan tells of the part that priests played in his own life, and in others' deaths

I WAS born into an Irish Catholic family in the rural Ireland of the 1950s, when the Irish Catholic Church was the single most influential institution in the lives of Irish Catholics. Rule by fear was the order of the day. I still remember the strut and swagger of the young priests who knew only too well how powerful they really were. It has been both exciting and pleasurable, therefore, to witness the increasing and long overdue public trauma which that Church now has to face on a regular basis.

The Irish Catholic Church has long been a law unto itself. In many respects it is a rather unique form of criminality. Why unique? Because it consistently conspired with the worst elements of extreme nationalism to produce a dogma based on the racial purity of a mythological 'Irish race'.

We were taught that Irish Catholics were special to God and that the Virgin Mary was an Irish colleen. Padraic Pearce and Easter Week were inextricably woven into a seamless mix of blood and sacrifice for country and Church. The Catholic Church's crimes against decency and humanity on this island threatened to submerge us in a sea of superstition, ignorance and hatred of all that was not totally obedient to its will.

Educated in the main by nuns and Christian Brothers, we 'learned' that God and Irish nationalism marched hand in hand to a tune shrouded in mystery but always clear to the faithful. They were truly blood brothers and we were all destined to be the sacrifice.

Even as a youngster I recognised in some vague way the all-pervasive power of the Church. Its influence was everywhere — from no meat on a Friday to the banishment, or worse, of unmarried mothers. We were marched to confession from primary school on the first Friday of every month; ranks of schoolchildren drilled in obedience to Holy Mother Church.

On our first day in secondary school, which of course was controlled by the Christian Brothers, we sat an exam which purported to grade us according to ability. Those who performed best were placed in the A class, where every subject, where possible, would be taught through the medium of the Irish language. I was lucky enough to be one of the chosen few. I objected, saying that I did not want to be

forced to submit to such dictatorial teaching methods. The assistant headmaster, a Christian Brother, was sent for. I was made to stand in front of the class while the other pupils were forced to kneel and pray that I might repent and see the error of my ways. It seems comical today, but when you are 13 years old and a giant of a Christian Brother is booming out prayers and abuse in equal measure, fear is what you feel.

The master capped it all by ordering me to leave the room: 'You are a disgrace to Ireland's noble dead.' This was followed by a fearsome rendition of a song written about a former Lord Mayor of Cork, 'murdered by the British', called McSweeney: 'Shall my soul pass through old Ireland?'

Then in 1968 the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland burst onto our television screens, to be quickly followed by the sectarian bloodletting which became all too familiar over the next 25 years. The nationalist cause was sermoned and preached from pulpit and Dail and, fool that I was, I

fell for the big lie. The Irish press, ably led by Tim Pat Coogan, played its part with distinction. Hatred of Britain and the Unionists was vomited daily from its pages and I, to my lasting shame, became a political gangster.

I joined the Provisional IRA in 1970 aged 15, and eventually ended up in Northern Ireland, where in 1974 I committed two murders in Co. Tyrone. One of those murders serves to highlight in a gut-wrenching way the extent of the link between extreme nationalism and Irish Catholicism.

Peter Ignatius Flanagan was an Irish Catholic and a detective-inspector in the RUC Special Branch. Stationed in Omagh, he was a particular hate figure among local

Catholics: he had betrayed his own. I was one of three people who murdered him in a public house in Omagh in August of 1974. Murder is murder — an obscenity — and the most terrible of crimes against humanity. Apologies in such circumstances are, I believe, only grotesque and self-serving; actions are what matter. I can never redress the balance, but I can try.

After the murder, we drove to a house a couple of miles from Omagh. Within a couple of hours, two of us were driven to a Catholic parochial house some distance away. I knew the house and the two priests who lived there quite well, as I and other

IRA people often stayed there. We were greeted joyously, showered with holy water and prayers and fed like kings. 'An abominable man who abandoned his faith and sold his soul to the devil.' That was how the senior of the two priests described the murdered man to us — two young murderers — as we sat at their table. I remember a flicker of disquiet, but not the awful revulsion that I should have felt. We were the heroes of the moment in that house.

The following day, we were driven to a house in Cookstown. The two priests obligingly scouted the road ahead to make sure that there were no security force roadblocks to endanger us. I could recount many similar incidents north and south of the border, told to me by other IRA people, which prove that those two priests were not by any means an exception. Far from it. The contacts between the Irish Catholic Church and the Provisionals were far too extensive for all of this to be unknown to the hierarchy. We have seen in the Brendan Smith case, and in the cases of other paedophile priests, that the hierarchy knows well how to cover its own back.

I am no intellectual. People like Conor Cruise O'Brien are far better equipped than I am to shed light on the relationship between the Irish Catholic Church and extreme nationalism. But I have the evidence of my own life. I was there when priests collaborated with Provisionals, in the name of God and nationalism, to procure and commit murder. I remember Cardinal O'Fiach coming out of the Maze prison to praise murderers for their steadfastness in their faith, their nationalism and their Gaelic culture — all the things which led to their committing murder. I was there when a priest from Northern Ireland addressed an IRA meeting in Kerry and told us that British soldiers were regularly raping Catholic women in Derry and Belfast.

The Irish Catholic Church is still well entrenched within nationalism. Powerful people like John Hume and Bertie Ahern will do the Church's bidding when the crunch comes. This web that stretches from baptism, communion, confirmation, to the confession box, marriage and death still smothers much of rural Catholic Ireland. Perhaps its power is waning but it will fight a long and dirty war to retain control over its flock. It will use genuine concerns about drugs and crime and the breakdown of communal responsibility to lead people 'back to basics' — back to God, back to the safety and security of Mother Church. The Irish Catholic Church has its own agenda. Everything and everybody are superfluous to that. It will not give up its privileged position easily. The battle has only begun.