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# Rehabilitating Haughey

By Ken Patterson

Lately there has been a concerted campaign to rehabilitate Charles Haughey. This rehabilitation has gathered significant momentum through recent public pronouncements of some Haughey supporters, including Charlie McCreevy, the present Minister for Finance, and Michael O'Leary, the chief executive of Ryanair.

This campaign has left ordinary people both angry and extremely puzzled as to why some people so eagerly seek to revise Haughey's controversial and shameful legacy. Perhaps those championing Haughey have conveniently forgotten what this man did in the name of Ireland and Irish politics? It is only because of such blindly loyal support that Haughey was able to get away with his disgraceful behaviour for so long. The fact that Haughey was a compulsive liar and a tax cheat does not matter in any way to his cronies because without him and his scheming methods several of them would never have made such vast amounts of money in the first place.

There are those who would say 'ah well the man is sick, you can't keep punishing him.' What must not be forgotten in replying to this is that at the time of his crooked dealings, Haughey was not ill either mentally or physically. Besides, Charles Haughey has never been properly punished for lying to the Irish public, for his obscene exploitation of the poor while lining the greedy pockets of his elite friends, or for the vast amount of backhanders he accepted. This attempted rehabilitation says a lot about our so-called justice system and about a society which is supposed to have social equality and not an identifiable ruling class. If any normal working class citizen was found not to have something as trivial as a TV license, then that person could expect to be brought before a court and prosecuted, possibly even receiving a custodial sentence. That Haughey has not been prosecuted for any of his corruption is a typical example of the hypocrisy within the Irish justice system at present.

Ryanair chief executive Michael O'Leary has been quoted as saying that we 'should bring back Haughey. He may have been crooked, but at least he got things done'. Many will argue that is not a surprising view coming from a capitalist who is known to use bullyboy tactics in business to get what he wants. However if one of the country's most successful businessmen thinks that being crooked is not a relevant issue, we have to question how he runs Ryanair.

Charlie McCreevy has also been contributing to the Haughey rehabilitation

campaign. In a newspaper interview he stated that, 'Mr. Haughey will always be remembered as the man who turned the country around' in the 1980s 'because we were bankrupt. We were the next case for the International Monetary Fund.' It may be true that the country was bankrupt in the 1980s, however this was mostly due to the crazy economic promises that won Fianna Fail the 1977 general election. Mr. McCreevy is wrong in believing that Haughey should be remembered for saving the country; he should be remembered for fleecing the country and its people. It is worth recalling that at the same time as Haughey was lavishly spending his corruptly acquired wealth he was advising the ordinary people of this country that they were living beyond their means and needed to tighten their belts.

It is astonishing that there are still people who are unashamed supporters of this man and his political ideology. Indeed some of his business cronies are still in powerful positions. Judging by this, it must make us wonder what exactly has been achieved at the Tribunals. It's hard not to believe that these are not just smokescreens to hide corrupt business and political activity, which continues to this day. That his Haughey's true legacy.

The Moriarty Tribunal listed the money received by Haughey between 1979 and 1996. It added up to an unbelievable €10.9m. Included in this were the now notorious 'gifts' of money given to Haughey by Ben Dunne. Earlier this year Charles Haughey agreed to pay €5m to the Revenue Commissioner to settle outstanding tax liabilities. To pay this tax bill he has recently sold his luxury home and surrounding 235 acres for an estimated €35m. It is thought that the disgraced former Taoiseach will personally make €10m after tax from the sale of Abbeville House in Kinsealy. His four children, who own most of the surrounding lands, will gain €20m from the deal. It is incredible to think that after so much corruption and tax evasion Haughey's financial assets have not been frozen and to this day he is allowed to make so much money from his business dealings.

There will always be those who will try to keep alive and support the Haughey legacy. This will continue to happen as long as those cronies from his inner circle are still allowed to remain in influential positions in Irish society.

**Ken Patterson is a republican prisoner in Portlaoise Gaol**

# Maghaberry: Long Kesh revisited

By Kevin Lally

Since the beginning of the struggle for national liberation, Irish political prisoners have opposed and resisted the often brutal conditions in which they have found themselves incarcerated. Scholars of Irish resistance will, no doubt, be well aware of the numerous publications on the topic, the most notable of which were penned by patriots of the calibre of Thomas Clarke and Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa. Those less well versed in the history of republican penal protest would do well to educate themselves in the actions undertaken by both IRA and INLA prisoners of war in Long Kesh and Armagh gaols.

On the 1st of March 1976, the British government withdrew the political status of POWs convicted on or after that date. With the withdrawal of POW status, the British sought to equate prisoners of war with common criminals, thus criminalising and depoliticising the Irish national struggle. The first step in this criminalisation scheme was a British

demand that all new entrants to Long Kesh and Armagh gaols would be required to wear the uniform of a convict. On the 14th of September, a newly sentenced prisoner, Ciaran Nugent, refused to wear a criminal's uniform and dressed himself in a blanket instead. The Blanket protest was born. This Blanket protest prompted the British to introduce twenty-four hour lock-ups in the gaols. However, towards the end of March 1978, after almost eighteen months on the Blanket, the POW leadership within Long Kesh realised that there was a need for an escalation in the method of protest. It was decided that POWs would refuse to 'slop-out', followed shortly thereafter by a refusal to wash. This new development became known throughout the ranks as the "No-Wash, No Slop-Out" protest. Within a number of days, the female POWs in Armagh Gaol had followed suit.

With that, the prison administration then blocked up the cell windows, thereby removing the only means POWs had to expel excrement and urine. The only recourse left, therefore, was to smear excrement upon the cell walls. This resulted in wing-shifts (to facilitate the steam-cleaning of cells) in August 1978. During these, POWs were savagely assaulted (this was normal at all times), forced to squat over

mirrors (to identify objects concealed inside the body), and washed forcibly by gangs of screws (armed with steel-wool, deck-scrubs, yard-brushes etc.). It should be noted that at no time did POWs have access to television, radio, books, educational materials or physical exercise of any description.

On Monday, the 27th of October 1980, after four years on protest, the POWs declared that political status was theirs as of right, and in an effort to secure it, seven men embarked upon a hunger strike, to the

On the 3rd of October 1981, over five years of brutality, torture and eventually, murder came to an end when the POW leadership announced the end of the protest. Shortly thereafter, the conditions sought by the men and women of Long Kesh and Armagh gaols were achieved. It was thought that political prisoners would never again be incarcerated in conditions that denied them their political status.

However, it will be of no surprise to some to learn that this is not the case. What will be of surprise and indeed shock is the

fact that the political representatives of the men and women who endured torture and death to secure political status have, with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, rendered those hard-secured prison conditions null and void. At the time of going to press, Republican POWs are once again staging a protest within Maghaberry gaol in Co. Antrim.

Since the signing of the GFA, the prison authorities in Maghaberry have been implementing a policy of forced integration. Simply put, this means that republican

POWs have been forced to share landings with criminal and loyalist elements which has inevitably led to serious confrontation with these elements and employees of the prison regime. It is these confrontations (which have resulted in beatings, scaldings et cetera for some POWs) that are the catalyst for the current protest under prosecution by POWs at the moment.

This, of course, is another attempt by the British to implement the old criminalisation policy of ill renown. It will fail today as it failed in both Long Kesh and Armagh. It will fail today as its acceptance is to recognise the criminalisation of republican POWs. It will fail today as its acceptance is a slap in the face to the protesting POWs of yesteryear. It will fail today as its acceptance is to dishonour the sacrifice made by the H-Block martyrs. It is doomed to failure today as its acceptance is to criminalise the national liberation struggle, and whilst Republicans are capable of drawing breath, this will never stand.



**The 1981 hunger strikers - how many will die this time?**

death, if necessary. Others joined the 'stailc' throughout its duration, including three female POWs from the unit within Armagh Gaol. On the 18th of December, the POW leadership believed agreeable terms had been reached and a halt was called to the stailc. Negotiations began, but it soon became apparent that the British were not going to honour the believed agreement.

With the realisation that the stailc had ended under a false pretence came the further realisation that men would die in the event of another hunger strike. However, with this in mind, the POW leadership announced that a second stailc was to be undertaken. There was no shortage of volunteers. On the 1st of March 1981, five years to the day after the introduction of the criminalisation policy, POWs once again stepped into the breach. Those taking part were under no illusion, death was the probable outcome in this, the final push to secure political status for friends and comrades, present and future, so that never again would political prisoners be forced to endure the harshest of prison conditions.

As a result of continued British intransigence, ten men - seven IRA and three INLA - were to lose their lives in a principled and just quest to secure decent and adequate living conditions for ALL Political Prisoners.

# An Irish political showtrial

**The McKevitt conviction marked a new low for Dublin's Special Criminal Court, argues Paul Maguire. Here he investigates the background to the trial, and examines Michael McKevitt's reasons for withdrawing from the court.**

On 28 November 2000, at a secure American location, senior MI5 officers sat face to face with David Rupert and made him an extraordinary offer. Rupert was told that in return for a statement to An Garda Síochána and his testimony against Michael McKevitt he would receive in excess of \$2.5m. Rupert didn't need much time to consider the offer. He immediately accepted. With this decision MI5 knew they were one step closer to securing the conviction of Michael McKevitt.

Six weeks later, on 9 January 2001, Rupert presented his statement to An Garda Síochána. Events quickly unfolded. At 11am on 29 March, as Michael McKevitt sat watching television with his family, forty members of the Special Branch and the Emergency Response Unit smashed through the front door of his County Louth home. It was clear this was no routine search and arrest. ERU operatives bundled Bernadette McKevitt to the floor, while Michael McKevitt was manhandled, placed under arrest and driven at speed to Balbriggan Garda Station, where he spent the next three days under interrogation.

With McKevitt securely detained, the arresting Special Branch officers were unable to restrain their glee. Some even began to drop their guard. Seated across the table from McKevitt in the interrogation room, Detective Diarmuid O'Sullivan taunted him that his arrest was 'a political stitch up from on high'. Two days later, Michael McKevitt became the first man in the twenty-six counties to be charged with directing an illegal organisation; he was also charged with IRA membership. On 31 March 2001, he appeared before the Special Criminal Court, was refused bail and remanded in custody to Portlaoise Prison.

In June the DPP presented McKevitt with the book of evidence. It contained details of Rupert's activities as an MI5 agent in Ireland and his Garda statement. From the outset, McKevitt's solicitor, Mr. James McGuill, sought the disclosure of all documents relevant to the defence case, as it was imperative that Rupert's statement was cross-referenced against Garda surveillance reports and his e-mails to MI5. It was also necessary to ascertain Garda and MI5 assessments of the quality of Rupert's intelligence reports. In short, before this case ever went to trial, the disclosure of relevant legal documentation was of extreme importance.

After several letters to the DPP seeking the disclosure of relevant material proved unsuccessful, the defence brought the matter before the courts. In April 2002, the Special Criminal Court declared it could not compel MI5 or the FBI to disclose any documentation. The High Court subsequently upheld this decision. In October 2002, a further disclosure application was brought before the Special Criminal Court. Chief-Superintendent Callinan, in an affidavit presented during the four-day hearing, stated that all undisclosed documents were either irrelevant to the defence case or were being withheld on grounds of national security. The prosecution concurred. In its ruling the Court accepted these assurances and rejected the application for disclosure.

On 23 June 2003, David Rupert entered the witness box. The court heard that on numerous occasions between April 1992 and

October 2000 Rupert traveled to Ireland with various girlfriends and wives. In August 1994 FBI Agent Buckley approached Rupert when he returned from one of these trips and persuaded him to gather intelligence on various Irish republicans and ascertain if funds raised in the US were being used to finance Irish terrorism. Rupert stated that his 'moral teachings' enabled him to embark upon this type of work. The FBI paid Rupert's expenses throughout this period. However on 24 February 1997 Rupert signed an official FBI contract, which earned him \$2,500 per month plus expenses.

These payments excluded cash bonuses for high-grade intelligence.

By May 1997 the FBI had encouraged Rupert to work for MI5 for an undisclosed sum. The controversial aspects of Rupert's testimony concerned his trips to Ireland from November 1998, the period during which he became acquainted with Mickey Donnelly, who he alleged was the Derry O/C of the CIRA. According to Rupert by this time Donnelly had become disillusioned with the CIRA and intended to join a new republican organisation entitled Oglagh na hEireann.

Rupert testified that Donnelly introduced him to McKevitt in August 1999. Thereafter, he met the accused on another twenty occasions. During one of these meetings McKevitt stated that the primary responsibility for the Omagh bombing lay with the CIRA. Rupert also claimed McKevitt appointed him Oglagh na hEireann's

US representative. From November 1999 Rupert allegedly accompanied McKevitt to several IRA meetings where strategies, tactics and the type of weaponry required to sustain any new campaign were discussed. Rupert last visited Ireland in October 2000. One month later, he met senior members of MI5 and the FBI and agreed to testify against McKevitt. When asked what motivated him to testify, he replied that a TV documentary on the Omagh bombing had profoundly influenced him.

On 30 June 2003 defence counsel, Mr. Hugh Hartnett SC, began his eleven-day cross-examination. The defence immediately attacked Rupert's credibility as a witness by highlighting his unsavoury past which included multiple bankruptcies, his career as a FBI informant which dated back to the early 1970s and previous FBI investigations into Rupert concerning wire and insurance fraud.

The Court also heard from Trooper Hamill, a policeman from Upstate New York, who described Rupert as 'a street smart criminal'. When continually pressed Rupert denied any criminal or smuggling past. At one point defence counsel pointed to the discrepancies between Rupert's testimony and a MI5 document, disclosed on 15 April 2002, which detailed his 'criminal and smuggling background'. Hartnett argued this was conclusive evidence that Rupert had perjured himself. However, the Court rejected the application.

Defence counsel also placed Rupert's motivation in testifying under the microscope. The Court learned that when Rupert met MI5 in May 1997 he described himself as 'a whore'. Furthermore, in a MI5 document dated 8 October 2000 - one month before he agreed to testify - Rupert confided: 'I'm a mercenary, tell me what



Michael McKevitt

to do, make it worth my while and as long as the benefit overrides the risk in my view it will be done to the best of my ability'. Harnett declared 'My Lords, these are hardly the utterances of a man guided by moral teachings'. Defence counsel put it to Rupert that his decision to testify was motivated by financial and not moral concerns. He pointed to the \$2.5m Rupert secured from MI5 and his April 2001 FBI negotiated tax-settlement with the IRS which ensured he paid a mere \$25,000 in lieu of a \$785,000 debt.

The accuracy of Rupert's intelligence reports were also scrutinized. Defence counsel highlighted a MI5 document in which Assistant Garda Commissioner Jennings ineloquently referred to Rupert as 'a bullshitter' and declared 'he [Jennings] continued to be dismissive about the reporting from Rupert provided by the British Intelligence Services'. When questioned in relation to the controversial aspects of his evidence Rupert appeared unassured and indecisive. He was unable to remember dates of meetings, those who attended and the content of discussions. Many legal observers perceived Rupert to be an unreliable witness of dubious motivation. On the morning of Friday 18 July, the day after Rupert had concluded his evidence, the DPP fired what amounted to a legal exorcist missile into the middle of the proceedings. Before the trial resumed the prosecution disclosed several Garda surveillance reports to the defence. These documents contradicted Rupert's initial statement in the book of evidence in which he alleged McKevitt had attended an IRA Army Council meeting on 17 February 2000. In contrast, the disclosed Garda surveillance reports situated McKevitt at his home on this date.

The defence immediately applied for a stay in the proceedings. The Court rejected the application. Thereafter, Hartnett declared that the non-disclosure of these documents 'had irreparably damaged, disadvantaged and disabled' the defence case. Hartnett then informed the court that the defendant had discharged his entire legal team and was withdrawing from the proceedings in protest. Mr. Justice Johnson asked the defendant if he wished to address the court.

Michael McKevitt reminded the Court that in October 2002 it had mistakenly accepted the assurances of Chief-Superintendent Callinan and the prosecution when they stated that all relevant legal documents had been disclosed. He continued: 'Why were these important surveillance reports withheld for two and a half years and disclosed twenty-two days into the trial, after Mr. Rupert had presented his testimony? The disclosure of these documents was in no way detrimental to national security. However, prompt disclosure was detrimental to an effective prosecution of this case, while simultaneously hampering the defence. Perhaps here lies the true reason for concealment?'

'If these surveillance reports had been promptly disclosed prior to the commencement of the trial, the defence would have reassessed its strategy, the presentation of its case and its cross-examination of Mr. Rupert. Somebody took a decision to withhold this information which directly attacks Mr. Rupert's credibility as a witness. I find this totally unacceptable. These developments pose a further serious question: What other material is being withheld?' McKevitt reiterated that he had been continuously denied the right to a fair trial. 'There are strong indications that MI5 documents were being tampered with in order to enhance the prosecution of this case. In a disclosure document dated 14 June 2002, a MI5 officer stated that Assistant Garda Commissioner Jennings urged that certain reports 'be removed'. The MI5 officer then informed Assistant Garda Commissioner Jennings that other 'trickinesses' in certain reports were being addressed. Evidently, an Assistant Garda

Commissioner was pro-actively engaged with MI5 in manipulating, in advance, the evidence which might be presented by the Gardai to the DPP to justify my arrest and arraignment. Is this not a clear example of interference with evidence in order to bolster the prosecution of this case? He concluded: 'For five weeks I have persevered with my legal team in asserting my innocence. But this task has been rendered impossible by the events which have transpired in this courtroom. Therefore, I will not participate any further in this political show trial and I now withdraw with my dignity intact'. The defendant absented himself from the courtroom while the prosecution proceeded with indecent haste to question the remaining 35 witnesses over a two day period. On Wednesday 6 August, the Special Criminal Court found Michael McKevitt guilty of IRA membership solely on the opinion of Chief Superintendent Michael Finnegan. In relation to the charge of directing an illegal organisation the Court found the defendant guilty on the basis of Rupert's testimony. The Court also ruled that Rupert's testimony was corroborated on two counts, namely, by some Garda surveillance testimony and by several items of evidence found at the defendant's home. However, this evidence was uncontested, as the defendant had already withdrawn from the trial. On Thursday 7 August Michael McKevitt was sentenced to a total of twenty years imprisonment.

In response to the Court's decision Mr. McKevitt stated: 'I wish to emphatically state I have never met the MI5 Agent David Rupert. I continue to rebut the charges laid before me in the indictment. My conviction was primarily predicated upon the concealment of vital evidence, the testimony of an MI5 paid perjurer and a joint investigation by MI5, the FBI and the Gardai, which was conducted with impropriety and involved the planting of evidence in my home and interference with documentation. I never expected to find Justice in the Special Criminal Court. Since its inception the Court has shown itself to be a discredited house of law and devoid of Justice. In this regard my expectations were confirmed, as I was systematically denied a fair trial throughout the past six weeks. However, I am determined to take my case before another court in an attempt to overturn this flawed judgement and to attain Justice'.

For any totalitarian regime to exist, two institutions must be abolished: a democratically elected parliament and the right to trial by jury. That a so-called constitutional democracy would remove one of these institutions is indicative of a cancer at the very heart of the body politic. The Special Criminal Court exists out of political expediency; not out of any perceived threat to jurors. The provisions of the Offences Against the State Act, under which Mr. McKevitt was convicted, allow evidence to be admitted that would not be permitted under rules of evidence in a conventional jury trial. It is probable that a conviction based solely upon the opinion of a Garda Chief Superintendent is incompatible with article 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights. Furthermore, the non-disclosure of relevant legal documentation and the willingness to accept the testimony of a discredited MI5 sponsored witness has cast a sinister shadow over the Irish judicial system. The recent events at the Special Criminal Court are undoubtedly a cause for concern for all who wish to safeguard every citizens' fundamental right to a fair trial.



**The Special Criminal Court, Green Street**

# David Rupert: return of the supergrass

By Brian Moore

*'The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,  
And wretches hang that jury men may dine.'*  
Alexander Pope.

Dublin's Special Criminal Court has never been accused of possessing the wisdom of Solomon. Indeed, wisdom of any variety has rarely been evident in its proceedings. As an ideological testing ground for promotion-hungry candidates for judicial high office, its conveyor-belt approach to justice has often descended into farce. Over the years, its judgements have frequently been as bizarre as they have been arbitrary. In one memorable case in the 1980s, a young man was convicted of IRA membership on the sole evidence of a political poster found cunningly hidden on his bedroom wall. Such incidents would be laughable were it not for the fact that people's liberty is at stake. Over the past thirty years, many hundreds of Irish citizens have had the misfortune to find themselves standing in the dock at Green Street. Between them, they have served several millennia of prison time. Unfortunately, the situation has only deteriorated in recent years, with the conviction of Michael McKevitt marking a new low in the court's history.

The Special Criminal Court was originally established in 1939 as an 'emergency' measure to deal exclusively with political trials. After a period of obsolescence, it was revived in the early 1970s to act as a judicial rubber stamp for the glorified internment of suspected republican activists. It is unique in the Irish court system in that it operates without a jury, with military officers entitled to sit as judges. The official justification for its use was that juries would be vulnerable to intimidation by the IRA. In reality, the government of the time knew that, with the then widespread public support for the IRA's campaign, no jury would be prepared to convict IRA personnel on political charges. In recent years, however, the court's mandate has widened significantly. In addition to political trials, the court is now used for cases in which the government wishes to guarantee a conviction but can not legitimately do so on the evidence available. Its first outing in this new role resulted in the mockery of justice surrounding the Veronica Guerin murder trials, the results of which will keep the appeals system busy for several more years to come.

The Guerin cases also saw the return of the discredited 'supergrass' informant to the Irish court system. In the original supergrass trials in North's Diplock Courts, hundreds of people, often in batches of 20 or

more, were convicted on political charges on the unsupported evidence of lone informants. The inherent unreliability of such evidence was compounded by the fact that the informant himself usually had a significant interest - either financial or in escaping prosecution - in securing a conviction. All the supergrass convictions were later overturned on appeal, and the policy was abandoned by the British government.

Unfortunately, the Dublin government has now resorted to this self-same tactic to



deal with its political opponents. Michael McKevitt's recent conviction on the charge of 'Directing Terrorism' was based solely on the evidence of one supergrass informant - David Rupert, a US citizen. Clearly, the safety of this verdict depends entirely on Rupert's reliability.

In its judgement, the court found that Rupert was indeed a 'credible' witness, even singling out the accuracy of his recollections for special praise. Unfortunately for the credibility of the court, the picture of Rupert which emerged during the trial was very different from the judges' official assessment. Over the course of the 6 week trial, Rupert was revealed as an individual with an extremely dubious past, motivated solely by the prospect of financial gain, and guilty of perjury in the very court which later praised his credibility.

Even the most cursory survey of David Rupert's past is sufficient to destroy any notion of his 'credibility'. Prior to coming to Ireland, Rupert ran a haulage business in New York State. One of the Defence's key claims was that during this period Rupert was in fact a career criminal who used his trucking company as a front to hide a lucrative drug smuggling operation. In his testimony to the Special Criminal Court, Rupert denied having any such criminal past - an assurance accepted by the court as its basis for relying on his testimony. The evidence, however, points to the contrary. An FBI

intelligence assessment obtained by the Defence describes Rupert as 'an extremely "street smart" criminal' who was 'well known to police officers in the New York State area'. According to the same report, Rupert had long been suspected of 'using various trucks for thefts and the smuggling of illegal aliens, drugs, weapons and explosives between Canada and the United States'.

This evidence of Rupert's criminal past is corroborated by MI5 documentation also obtained by McKevitt's defence team. In one report, an anonymous MI5 author describes a briefing with Rupert in which he discussed 'his criminal contacts in the Afro-Caribbean community', and 'related much about his earlier criminal and smuggling past'. Lest there be any doubt, the report concludes with the statement that 'He [Rupert] has admitted to being involved in smuggling before he was recruited.'

The court's assessment of Rupert's credibility is also challenged by that of Detective Chief Superintendent Dermot Jennings (currently a Garda Assistant Commissioner), who met Rupert when he first came to Ireland in 1996. Jennings, according to MI5 documentation, described Rupert as a 'bullshitter', and accused him of making false allegations against the Gardai in relation to financial matters.

Rupert, it should be clear, can by no stretch of the imagination be described as a truthful character. Furthermore, he had no shortage of motivation for lying in his testimony to the court. Described in an FBI assessment as a man who 'will do anything if he sees a financial profit in it', Rupert earned over \$3 from his FBI and MI5 handlers for testifying against McKevitt, and had secured a potentially lucrative book deal dependent on his securing a conviction. Rupert himself told the court that he had been driven to testify against McKevitt by his 'moral teachings' - a statement accepted in the court's judgement, but contradicted by evidence from his own handlers. According to MI5 documentation, Rupert described himself as 'a whore' and 'a mercenary' who would do anything for money. 'Tell me what to do,' he told his MI5 handlers, 'make it worth my while and as long as the benefit overrides the risk in my view, it will be done to the best of my ability.' MI5's own assessment of their informant's motivation is stark: 'Motivation: Financial'.

Yet again, the Special Criminal Court has proved itself a stranger to the concept of justice. Rarely, however, has it done so in so blatant a fashion.

# Court dances to MI5 tune

By Malcolm Kerins

The non-jury Special Criminal Court has never been known for good law. Indeed it has been frowned upon by both the legal profession and human rights organizations alike. Over the past number of years the United Nations, Amnesty International and numerous other human rights groups have repeatedly called for its abolition. The recent controversial supergrass trial of Michael McKevitt was certain to be another example of poor law in this internationally discredited Court.

The trial got under way on 18th June 2003. Present in the court on day one were the three judges (who double as the jury), the prosecution, defence, defendant, members of the Special Branch, FBI agents, MI5 agents, human rights observers and the general public.

On day three of the trial the main prosecution witness Mr. David Rupert took the stand. From the minute this paid informant entered the courtroom sensational revelations became commonplace to such an extent that at times one would have been forgiven for thinking that David Rupert was on trial. Defence council Mr. Hugh Hartnett SC revealed Mr. Rupert's background and exposed the trail of destruction which Rupert had left behind over three decades. At one point Mr. Hugh Hartnett SC asked Mr. Rupert if he had been arrested in Alabama on one occasion for involvement with a minor, a fifteen year-old schoolgirl. Rupert was visibly shaken by this question but composed himself quickly and replied by saying, 'I was detained by the police but not arrested' for involvement with the young girl. Mr. Rupert agreed that both he and his co-driver had kept the schoolgirl in the cab of their lorry for over a week. It was quite noticeable that even Rupert's handlers were uncomfortable by this unpalatable disclosure, which had only come into the hands of the defence in the middle of the trial. Rupert also admitted leaving a trail of bankruptcies, which he described as 'business tactics' as he went from city to city leaving debts which amounted to millions of dollars and which remain unpaid.

Throughout the trial it was apparent that Mr. Rupert had been well coached on how to conduct himself in the witness box. Indeed at one point Mr. Hartnett asked Rupert if he had been coached. Rupert confidently replied, 'Yes I have, but for another

trial and it was by a consultancy firm hired by MI5'.

Notwithstanding the details surrounding Mr. Rupert's murky past, MI5 documents showed that Mr. Rupert's testimony was simply beyond belief. An MI5 document, disclosed on the 15th April 2002 refers to Mr. Rupert's 'criminal and smuggling background'. However, Mr. Rupert, in his Garda statement of the 9th January 2001 and his testimony before the court, denied any such 'criminal and smuggling past'. One must ask: was Mr. Rupert's evidence in relation



Thames House - MI5 Headquarters, London

to this and other matters untruthful or were the MI5 documents deliberately designed to mislead the defence?

The defence pointed out to the court that there were strong indications that MI5 documents had been tampered with in order to enhance the prosecution of this case. They also pointed out that in a disclosure document dated 14th June 2002, an MI5 officer stated that Assistant Garda Commissioner Jennings urged that certain reports 'be removed'. The MI5 officer then informed Assistant Garda Commissioner Jennings that other 'trickinesses' in certain reports were being addressed.

For the six week trial several members of MI5 colonised a significant section of the Special Criminal Court. MI5 had previously been afforded facilities within the confines of the courthouse to facilitate the storage of documents. This is nothing short of a national scandal. MI5's deployment of Mr. Rupert in the twenty-six counties also raises other more serious questions that affect the welfare of every Irish citizen. When was the Dublin government informed that this MI5 agent was operating in Ireland? Did the Dublin government have prior knowledge and grant subsequent approval? The Special Criminal Court is no more than a stone's throw from Parnell Street, which in May 1974 was just one location targeted by the MI5 during the Dublin-Monaghan bombings. For the Dublin government to be assisting MI5 more than twenty-nine years

after this tragic event is nothing short of contemptible. But this fact also raises one further salient question: How many more MI5 agents are currently operating in the twenty-six counties with the Dublin government's approval? These are salient questions that must be answered.

The most sensational development came on Thursday 24th July 2003. Michael McKevitt dismissed his legal team and asked to address the court. Silence fell over the packed courtroom as Michael McKevitt addressed the Court. One could hear a pin

drop. The judges were visibly shocked at this development and didn't seem to know how to handle it. During his address Mr. McKevitt pointed out that the defence had been continually denied vital disclosure documents. He also accused the non-jury court of denying him the right to a fair trial. Ending his address he told the judges, 'I will not participate any further in this political show trial and I

now withdraw with my dignity intact'. Shortly afterwards, Michael McKevitt withdrew from the court and remained in his cell underneath the court for the remainder of the trial.

Throughout the trial it was evident to all present that this trial was a mirror image of the political show trials in Belfast during the 1980s and when the prosecution reluctantly disclosed documents midway through the trial which contradicted Mr. Rupert's evidence it became blatantly obvious that Michael McKevitt's right to a fair trial was being denied by the Special Criminal Court. When the defence lawyers and the defendant absented themselves, the trial was exposed for the show trial that it was. The trial concluded with no defence team, no defendant and no justice.

In any proper court of law, justice must be seen to be done. However, at the end of this trial the Special Criminal Court's reputation remains intact as a court of conviction even at the cost of justice being seen to be done.

# John Mooney - a tribute

By Jimmy McGrath

At its best, journalism does more than inform. It gives a voice to those who otherwise have none and puts under the spotlight those who usually escape scrutiny. One thinks of the journalism that helped to expose the extent of the hidden abuse of children in state-run institutions in Ireland in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Or the journalism that exposed the epidemic of political corruption in this state in the 1980s and 90s.

But at its worst, journalism does more than misinform. It recycles lies. It serves the interests of the powerful. It puts people's lives into danger. One recent example was the media frenzy surrounding the arrest in Palestine of Belfast man Sean O'Muireagain. Newspapers, broadsheet and tabloid alike, reported as fact that O'Muireagain was a senior Real IRA man who had travelled to the West Bank to instruct Palestinians in bomb making. In what has become an all too familiar practice, journalists did not bother to check the veracity of the story before publishing. When the truth emerged that O'Muireagain had no links to the IRA and was simply in Palestine as a member of the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Movement, the journalists who had convicted him without any evidence offered no apology. They had already moved on to the next story.

Lazy and sloppy journalism such as that which occurred in the O'Muireagain case is as old as journalism itself. Of even more concern is the insidious journalism that knows it is misreporting the facts but is so desperately pursuing an agenda - often anti-republican - that the truth becomes less of a concern than the size of a headline or the sales of a paper. John Mooney of *The Star* newspaper is a prime exponent of this. Mooney, a self-styled expert on Irish republicanism, has a long track record of not letting the truth get in the way of a good story. Recently, he has been covering the McKevitt trial at the Special Criminal Court for *The Star* and for *Five-Seven Live* on RTE radio. Mooney managed to give supposedly authoritative accounts of the trial even though his attendance was sporadic. Inevitably, he repeatedly misreported the facts. Some of these mistakes can be put down to his poor attendance and general ignorance of such matters but other mistakes carry more than a whiff of deliberate manipulation.

For instance, in the middle of the trial, Mooney went on *Five-Seven Live* and announced that Michael McKevitt was 'refusing to recognise the court'. McKevitt had done no such thing. He had withdrawn from the trial after the judges refused to dis-

close crucial evidence to the defence and after McKevitt's counsel had stated that they were being denied the right to offer their client a proper defence. Recognition of the court itself was not an issue. On first inspection Mooney's error might not seem important but when one considers the implications of his version of events, one gets the uneasy feeling that this was not an accident. If Michael McKevitt had refused to recognise the court, as Mooney alleged, in many people's eyes this would serve to confirm McKevitt's guilt - after all refusing

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distortions’

to recognise the court was a favourite tactic of the IRA for years. Mooney's lie had the added advantage of taking the focus away from the reprehensible conduct of the Special Criminal Court in preventing McKevitt from getting a fair trial. One must ask: whose agenda is John Mooney pursuing by such distortions?

Even more worrying is the news that John Mooney, along with fellow Star journalist Michael O'Toole, is writing a book on the anti-agreement republican movement. Most republicans, suspecting that this book will be an ill-informed hatchet job, have sent requests for interviews where they belong - the bin. However, it is believed that a small number of individuals, who represent the lunatic fringe element that has attempted to attach itself to the republican movement in recent years, have talked. While the sum total of these undesirables' insight into republicanism is minimal, it is entirely predictable that Mooney will portray these low-level informers as 'senior sources' within republicanism.

Readers may be interested to learn that the Walter Mitty-like Mooney used to pedal a story around Dublin that Garda Special Branch were trying to assassinate him. According to Mooney, one attempt involved Special Branch officers trying to run him over. Quite why the Branch was trying to do away with him, Mooney never explained. One suspects this bizarre story was a lame effort by him to ingratiate himself with Dublin's underworld. Whatever the reason, Mooney has more than patched

up his differences with Special Branch and it is believed that they are providing Mooney with much information for his book. Judging by the Gardai's famed fondness for telling lies, the Mooney-Special Branch arrangement is a marriage made in heaven.

Mooney's fantasies might seem harmless enough except that of course real people are often vilified by such journalism. On the night Michael McKevitt was sentenced, John Mooney appeared on RTE's *Prime Time* barely able to contain his glee at the long sentence handed down. When asked about the serious issue of misconduct by the trial judges, Mooney facetiously replied that McKevitt's main problem was that he was guilty. Mooney wasn't basing this on the evidence. We know this because, as Jane Winter of British-Irish Human Rights Watch pointed out, John Mooney and much of the rest of the media had Michael McKevitt convicted long before he entered the courtroom.

For a man who is writing a book on the Real IRA, Mooney has even managed to get the crucial details of the split with the Provisional IRA wrong. He repeats the old myth that there was a walkout at the Gweedore Army Convention in 1997 when in actual fact the split came several weeks later at an Army Executive meeting. This might seem only a small detail but it further highlights Mooney's inability and unwillingness to research the facts. It is not as if the truth of the split is hard to come by. Ed Maloney's *A Secret History of the IRA* accurately details what happened.

John Mooney is but the latest in a long line of not very distinguished journalists who have attempted to build a career out of serving the interests of those dedicated to defeating Irish republicanism. Eventually, most of these journalists are exposed for what they are and quickly and quietly they return to the undergrowth from whence they came. In time, the same will undoubtedly happen to John Mooney.

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## Criminality - the new scourge of republicanism

Nobody today would dispute the fact that republicanism is in a terrible state of disarray. We have seen divisions in the Republican Movement before, but none which left it so fragmented and demoralised. Who could ever have imagined twenty years ago that a strong united movement would ever find itself in the situation it does at the moment. We fought the British in an effort to end partition and create a united Ireland. So how did the acceptance of British rule, a unionist veto, the surrender of arms, and open criminality replace those objectives?

Over these past few years we have discovered a web of deceit, spun by those who gained control of the IRA and Sinn Féin in the early 1980s. We have read of their secret meetings with the enemy, the agents they allowed to roam through the IRA, the removal of good Republicans and their replacement by people who had worked against the movement. All this was done to advance the so-called 'Peace Process'. Whenever a voice was raised in protest at their actions and tactics, it was silenced by howls of mock indignation and the cry 'What's your alternative?' We were told that to suggest they would give away one bullet or one ounce was nothing short of treason.

Today we know better. They did give them away, and the lies and arguments they used against genuine Republicans are being exposed on a daily basis. It is a sad state of affairs, but the damage has been done, and telling ourselves we were right all along does not make it any easier to swallow. As Republicans we still have not answered the question, 'What is our alternative?' That is the most important question now. Of course, if we had known in advance that the Republican leadership were planning to betray us, we could have developed a more effective response to their actions, and the question would be academic. We didn't need an 'alternative' then. There was nothing wrong with fighting the British and using the resources of the movement to do so. What hampered the military struggle was its undermining by those who wished to compromise with British rule in Ireland. Of course, if we had wanted to, we all could have feathered our own personal nests. Perhaps it was our principles or the memory of our dead comrades and friends that prevented us from making ourselves rich on the back of the struggle.

Genuine Republicans are left in a difficult situation as a result of all this. On one side we have those in the Provisional movement who, despite their radical change of direction, still use the name 'republican'. This 'compromise' Republicanism is going nowhere. Despite their electoral gains north and south, they are clearly a weak constitutional party without any real political clout. On the other side, anti-Agreement Republicans are fragmented, the only common thread being the recognition that the Belfast Agreement is doomed to failure. Some of those who oppose the Agreement have taken refuge in 'historical' Republicanism. While one can understand the genuine motives for this, it is an escape from reality. Republicans lost the civil war of 1922-23. As Republicans, we

know the rights and wrongs of it, but clinging to our past will not solve the difficulties we face today. To regress into blinkered fundamentalism, with its inevitable focus on irrelevant historical minutiae to the detriment of living principles, will not strengthen Republicanism but weaken it. Republicans should not be afraid to tackle the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

Unfortunately, these circumstances are bleak. There are those who have exploited anti-Agreement republicanism for financial reasons. These people are prepared to line their pockets and in doing so undermine the Republican ideal. Sad and destructive as this might be, it is no reason for genuine Republicans not to rebuild the movement, making sure such individuals are removed and prevented from re-entering in the future. Every day that passes reveals incidents where people purporting to be in one 'IRA' or another are involved in extortion, lap-dancing clubs, selling weapons and other

forms of criminality. People using the name of the IRA to cover their criminal actions must be exposed and stopped. For any Republican, especially those in the 'historical' stream, to preach about true republicanism while their organisation is riddled with criminality is nothing short of a farce. But there is an even more sinister aspect to all this. The Gardai have a vested interest in encouraging pointless 'Republican' activity.

As in the 1950s, they continue to use agent

provocateurs and informers to recruit young people so they can be set-up for arrest, thus securing promotions for those involved while proving the continuing need for a well financed and powerful Special Branch.

If anti-Agreement Republicanism is to regain lost ground and build a realistic alternative to the failed electoralism of Sinn Féin, then it must adopt a 'realistic' Republicanism to meet the demands of the twenty-first century. It must include the basic principles of Republicanism and an understanding of its history. But it must also have the ability to adapt to the modern world. This failure of anti-Agreement Republicans to provide a credible Republican alternative to the status quo has had serious consequences. Firstly, it has provided the Sinn Féin party, as the only serious 'Republican' organisation, with an open field, resulting in undeserved successes for the Adams leadership. Secondly, and more seriously, it has ensured that anti-Agreement Republicanism has remained weak and fragmented, and therefore vulnerable to infiltration by criminal elements. And this infiltration has reached epidemic proportions. Some ostensibly republican organisations are now almost indistinguishable from the criminal gangs they associate with. The various 'IRAs' are a laughing stock to the ordinary people of Ireland, and the good name of Republicanism has been dragged through the gutter. It will take hard work and great dedication if it is to recover - if indeed it is not yet too late. Republicans still talk about building a new Ireland. If they are serious, they must begin by building a new Republicanism.

**'The good name of  
republicanism  
has been dragged  
through the gutter'**

Letters and articles can be sent to Forum Magazine at:

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# Iraq: resistance to occupation mounts

By Richard Whyte

Since the declaration by US President George W. Bush on May 1st 2003 of an end to all major combat operations in Iraq, over 60 American soldiers have been killed in action in less than 17 weeks.

In one recent incident, a convoy of four troop transports was travelling north of Baghdad when a land mine device exploded underneath one of the vehicles, killing one US soldier and wounding another. Such attacks are becoming more sophisticated. A new kind of co-operation is emerging in Iraq, driven by hatred of the Western occupation, and drawing on long memories of British colonialism in the region.

Despite George Bush's declaration, Khalaf Abeb Shebib believes the war is just beginning. Shebib is a tribal leader in Fallujah, a town 20 miles west of Baghdad. In late April, 16 Iraqi civilians were massacred there by US troops during a protest march. An ugly mood now settles over the town, which is seething with pure hatred for the American invaders.

It is obvious from looking at daily news reports that the US military have not learned anything from the Vietnam war with regards to winning the hearts and minds of the people they say they are trying to liberate. As the killing and wounding of Iraqi civilians by the US military continues, popular support for the underground resistance cells only strengthens.

While some of the attacks are believed to have been mounted by supporters of Saddam Hussein, others have almost certainly been staged by Iraqis seeking revenge against the US forces for harsh and humiliating treatment. In mid July US forces conducted 143 raids in the central and northern provinces. The downside of such tactics is that innocent civilians are being killed and wounded, while families are humiliated and their property destroyed. The most striking example was the recent killing of five Iraqis during a US Special Forces raid on a house in the western Mansur district of Baghdad. A typical raid on an Iraqi home often involves kicking in the front door, shouting at the occupants, pointing weapons at the entire family, followed by a destructive search of the premises. Such raids may also involve the placing of bags over the heads of all the males present, before taking them away for interrogation. In some cases families do not know where their loved ones are being

taken or being detained for many days or even weeks.

Well-planned ambushes on US patrol vehicles on commercial streets in the capital indicate that Iraqi resistance cells are improving their targeting capabilities against the occupation forces. In this type of theatre of combat this would indicate the backing from locals for intelligence gathering activities. American poor habits are leading US troops into ambush after



ambush. The tactics of guerrilla warfare - hit and run ambushes, escape and evasion techniques, and an elite knowledge of fighting in built up areas - have been adopted by these cells. Obviously the Republican Guard was training for such warfare in the run up to the invasion.

The US military have made some fundamental mistakes in carrying out their operations in Iraq. By underestimating the resistance cells they have jeopardised their position. On the other hand, the Iraqis did not underestimate the US military. This can be attributed to past experience with the coalition forces during 'Desert Storm'. The resistance are not over-confident, unlike the US army. The resistance cells have the added luxury of knowing the terrain and fighting on home ground. In addition, because of the growing hatred the occupation is provoking, the resistance cells are able to gather solid intelligence on their enemy from local Iraqi people.

With the sophistication of US technology, and their ability to monitor the battlefield effectively, the Iraqis have reverted back to basic field craft to fight the Americans. Communication between the Iraqi resistance cells would likely be word of mouth, rather than by means of digital or analogue radios. The use of such simple tactics maintains the integrity of their security, and neutralises much of the Americans' advantage.

American commanders are now losing patience with the resistance cells, and resorting to torture and brutality in an effort to stamp out the attacks. US battle planners failed to legislate for the extent of the difficulties such localized resistance would create in the aftermath of the main assault on Iraq by coalition forces. Naively, many honestly thought that the Iraqi people would welcome them with open arms when Saddam Hussein was ousted.

Most of the resistance is currently concentrated in Baghdad, around Fallujah, Balad and Saddam's hometown of Tikrit. Some of these areas were never swept through thoroughly in the hurry to capture Baghdad. Another fundamental mistake by US forces. American soldiers in Iraq are now grappling with a new kind of war. One that all their firepower, helicopters, bombing and technology can never win. It is a grim counterinsurgency conflict against the lone sniper team in a sniper's paradise like Baghdad. This is a war their arrogance has left them critically unprepared for.

The Iraqi resistance are keeping the battlefield as simple as possible, ignoring technology and depending on good guerrilla tactics. Using snipers and ambush as the main way of assaulting the occupation forces. As the American forces learn from their basic mistakes, the resistance cells will use even more spectacular ways of dislodging the US military. Demoralisation is the cells main objective, and this is something seen on the faces of every young American soldier.

US forces in Baghdad and in Iraq in general are woefully ill prepared for inter-cultural bridge building and must change their tactfulness in dealing with the Iraqi population or they will suffer even more casualties in the future. More and more folded American flags will be presented to the families of dead American soldiers until they realise that battles are won tactically with steadfast dedication to achieving the immediate aim, not arrogance and technology. The Americans are trying to fight fire with fire. Maybe they should try water instead.

**Richard Whyte is a republican POW in Portlaoise Gaol.**

# Palestine: 'peace plan' or final solution?

By James Burke

The continuing conflict in the Middle East between the Palestinians and the occupying Israelis has highlighted flaws in the so-called 'road map' to peace. Young Palestinians are being murdered daily and the homes of Palestinian militants demolished. The release of Palestinian prisoners, 6000 of whom are being held without trial, has also caused anger. Yasser Arafat commented on the releases by saying, 'they say they are going to release 400 and then they turn around and arrest 800. What is this, deception? Are they laughing at us?'

The reality of the situation would lead one to answer Arafat's question in the affirmative. The whole idea of this so-called 'road map' was a face saving exercise in the first place and not a serious attempt to settle the demands of the Palestinian people. Due to international criticism of the US and Britain over the Iraq war, it was felt that a 'peace plan' in Palestine would help make the aggression in Iraq more acceptable. This newfound concern contrasts with western governments' attitudes since the foundation of an Israeli /Jewish state and the part the West played in creating the conflict in the first place. Wracked with guilt, as a result of the Nazi Holocaust, they were prepared to do anything to placate the Zionists. The Western powers had no qualms about the dispossession and permanent exile of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. From their refugee camps they and their children have been forced to watch Americans, Russians and others from around the world build settlements on their lands. Many of these Jewish settlers never experienced any form of persecution in their own country, but even if they did, it would not justify the expulsion of the Palestinians from their homes and lands.

It has been the Nazi-style tactics of the Israelis against the Palestinians which has added fuel to the flames and ensured that young Palestinians would join Hamas, Islamic Jihad or the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. In its attempt to defeat these organisations, the Israelis have been influencing US foreign policy in the Middle East. High-powered Jewish fundamentalist 'think tanks' have encouraged the US government to attack Iraq and threaten other countries in the region, such as Syria and Iran. These countries, given their geographic location, do not pose any threat to the US. However they have helped the various

Palestinian organisations and are therefore a threat to Israel. The Israelis have likewise tried to dictate who should or should not speak for the Palestinians. Using the US, they forced the Palestinian Authority to elect a new post of Prime Minister, which has been filled by Mahmoud Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen. Abbas is now under US/Israeli pressure to disarm the militant Palestinian organisations, thus doing the dirty work for the Israelis. In exchange for doing this, the Palestinians might be



allowed to live in a patchwork quilt of a state, under Israeli control. The lands taken from the Palestinians will not be returned. The settlements built illegally in the face of numerous UN resolutions will remain. The new 'security' wall being built around the Palestinian towns and village will remain in place. So arrogant are the Israelis on this point that Sharon more or less told George Bush to mind his own business. This arrogance stems from the fact that the Israelis are using the so-called war on terror to hide their actions and intentions. By branding the Palestinians as terrorists, the Israelis are able to carry out a policy of 'gettoisation'. By the use of military forces, checkpoints and fences, they have corralled the Palestinian populations of different towns preventing movement between them. This in effect means that Palestinians cannot carry on business or normal life of any kind. A journey that should take half an hour takes all day. Such is the extent of the deliberate delays at checkpoints that food bought in shops is often rotten by the time it is brought home,

The dispossession of land from the Palestinians continues on an on going basis. Recently the Israeli informed one of the small nomadic tribes of the region that they would have to remove themselves from the area. These people have travelled these lands for a thousand years but are now not welcome, as they make room for settlers

from New York, Moscow and other cities. It would be insulting enough if the conflict the Palestinians were faced with was with people who had lived there for hundred of years like themselves but to be dispossessed by people whose only connection with the region stems from the religion they practise must be galling in the extreme. One wonders how the people of Rome would like it, if thousands of Christians from all over the world arrived and demanded that they hand over their lands.

Given the deep resentment of the Palestinians and the daily injustices they endure, it is little wonder that they wage a war against the Israelis. All the measures used by Israel, including assassinations by Mossad, have failed to prevent attacks. Nevertheless, it would appear that Sharon and his right-wing colleagues have no intention of letting the Palestinians create a viable state where they could live in peace. The demands and restrictions placed on Abbas make this plain. Sharon is already guilty of the mass murder of Palestinians in the Sabra and Chatilla refugee camps and more recently in Jenin in the West Bank. If it required further mass killings he would no doubt sanction them. One would have thought, that a people like the Jews, who suffered dispossession, gettoisation, and humiliation, as well as mass killings, would have learned a better lesson than to be guilty of doing the same to the Palestinians. After all, their only crime was to be born on the land of Palestine. With Israeli policy continuing to trample on the aspirations of the whole Palestinian people, this road map is leading into a cul de sac. It will not bring about a Palestinian state and will not therefore bring peace, nor was it meant to. Perhaps Sharon and the Israeli government have learnt another lesson and have devised their own final solution for the problem. I suspect if they did, the US, Britain and the rest of the world would look the other way. After all it wouldn't be the first time.

# The New Republican Forum

The New Republican Forum is a coalition of political and community activists, founded to challenge the political status quo in Ireland by providing a radical Republican alternative to the mainstream political establishment.

## The New Republican Forum:

- Stands for the reunification of Ireland and opposes all aspects of British interference in Irish affairs.
- Opposes the Belfast Agreement, which subverts the Irish people's inalienable right to self-determination.
- Stands for the creation of a just society in Ireland, based on principles of equality, social justice and genuine democracy, underpinned by a comprehensive charter of inalienable human rights.
- Supports the promotion and development of Irish culture.
- Opposes the resurgence of imperialism as a political ideology, led by the United States, its allies and client regimes.
- Supports all oppressed peoples struggling for national liberation.
- Opposes any attempt by the Dublin government to aid or assist any Western military alliance.

## Our aims are:

- To establish a credible Republican opposition to British rule in Ireland.
- To critically reassess and analyse the history of the Republican struggle in Ireland, and by so doing, chart a course for the future of the Republican movement.
- To establish, support and coordinate the activities of Republican, community-based and other progressive organisations, forging a basis for a new national movement.
- To liase with other progressive forces, nationally and internationally, including anti-capitalist groups, trade unionists and environmental movements, along with national liberation movements worldwide, to further the cause of anti-imperialism.
- To establish a range of independent media outlets providing Irish people with alternative sources of information on political and social issues.

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