

Change and Continuity: Republican Thought Since 1922

BRIAN HANLEY

*I am grateful to Joost Augusteijn who let me read a copy of his forthcoming *Political Violence and Democracy. An analysis of the tensions within Irish republican strategy, 1913-2000*. Thanks also to Anna Bryson for commenting on an earlier draft of this article.*

When writing about the development of republican thinking in Ireland from 1922 onwards one is immediately confronted with a problem. Since the civil war the term has been largely used to describe those who opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty. But important sections of the pro-Treatyites saw themselves as no less republican than their opponents. Similarly, the term may be used to describe those who rejected de Valera's break with Sinn Féin in 1926. But equally, those who followed de Valera and today constitute the largest political party on this island, term themselves *the* republican party. Today it is commonly used to describe supporters of Sinn Féin, but many outside their ranks would also claim the title. To confuse matters further, the idea of republicanism has in many peoples minds become associated with narrow nationalism. Partially, this is due to the influence of an anti-republican bias within sections of the media and society generally, but I will argue that it is also because republicanism (or at least a variant of it) was official state policy in this country from the 1930s until the 1970s. For the purposes of this article I include all who describe themselves as republican. I will attempt to justify this approach by arguing that all variants of republicanism have shared similar features at various stages. Irish republicanism is a complex phenomenon. Since 1922 it has been capable of including both radical and conservative elements; of being both inclusive and xenophobic; of promoting a critique of Irish society and of accommodating itself completely to the status quo. Republicanism has at various stages adopted socialist rhetoric; at others it has used the language of the far right. While campaigning for the end of discrimination and repression in one sphere, it has often ignored it in others. While at times being insular, it has always been influenced by

ideas from abroad. While this is primarily a study of ideas, ideas are inseparable from the context in which they were formed. Innovation or change in republican thinking has almost always come about as a reaction to defeat or stalemate.

In 1922 the most obvious problem facing republicans was that the majority of the electorate had accepted a settlement which fell far short of a republic. Of course, there were genuine problems with the circumstances of the Treaty election, the most important one being that it was fought under the threat of an 'immediate and terrible war' and hence it can be argued that it was undemocratic itself. The argument that the civil war was fought between pro-Treaty democrats and anti-Treaty would-be-dictators is simplistic and deeply flawed.¹ However, it is unquestionable that a section of republicanism in 1922 was not in the least bit concerned about the views of 'the people' it was supposedly speaking for. One response was to see the Treaty purely in terms of treachery, of a leadership bought off by 'fancy diplomatic language' and a populace duped into supporting them. To some the only policy to counter this was a military one, and indeed it is possible that a resolute anti-Treatyite military offensive in the summer of 1922 could have defeated the government forces. However that would have meant that republicans would effectively have had to rule a largely hostile population with military force. This situation did not arise, but little thought seems to have been given to it by republicans before or since. The belief that military force represented the only proper response to conditions of stalemate or defeat has continued to exercise a hold over republicans until the present day. It is important to restate how little partition was discussed during the debate on the Treaty. Such division as there was over the border did not cause the civil war. Southern republicans paid comparatively little attention to that issue until the late-1930s.

Another response to the establishment of the Free State was a more thoughtful one. This view, popularly associated with Liam Mellows, saw the defeat as the result of the anti-Treatyites failure to present an alternative to the Irish workers and poor. People had been expected to rally to defend the *Republic* without any idea of how this republic would make any difference to their daily lives. The only answer was for the anti-Treatyites to go 'back to Tone ... relying on that great body the men of no property'. This belief in an essential connection between republicanism and social change, has with occasional differences of emphasis, been a left-republican article of faith since the 1920s. Critics of this view have noted that there was in 1922 no essential connection between the two.² The anti-Treatyite forces contained many who had no interest in social change, and indeed some who were arguably more conservative than some

of their pro-Treaty opponents. Large numbers of the urban workers and rural poor showed little sign of instinctive solidarity with the anti-Treaty side, with many joining the ranks of the National Army and probably many more spurning both sides. However, whether it be termed left, social or socialist, this variant of republicanism has had an important influence on most republican thinkers in the twentieth century.

A further response, already in existence in 1922, but which became more evident in future years, was the notion of republicanism as an almost secular religion. An element of this involved devotion to the memory of martyred dead, isolated from wider society and awaiting the reawakening of the nation through some dramatic act. Loyalty to the *Republic* was expressed through the commitment to abstention from parliament north and south. This approach was influenced by a profound, but widely accepted, misreading of the popular reaction to the 1916 rising, and has achieved a limited but occasionally influential following.³ This view was represented by the Sinn Féin organisation during the 1920s and 1930s.

A much larger grouping was one in which the influence of all the latter ideas were apparent, but which realised that isolation and decline would be its lot unless it was prepared to take drastic steps. That grouping, which actually contained many of the most forward thinking republicans of the period, was one which would eventually emerge as Fianna Fáil and constitutional republicanism. This ideology was flexible enough to incorporate both radical and conservative ideas, and appeal to a broad spectrum of southern Irish society. There was, initially, comparatively little emphasis on partition, and the use of force to end it was ruled out as early as 1931. (De Valera had ruled it out even earlier, in August 1921). Their economic policy was, ironically, tied to the old Griffith-Sinn Féin idea of economic self-sufficiency. (Indeed, the extent to which Griffith's key ideas remained influential among republicans is often overlooked). This view was to inform the 'Boycott British' campaigns of the IRA during the 1930s, the economic policies of Fianna Fáil until the 1950s, and, indeed, republican thinking on economic matters until quite recently.

Republican ideology since 1922 has been dominated at various stages by one or other of these ideas, and sometimes all of them have co-existed together. There are two other areas where republican thinking has been incomplete.

For long periods republicanism has had difficulty dealing with the existence of unionism in the north-east of Ireland. Overall the tendency has been to believe that unionism would disappear during the struggle for a united Ireland, or when a united Irish republic was achieved. On occasion elements within republicanism have adopted less benign interpretations and seen the unionists as a 'settler class'. Remarkably little

thinking has been devoted to the subject, given its importance to any all-Ireland republican project.⁴

The revival of the Irish language has been associated with all variants of republicanism for the last 80 years. Only Fianna Fáil have had the long term period in office necessary to oversee a revival, which patently failed to occur. Large numbers of republican activists have had little or no knowledge of Irish, and many have only had the opportunity to learn it while in prison, whether in the Curragh during the 1940s, or Long Kesh more recently. However, no republican thinker to date has suggested that the Irish language is irrelevant to the republican project.

1932 saw both the triumph of constitutional republicanism, with the election of the first Fianna Fáil government, and also the highpoint of radical republican influence within the IRA. Fianna Fáil's victory was widely perceived, both domestically and internationally, as the precursor of a renewed conflict with Britain or a wholesale purge of pro-Treatyite supporters. Neither occurred and Fianna Fáil's ideology, while still rhetorically republican, shifted from an emphasis on the nation to the state. Now, demands for land redistribution, nationalisation and disbanding of the Special Branch became unreasonable. Cumainn were censured for pestering the government with their 'local' problems, and disgruntled activists accused of tacitly aiding Ireland's enemies. This process was not an easy or uncomplicated one, as within Fianna Fáil there was still substantial rank and file adherence to a more radical republican view, but by 1937 the ideology of the largest republican force in Ireland had shifted from critiquing the Free State to becoming its foremost defender. Partition was implicitly recognised by the 1937 Constitution and whatever difficulties the catholic church had previously had with Fianna Fáil were solved with its recognition as the 'guardian of the faith professed by the great majority'. This is not to argue that there were no positive benefits from the first Fianna Fáil administrations—there certainly were. In public housing, pensions and social welfare a real difference was made to the lives of thousands of people by the new government. But in ideological terms commitment to radical republican change was replaced by nationalist state-building. However, glorification of the military past was to remain a strong element in Fianna Fáil's public pronouncements.

The highpoint for radical republicanism, represented mainly by the IRA, was from 1929 to 1934; the zenith was the organisation's launch of the Saor Éire programme in 1931. That programme, with its demand for the 'possession and administration by the workers and working farmers, of the land, instruments of production, distribution and exchange', marks the furthest leftward that any republican organisation has travelled. The IRA of this era presented a radical critique of both states in Ireland. It was

committed to revolutionary change, envisaging the republic it sought as one where poverty would be eliminated, where social injustice would be tackled, and it explicitly addressed itself to Ireland's urban and rural poor. Its newspaper, *An Phoblacht*, was notable for the large number of women writers it employed, and for its coverage of international affairs. Anti-British revolts were obviously celebrated, but so were revolts against the French in Africa, and the US in Nicaragua. The Soviet Union received very favourable coverage. The IRA was not an inward looking organisation in those years and was never narrowly focused on partition to the exclusion of other issues. Indeed, one of its most bitter campaigns was not an armed one, but an electoral challenge to the northern Nationalist Party during 1933, which saw the IRA win a seat in South Armagh and make serious inroads into Joseph Devlin's vote in West Belfast. This electoral campaign was mounted because the IRA believed that large numbers of northern protestants could be broken from unionism. Indeed, the IRA saw the Nationalist Party and the Ancient Order of Hibernians as sectarian organisations playing into the hands of unionism.⁵

IRA radicalism was not solely the result of the influence of prominent socialists such as Peadar O'Donnell—the organisation's Chief-of-Staff, Moss Twomey, and other leading figures shared the belief that the national revolution must accomplish radical social and economic change. But this radicalism co-existed with a belief that only military force would accomplish the task, and there was an influential section of the leadership who believed that the IRA should not possess any social policy and whose attitudes often betrayed a contempt for the 'opinion of the mass of the people.'⁶ The IRA remained dominated by the view that its chief role was to prepare for an armed uprising and that politics were secondary.

There was an intensely anti-communist atmosphere in Ireland during the thirties, despite the tiny numbers of actual communists. The catholic hierarchy's denunciation of the IRA for its Saor Éire programme, allied to a suspicion of communism among many of its rank and file, gradually forced the organisation to water down its radical rhetoric.

The organisation split in 1934 with the most prominent socialists leaving to form the Republican Congress, which declared that an Irish republic would not be realised unless capitalism in Ireland was 'uprooted'. It is too simplistic to see this split as dividing socialists from apolitical or right-wing militarists. Many of those associated with the IRA's radical policies remained within the organisation. Among those who left there remained a commitment to armed force, as was seen in their attempts to form a citizen's army. The Congress, too, would split at its first conference, between those demanding a specifically socialist programme and those favouring a united front of republican forces. O'Donnell and

others influenced by Communist Party thinking favoured the united front approach. They believed that Fianna Fáil would ultimately fail to satisfy the republican aspirations of its followers and could be outflanked by radical republicanism. Their opponents argued that only the call for a Worker's Republic could rally both workers and small farmers in the south and, crucially, both catholic and protestant in the north. Both viewpoints were increasingly marginalised by the late 1930s.

In later years the radical republican tradition of that period was largely forgotten by republicans themselves. In fact, it has often been the 1940s that were remembered and romanticised. By the late 1930s the dominant ideology within the IRA was one of militaristic obsession with the striking of a blow to ignite public opinion behind a new campaign. From this period on partition was to become the focus for militant republicans, in a way it had not been until this stage.⁷ The tragicomic dimension to the handing over of power by the surviving members of the Second Dáil to the IRA Army Council should not blind us to a very real shift in IRA thinking. Now, the conservative views of Sinn Féin came to dominate IRA pronouncements. While few within republicanism are prepared to acknowledge it, this shift included the adoption of fascist rhetoric in republican propaganda. While not arguing that the majority of 1940s IRA members were ideologically sympathetic to the Nazis, a section of their leadership certainly were, and were prepared to welcome Axis troops in Ireland as 'liberators'. What that would have meant in reality is depressing to contemplate.⁸

This bitter period of internment, executions and isolation again forced a shift in republican thinking. The pragmatists who had left the IRA in 1938 were the core around which the next constitutional challenge to Fianna Fáil would be built.⁹ Clann na Poblachta's ideology was a combination of Fianna Fáil's discarded radical baggage from 1932 and a novel disdain for civil war politics. Radical proposals were accompanied by pious declarations of anti-communism to ward off the inevitable 'red scare'. In a departure from republican orthodoxy, Clann na Poblachta not only recognised the Free State, but also supported its declaration as a Republic. This was combined with militant anti-partitionist rhetoric, and with the proposal that northerners be allowed representation in the southern parliament. There was also an enthusiasm for US foreign policy on the part of some of the leadership, which sat uneasily with sections of the rank and file. Also uniquely, the party opposed the compulsory teaching of Irish. Fianna Fáil, too, embarked on an anti-partitionist crusade at this point, and for several years declarations fulminating against partition were an integral part of political discourse in the south.

Non-constitutional republicanism also adjusted to changed circum-

stances following 1945. While rhetorically refusing to countenance recognition of the southern state, in actual fact the adoption by the IRA of Army Order No. 8, forbidding armed conflict with the Garda and National Army, was implicit recognition that the situation was different south of the border. A smaller number went further and recognised the Republic of Ireland, even to the extent of taking a seat in its upper house, while continuing to plan an armed campaign in the north. From then on the militant republican tradition stressed 'freeing the north' above all else. In many ways republican ideology during the late 1940s and early 1950s was simply a more aggressive version of official state rhetoric about the north. There was no longer any attempt to present an alternative vision of a republican Ireland. Indeed, in many aspects, the conservatism of early 1950s Ireland was mirrored in a more extreme form by the republican movement. More, not less, censorship of 'foreign' literature was demanded by the republican press. The 'inextricable intertwining of catholic tradition and Irish separatist thought' was celebrated. Republican writers warned of a supposed 'judeo-masonic' influence in the British government.¹⁰

The south was still seen as being under the thumb of Britain despite having been able to maintain its neutrality during the Second World War. The logical outcome of the exclusive concentration on partition was the border campaign. Following the campaign's failure, the blame was placed on the southern population's obsession with 'secondary issues', which, in the Ireland of the 1950s meant unemployment and the likelihood of emigration.¹¹ The existence of a hostile unionist population in the north was essentially ignored.

Many republicans, especially those who grew up in the north, have difficulty understanding how, until the 1970s, the southern education system, the press and to a lesser degree the catholic church promoted a version of republicanism. That meant learning by rote the history of past oppression, associating Irish nationality completely with catholicism, and accepting that, bar the six counties, freedom, as visualised by the 1916 rebels, had been achieved. To the thousands of young Irish people who took the boat to Britain in those decades, republicanism must not have seemed very inspiring at all. This was exacerbated by the fact that the republican movement did not present an alternative vision of Irish society, generally suggesting that the only problem that existed on the island was that of partition. This in turn dovetailed neatly with all the southern political establishment's, but especially Fianna Fáil's, periodic rhetoric about re-unification.¹² When revisionism got into its stride during the 1970s it had a ready audience because so much of what had been presented as republicanism was based on false premise. It has taken

almost two decades for critically minded historians and writers to confront this.¹³

The trauma of the events of 1969 has inevitably coloured perceptions of the ideological reasons behind republicanism's political development during the preceding years. An influential section of the IRA responded to the failure of the 1956-62 campaign with a rediscovery of the Republican Congress tradition; they also listened to the advice of intellectuals schooled in the communist Connolly Association in Britain. Republicanism, they argued, had to confront social and economic problems if it was to make itself relevant to the majority of Irish people, north and south. A variant of the 'stages theory' was developed, which saw campaigns for democratisation as stepping stones to the fight for the republic. In the south this would mean alliances with 'progressive' groups around issues like housing and land rights; in the north, crucially, it meant helping initiate a campaign for civil rights. This type of campaign, it was believed, would undermine unionism and also be capable of attracting protestant working class support. If there was to be armed activity, it would now be as part of a 'National Liberation Front'. These developments were also obviously influenced by the international climate: the Vietnam War intensifying, anti-colonial struggles developing in Africa, and the student movement in Europe and the US.

This theory fatally underestimated both the intransigence of the unionist regime and the support for unionism among the protestant working class. When violence returned to the north in 1969, there were already many within the republican movement extremely critical of the new direction. However, many of those who had earlier left in protest over 'communistic' teachings may have just become a historical curiosity had the north not exploded.

The eruption of violence after 1969 was presented by what became the Provisionals as just another phase of the struggle against Britain. But, in reality, it was light years away from the ideas behind the border campaign. Young men and women who came to republicanism because their streets were under attack, found themselves in alliance with those who believed that the last legitimate election in Ireland took place in 1918. The escalation of inter-communal and nationalist-British army conflict from 1970 onwards masked very wide differences within the ranks of what emerged as Provisional republicanism.

Initially, the events in the north saw a brief re-emergence of militant anti-partition rhetoric in the south, but without any broader vision outside aiding 'our people' in the north. Indeed, some of those prominent in promoting this view had been centrally involved in suppressing the border campaign. As the northern conflict settled into a brutal routine, little more

was heard from them.

The first to ideologically take stock of the new situation were the Official republicans. For a variety of reasons, there was a realisation that military struggle was proving insufficient and becoming counter-productive. The effect that the republican armed campaign was having on the unionist population was taken into account for the first time. A decision was taken to call a cease-fire, although supporters of the organisation continued to be involved in armed activity for several years afterward and, despite claims of having left militarism behind, the imagery of the supposedly non-sectarian working-class armed struggle waged from 1969-72 continued to be a feature of the Official republican self-image until well into the 1990s.

Ideologically, Official republicanism during the early 1970s developed from a range of often conflicting ideas. The strand that eventually emerged as dominant adopted a world view more common in European communist parties and, indeed, held on to it longer than most of them. Domestically they began to argue that Irish industrial underdevelopment was not due to rule by British imperialism but to a 'lazy bourgeoisie' who refused to carry out their historical task of creating an 'Irish industrial revolution', thereby also producing an Irish industrial working class, who would then push through a socialist revolution. Mechanistic in the extreme, this theory saw US rather than British imperialism as the major threat, while also welcoming international investment to help create an industrial Ireland. Diligent work in urban areas of the south eventually paid dividends in terms of working class support. However, the departure from what they saw as traditional republicanism also eventually led many of them to denounce their former comrades as 'fascists'. Some eventually came to regard unionism as a more progressive ideology than nationalism. Any one of a number of individuals who argued for a greater understanding of the northern nationalist position were condemned as fellow travellers of the (Provisional) IRA. The national question was increasingly seen as largely irrelevant because there were, in fact, two nations in Ireland. This view at least recognised that there was opposition to a united Ireland from northern protestants for reasons other than mass delusion or false consciousness, but, taken to its extreme, it denied that any serious problem had ever existed for northern catholics. In practice, it meant that partition was accepted as logical. These views became influential within wider society due to the prominence of their proponents within the media and academia. However, they were never fully accepted by many of the organisation's rank and file, who continued to endorse some form of socialist republicanism, however vague. The collapse of the Eastern Bloc in 1989-90 had a major effect on this tradition. The majority

of its leading figures used the opportunity to jettison what was seen as embarrassing historical baggage and join the ranks of mainstream social democracy.

Within Official republicanism, a minority had rejected the ending of an armed campaign and continued to support the idea of an armed 'National Liberation Front'. Again, the legacy of the Republican Congress was employed, but from the beginning this minority was so mired in conspiracy and militarism that, by its nature, it was confined to a political ghetto. The history of that organisation would point to socialist republicanism being no guarantee against descent into tragic bloodshed.

Among Provisional republicans, thinking in the early 1970s was dominated by belief that a rapid military victory was inevitable. With victory, in theory, so close, the need for political thinking was initially neglected. A blueprint for a federal Ireland, with four local assemblies and a high degree of decentralisation and vaguely defined as 'democratic socialist', was promoted as an alternative to partition. This 'Éire Nua' would also ease unionist fears it was thought, offering a large degree of autonomy within Ulster. However, it is fair to say that military rather than political concerns dominated the movement until it became bogged down in an increasingly sectarian conflict in the mid-1970s. Younger northern activists increasingly began to set political policy, arguing that a 'long war' was in prospect during which a degree of popular community support would be necessary to maintain the struggle. The federalist idea was seen as an unnecessary concession to unionism and eventually dropped. There was bitter hostility towards the 'collaborationists' in mainstream nationalism, north and south. Support was loudly expressed for international liberation struggles, and socialist republicanism was again brought to the fore. There was a conscious playing down of the movement's 'catholic' image and a new interest in the area of women's rights. Following the long agony of the 1981 hunger strikes, there was a rise in both the numbers of young people attracted to the Provisionals and in support for Sinn Féin electorally in the north. The need to maintain that support and increase it in the rest of Ireland would lead to the eventual abandonment of abstentionism.

Political growth in the south came to be seen as crucial, especially as it was still seen as a 'neo-colony' of Britain and therefore its population should have been able to identify easily with the northern struggle. This by the 1980s was simply not the case. The Republic of Ireland was clearly an independent state and the majority of its population did not regard themselves as oppressed by Britain. They had no automatic identification with northern republicans at all. Ending abstention did not guarantee popular support or electoral success. Indeed, by the late 1980s it was

becoming apparent that use of the 'Armalite' was denying the movement success at the 'ballot box'. That was an extremely difficult reality for republicans to face. Right through the movement, from the era of 'Éire Nua' to that of the new socialism of the 1980s, there was a universal acceptance of militarism, if not a belief in outright military victory. But by the early 1990s, it was clear that outside of key areas in the north, there was no mass support, indeed only disapproval, for this tactic. The reasons for this are complex. Censorship (including self-censorship) and the dominance of anti-republicanism in the media are part of the answer. But there was a deeper reason. Aside from arguably 1970-72, there was never widespread support for an armed campaign amongst the majority of people on the island.

Most republicans have seen the military campaigns from 1916 onward as part of different phases of 'the struggle'. But there is a sense that they only appear that way to republicans. 1916 took place in different conditions from 1919; 1939 was completely different to 1969; and so on. The context changes, and republican ideology eventually changes with it. What has brought about the latest developments in republicanism is recognition of that; they are also a response to stalemate, if not actual defeat. They, surely, cannot represent a victory, in that, objectively, much that has for years supposedly justified an armed campaign has been abandoned: the most glaring example being the new recognition that a united Ireland will only occur with the consent of the north's unionist population. The international background to these events has been largely ignored, but it clear that the collapse of the Eastern bloc and the moves toward settlements in South Africa and the Middle East influenced republican thinking.¹⁴

Mainstream republican thinking is now dominated by the belief that electoral success, north and south of the border, will make a movement towards an all-Ireland republic more likely. Whether this will be the case is open to question. Along with this there is the implicit acceptance of the belief that demographic changes will help bring about a united Ireland in the not too distant future. This belief is unproven and, surely, undermines the republican vision of unity between 'catholic, protestant and dissenter'. There remains a strong glorification of militarism, and this is not confined to those determined to continue some form of armed campaign, however futile that may be. Militarism has always led to a hostility to debate and criticism because it is believed that these aid one's enemy. Ironically, the strongest critique of militarism has come from republicans opposed to the Good Friday agreement.¹⁵ There is also an increasing tendency to see republicanism and nationalism as identical.

Republicanism since 1922 has grappled with the legacy of the civil war.

It has been bedevilled by a failure to understand that its strength is that it is a democratic, secular ideology. The continuing existence of partition has meant that often republicanism's focus has been solely on national reunification, not on a constructive critique of both states. Perhaps now we can take advantage of the space provided by journals such as this to discuss how relevant republicanism will be for Ireland in the new century.

Notes

¹ The most recent exponent of this view has been Tom Garvin. See his 1922—*The Birth of Irish Democracy* (Dublin 1996). For an opposing view, see John M. Regan, *The Irish Counter-Revolution 1921-1936* (Dublin 1999). For an important look at attitudes to partition during the Treaty debates see Eamon Phoenix, 'Michael Collins and the Northern Question' in Doherty and Keogh (eds.), *Michael Collins and the making of the Irish State* (Dublin 1998).

² See Richard English, *Radicals and the Republic, Socialist Republicanism in the Irish Free State 1925-1937* (Oxford 1994), esp. pp. 29-65.

³ This is the belief that the rising was a deliberate blood sacrifice with no popular support, which led to a 're-awakening' of national spirit following the executions of its leaders. As Joseph Lee has noted, this interpretation suits both revisionist opponents and republican supporters of the rising. See his *Ireland 1912-1985, Politics and Society* (Cambridge 1989), pp. 24-38.

⁴ See a thoughtful article on the subject by Sinn Féin's Mitchel McLaughlin in *An Camhéachta*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1991).

⁵ This is not to argue that sectarianism did not exist within the IRA, but that it was of marginal influence in that period. The reader should also note that the IRA candidates stood as 'Republicans', not as Sinn Féin with whom the IRA had poor relations in this period.

⁶ Quote from Sean MacBride at the 1934 General Army Convention. For a more extensive discussion of IRA radicalism, see my 'Moss Twomey, Radicalism and the IRA—a reassessment' in *Saothar* (2001, forthcoming).

⁷ See for example the verdict on the period from *The Last Post* (Dublin 1985): '1923 to 1940 [was] a valley period ... [of] inactivity, playing with politics'. Sean Russell's status remains high among traditional republicans, yet the evidence points towards he and his allies sabotaging the IRA's military plans in 1938 and then launching their own disastrous campaign.

⁸ 'Ireland's Answer' July 25, 1940. There are numerous examples, including support for Nazi anti-semitism, in IRA publications of the period, especially *War News*.

⁹ The first Clann na Poblachta national executive contained seven former leading IRA officers, including two former Chiefs-of-Staff and two former Adjutants General.

¹⁰ See the *United Irishman* newspaper, September 1950, October 1952 and January 1956.

¹¹ *United Irishman*, March 1962.

¹² This is not to argue, as some have, that the southern education system produced the modern IRA. In fact, excessive nationalist teaching probably alienated more than it inspired.

¹³ Early critics of revisionism tended to suggest that there was no problem with traditional nationalist orthodoxy. A more nuanced approach is noticeable in, for example, Máirín Ní Dhonnchada and Theo Dorgan (eds.), *Revising The Rising* (Derry 1991).

¹⁴ See quote from Danny Morrison in Richard English, 'Left on the Shelf' in *Fortnight*, no. 388, September 2000.

¹⁵ The Irish Republican Writers Group and their magazine, *Fourthwrite*.