



# The Burning Bush—Online article archive

## Oath of support for police — a solid rock or sinking sands??



**Michael Collins, terrorist, oath-taker and oath-breaker**

The main argument put forth by those in favour of the St Andrews Agreement appears to be the oath of support for the law enforcement agencies, which it is hoped will be forthcoming from Sinn Fein/IRA. This will form the foundation of a Stormont coalition administration between the DUP and Sinn Fein/IRA. This has been repeatedly set forth as the rock-solid safeguard which should set the minds of troubled unionists at rest.

It has been stated that should such a promise of support be given, then Sinn Fein/IRA will have repudiated their Irish Republicanism, basically admitted defeat and accepted the status quo of Northern Ireland's constitutional position as part of the United Kingdom.

### If only!

If only that were so, life would be so simple!

As we look at this thesis it is necessary, first of all, to

observe that this "magic" formula does not seem to have occurred to unionist leaders in the past, because, instead of simply asking for such an undertaking from Sinn Fein/IRA, they also demanded certifiable decommissioning, the dismemberment of the IRA organisation, the reparation of stolen goods and money and the handing over of IRA criminals who have not been before the courts of the land for their crimes.

Why was all that required if the simple undertaking which is now being demanded of Sinn Fein/IRA is sufficient to show that there has indeed been a radical and sincere change in the whole thinking and ethos of bloodthirsty Irish Republicanism?

The truth is, of course, that in the past it was recognised that such a promise was indeed worthless, given the nature of those with whom unionism is dealing!

### Shift

This new notion indicates the major shift that has taken place in the thinking of the DUP. Would such an undertaking sound the demise of Irish Republicanism? Would it signal that the leopard had changed its spots? The Word of God would suggest not. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil," Jeremiah 13:23. The words "accustomed to do evil" may be translated literally "the disciples of evil". What an accurate and succinct description of Sinn Fein/IRA! They are indeed the disciples of terror and wickedness and have travelled the world, passing on the lessons they have learned as they have conducted their campaign of murder and



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maiming over the last 30 odd years.

No repeating of a formula of words, put together in such a fashion as to mean all things to all men, is proof that Sinn Fein/IRA have changed and are now suited to govern this land. It would be suicidal of unionism to think for a moment that it ever could be.

## Examples from irish history

We have examples from the history of Irish Republicanism how meaningless is the swearing of a promise or oath, no matter how carefully scripted, by an Irish Republican.

Following the agreement between the British government and Sinn Fein/IRA in 1921 and the signing of the Anglo/Irish Treaty, the Irish Free State was born. A large degree of self-government was granted to the 26 counties which desired to leave the United Kingdom. But the links with London were not entirely broken. Government ministers in the new Dublin administration were required to swear an oath to King George V which was much more intricate and widesweeping than anything required of Sinn Fein/IRA at present.

Doubtless it stuck in the throat of Sinn Fein/IRA to swear an oath BUT THEY DID!

They did so for it served their purpose. Furthermore, though they did so, it did not indicate the death of their republican aspirations or any acknowledgement of wrong-doing in their endeavours to achieve the establishment of a republic!

### Michael Collins

Michael Collins was one of those who swore the oath of allegiance to King George V. The swearing of an oath did not stop him continuing to encourage terrorism to be waged against Northern Ireland. He, along with those former compatriots who did not agree with his signing the Treaty, cooperated to send men and weapons to Northern Ireland in order to undermine that aspect of the Treaty which brought the state of Northern Ireland into existence, while he publicly professed to uphold it.

There is documentary evidence which would support the view that Collins ordered the assassination of Sir Henry Wilson on June 22nd 1920. While he publicly condemned the murder, he sought by every means to have the assassins released. He even had a "distinguished British citizen taken and held as a hostage." (The day Michael Collins was shot, page 18.)

So much for the notion that a repudiation of Irish Republicanism will take place, following the swearing of an oath to uphold the status quo!

### Recent history

But more recent history provides us with even more cogent facts.

In 1986, Sinn Fein/IRA split over the issue to end the policy of abstentionism and to allow elected Sinn Féin members to take their seats in Dáil Éireann. This move signalled a departure from the traditional republican analysis which viewed the parliament of the Republic of Ireland as an illegal assembly, set up by an act of the British parliament. It was argued



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that republicans owed their allegiance to the Irish Republic, maintaining that this state existed and that its authority rested with the IRA Army Council.

Did this public recognition of what had been deemed up until then an "illegal assembly" and the oath taken by Sinn Fein/IRA members elected to this heretofore unrecognised institution result in any significant change of heart within Sinn Fein/IRA? No, most certainly not, since the murders and brutality, the terrorism and robbery continued unabated.

## 1989

But we have a more modern example of the pointlessness of requiring an oath of Sinn Fein/IRA. In 1989, legislation was passed in which an oath was required of all elected councillors in Northern Ireland.

Here are the terms of that oath:

I declare that, if elected, I will not by word or deed express support for or approval of—  
(a) any organisation that is for the time being a proscribed organisation specified in Schedule 2 to the [1978 c. 5.] Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1978;  
or  
(b) acts of terrorism (that is to say, violence for political ends) connected with the affairs of Northern Ireland.

## Impact

Just what impact has that oath had upon the members of Sinn Fein/IRA?

None whatsoever, as far as support for the illegal actions of the IRA and their continuing rejection of the legitimate agencies of law enforcement in Northern Ireland are concerned. Each Sinn Feiner who swore that oath loyally gives his support to an organisation which day and daily is involved in all forms of violent and illegal activities and that all for political ends.

What fools we would be to think that any oath taken by a Sinn Feiner would in any way bring to an end his discipleship of evil and corruption.

## Morals of Rome

Why are oaths and promises treated in this way by republicans?

It must be traced back to the moral bedrock upon which their thinking and mindset have been grounded.

The Church of Rome has adopted as a leading principle of her policy, that faith is not to be kept with heretics, when its violation is necessary for the interests of the Church. This abominable doctrine papists have disclaimed. This does not surprise us. A priori, it was to be expected that any society that was wicked enough to adopt such a principle would be base enough to deny it. Besides, to confess to this policy would be the sure way of defeating its end. Who would contract alliances with Rome, if told beforehand that she would keep to them not a moment longer than suited her own purposes? Who would entrust himself to her promise, if he saw it to be the net in which he was to be caught and destroyed?



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## Proof

For proof that such a doctrine exists we appeal the matter to her canons and her history. The doctrine that no faith is to be kept with heretics, when to do so would militate against the interests of the Church, was promulgated by the Third Lateran Council, decreed by the Council of Constance, confirmed by the Council of Trent, and is sworn to by all priests at their ordination, when they declare on oath their belief of all the tenets taught in the sacred canons and the general councils; and it has been practised by the Church of Rome, both in particular cases of great flagrancy, and in the general course of her actings. The proof is as clear as the charge is grave and the crime enormous.

The Third Lateran Council, which was held at Rome in 1167 under the pontificate of Alexander III, and which all Papists admit to be infallible, decreed in its sixteenth canon, that "oaths made against the interest and benefit of the Church are not so much to be considered as oaths, but as perjuries." The fourth or great Lateran Council absolved from their oath of allegiance the subjects of heretical princes.

The Council of Constance, which was convened in 1414, expressly decreed that no faith was to be kept with heretics. The words of this decree are, that "by no law, natural or divine, is it obligatory to keep faith with heretics, to the prejudice of the Catholic faith." This fearful doctrine the council ratified in a manner not less fearful, in the blood of John Huss. It is well known that this reformer came to the council trusting in a safe-conduct, which had been given him under the hand of the Emperor Sigismund. The document in the amplest terms guaranteed the safety of Huss, in his journey to Constance, in his stay there, and in his return home. Notwithstanding, he was seized, imprisoned, condemned, and burnt alive, at the instigation of the council, by the very man who had so solemnly guaranteed his safety.

## Conclusion

We conclude with a word of warning from John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, as it is posted on Dr. Paisley's website — "European Institute of Protestant Studies", ([http://www.ianpaisley.org/article.asp?ArtKey=sword\\_010198](http://www.ianpaisley.org/article.asp?ArtKey=sword_010198)).

The following was written by John Wesley to the "Public Advertiser" in 1780.

Sir, - Some time ago a pamphlet was sent me, entitled 'An Appeal from the Protestant Association to the People of Great Britain'. A day or two since, a kind of answer to this was put into my hand, which pronounces 'its style contemptible, its reasoning futile, and its object malicious'. On the contrary, I think the style of it clear, easy, and natural; the reasoning in general strong and conclusive; the object or design kind and benevolent. And in pursuance of this kind and benevolent design - namely, to preserve our happy Constitution - I shall endeavour to confirm the substance of that tract by a few plain arguments.

With persecution I have nothing to do. I persecute no man for his religious principles. Let there be as 'boundless a freedom in religion' as any man can conceive. But this does not touch the point.

"That No Roman Catholic does or can give security for his allegiance or peaceable behaviour, I prove thus: It is a Roman Catholic maxim, established, not by private men, but by a



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public Council, that 'No faith is to be kept with heretics'. This has been openly avowed by the Council of Constance; but was never openly disclaimed. Whether private persons avow or disavow it, it is a fixed maxim of the Church of Rome. But, as long as it is so, it is plain that the members of that Church can give no reasonable security to any Government of their allegiance or peaceable behaviour.

Therefore they ought not to be tolerated by any Government - Protestant, Mohammedan, or Pagan. You may say, 'Nay, but they will take an oath of allegiance'. True, five hundred oaths; but the maxim, 'No faith is to be kept with heretics' sweeps them all away as a spider's web. So that still no governors that are not Roman Catholics can have any security of their allegiance.

Again, those who acknowledge the spiritual power of the Pope can give no security for their allegiance to any Government; but all Roman Catholics acknowledge this; therefore they can give no security for their allegiance.

John Wesley.

### Folly

Acceptance of the St Andrews Agreement on the basis of a Sinn Fein/IRA oath is utter folly and will prove ruinous for Ulster. May the God Who was the help of our fathers deliver us from such ruin.