

a nisd.
 Bha an naoinear a taiseachadh ri Urnaigh an Tighnearna maraon sa Ghaidhlig, sa Choirneis is sa Bheurla. . . . "Ar n-Athair . . . nuair a dh'fhosgail an dorus. Bha faileadh de "chordite" a' tighinn a-steach comhla ris . . . ach lean iad uile air an Urnaigh . . . "gu naoimhichear t-ainm. . . ."

Stad an Caipitean Turcach lachdann . . . "gun tigeadh do rìoghachid" . . . chuala siad e a' tionndadh . . . "gun dèanar do thoil air an talamh. . . . Chuala iad a chas-cheumannan a' teàrnadh na staidhre, ach bha difir mòr ann . . . bha a chas-cheumannan a nisd cho iriosal mar gun robh e ann an eaglais . . . "mar a nithear air nèamh. . . . Dhùin e an dorus gu sàmhach.

Air an t-sràid dh'eigh an ceannard ciar Turcach mar b'abhaist dha, ach bha mòran difir ann cuideachd.

Cha do dh'èigh e àireamh sam bith . . . "Falamh!" ghlaodh e. "Falamh! Chan eil duine a-staigh idir. . . . Rachamaid don ath-thaigh. . . ."

Chuala iad an Turcach a' ruith suas an staidhre fhiodh an ath-dhorus . . . thill e a dh-èigheuch. . . . "Còig . . . còig."

Bha gearanan is guidheachan abhaistich nan trughan ri chluinntinn . . . còig urchraichean . . . an sin, -sàmhchair.

Cho-èignich an Caipitein breac-bhallach an fheadhainn eile Urnaigh an Tighearna a dèanamh trì uairean an deidh sin, gus an robh na Turcaich air falbh.

Bha an t-sràid dhustach theth a nis falamb ach na cuirp fhuidhich agus na cuileagan orra aig gach dorus ach aig an taigh aca fhéin.

Sin mar a ghairm Murchaidh Thormaid air an Tighearna ann an Kut al Amara. Thill e agus a chuid dhaoine dhachaidh gu sabhailte. . . agus tha 'ogha (Màiri nighean Dhomhnuill Kut) a' fuireach air croit a seanair an diugh.

GILLEASBUIG MacMHUIRICH
 Gilleasbuig Lachlainn 'Illeasbuig.

The writer first heard this dramatic account from his father who saw active service on the Turkish front in the First World War.

Scottish parliament, another Stormont."

The author heard this argument during the devolutionary '70s and, unfortunately, hears it today with undiminished candour and conviction in the de-industrialising '80s among the Irish community.⁵

This was not always the case however; in the 1920s Red Clyde, and its Scottish Republican leader John Mac Lean, was heavily supported by the Irish of the Gorbals and the Lanarkshire coalfield.⁶

Mac Lean's plan was to imbue in the Scottish working class the politics that had been developed in Ireland by Edinburgh-born James Connolly;⁷ a synthesising of nationalism and communism based on the observation that capitalism and private property were English importations into Celtic Ireland, whose traditions had been essentially collectivist since antiquity.

Mac Lean's dream was, of course, never realised in his lifetime. His untimely death,⁸ saw the birth of the Northern Ireland Statelet following the British withdrawal from the 26 Counties after the Tan War.

Stormont's resign of terror was to end fifty years later amid the IRA blitz and the re-introduction of direct London rule which continues today.⁹

The campaign of the IRA that brought down Stormont had its origins in the ghetto emergencies of '68 and '69 when Catholic pogrom — a Belfast Protestant tradition — again threatened to rear its head.

"Liberal" Britain reeled in shock horror that such a system of religious apartheid could exist on their doorstep, within *their* state, in modern times. The shocked surprise was not, however, universal this side of the water. Nowhere on this island was the plight of the Bogsider or the resident of Ardoyne so instinctively understood than among the Irish in West Central Scotland. As tales of barely controllable B-Specials and viciously sectarian local government institutions flooded across the water, the scenario of an Edinburgh Stormont and a Strathclyde RUC could not have been more vivid for the Glasgow Irish contemplating a separate Scotland. If there were any doubters among the Irish community as to whether this would be the case they only had to look at the solidarity and kinship, not to mention material support, that was shown to the Loyalists in the North from Scottish Protestant organisations, particularly the Orange Lodges.

Unlike the 1920s however, there was no "HANDS OFF IRELAND" campaign run by Scottish separatists. The voice of Scotland, to the Irish in Scotland, appeared to be various shades of Loyalism, and therefore, various shades of anti-Irish racism. That nothing significant happened in the following ten years to change this perception of the Irish here did not do the devolutionists chances much good among the Irish — the author knows of no member of his extended family or friends of voting age in 1979 who voted for the assembly.

How can this community then, which appears to have many of the qualities and traditions necessary, if not vital, for the creation in Scotland of a solid separatist movement, be won over to the cause of Scotland?

THE IRISH IN SCOTLAND AND THE SNP: A CELTIC PERSPECTIVE

by
P. J. MAC GIOLLA BHÁIN, B.A.

The Irish, since coming to Scotland in modern times, have formed Scotland's largest immigrant community. They are also culturally and ethnically Scotland's closest kith and kin. The Scottish nationality — as has already been stated¹ — is itself mainly Gaelic.

This links Scotland with Ireland in a relationship that is unique in both the countries experience.

Due to their experience at the hands of English imperialism the Irish came to industrial Scotland the most oppressed, abused peasantry in Europe. They came to Britain uncommitted to the Protestant work ethic of Victorian industry and thrift and uncommitted to society around them by either tradition or economic success.

They brought with them much of the Gaelic culture of their homeland and with it its inherent value system of kinship and solidarity that had been extinguished in much of lowland Scotland by the great engines of Anglicisation-industrialisation and reformation.

Perhaps because of these factors they provided industrial Scotland with its agitators and the working class in this country with a cutting edge of radicals and revolutionaries disproportionate to their number. This was true of all Britain's industrial cities where the Irish settled, but perhaps nowhere more so than Glasgow. MacLean's powerbase in "bolshhevik" Scotland was the Gorbals-central Glasgow's Irish ghetto of no mean city.

Today in the working class areas of Glasgow where there remains large concentrations of Irish people,² the graffiti is more redolent of the Ardoyne of New Lodge Road than to anything distinctly Scottish. The Irish in Glasgow have remained at the lower end of the socio-economic league and, as a self-conscious community, especially its youth, relatively alienated to the society around it.

This community, in the heart of urban Scotland, in the heart of labour's "heartland,

would seem to have many of the qualities that where outlined by David Bowie³ when looking to what type of support the SNP would have to attract and hold if independence from England⁴ was to be realised.

That they are also the Scot's nearest Celtic kith and kin would seem to guarantee that a party such as the SNP — out to break the connection with England and rend asunder the English dominated UK — would be commanding as much support from Glasgow's Irish community today as Mac Lean did in his day.

The situation, however, is quite the reverse. The Irish in Glasgow are not, it would appear, supporting the SNP in the manner outlined above.⁴

The main reason for this, I believe, is the perception of the SNP among the Irish in Glasgow, and the results for the Irish community in Scotland if the SNP were to be successful and establish an independent Scottish state.

The overwhelming answer given to the author for *not* supporting Scotland's claim for national independence by Irish people is remarkably uniform. "A separate Scotland would rapidly develop into another Ulster, a

Having gone through the available literature from the SNP I can find no mention of Ireland whatsoever. The SNP, it would appear, does not have a policy on the occupation of the six counties of N.E. Ireland by Britain. This could not be said of the other Celtic Nationalist party on this Island — Plaid Cymru.

Plaid Cymru is quite unambiguous in their support for a 32 county republic and self-determination for the entire island of Ireland free from British interference. Daffyd Ellis Thomas and other PC members have frequently been on pro-Irish platforms extending Celtic solidarity to the Irish.

I cannot however recall, or find evidence of any SNP spokesperson addressing the party's attention to the activities of the British State, and many Scottish troops, in the North of Ireland over the past 17 years.

This silence, or apparant silence, is taken as indicating acquiescence by the Irish community here in Scotland, to those activities. This belief among the Irish over here has been significant in denying traditional Labour votes defecting to the SNP. The silence has convinced many in the Irish community that the Scots are in fact merely a species of North Brit, fully participant in the Protestant consensus that the rebellious Irish must be controlled.¹⁰

This is indeed a travesty of Scottish history. That this country, whose national roots and cultural heritage are so firmly founded in the Irish kingdom of Dalriada. This country that shared with Ireland a common cultural heritage, a common language and common customs that were to remain intact across the narrow waters that separate the two countries for over 1200 years.

That modern Irish immigrants in Scotland have considered themselves immigrants at all is indicative of the direction of Scotland under English rule.

The Irish over here, in response to discrimination and exclusion from status and institutional power, reacted in classic immigrant fashion in a country where they shouldn't have felt foreign in the first place but did, and arguably, still do. In their politics, the Irish community when looking over the sea to the homeland were among the most republican and active of the Irish communities in Britain,¹¹ in the 1920s period. Today Glasgow has been the source of much support for the war in the North to eject the British.¹²

When concerned with their political allegiance in Scotland the Irish have, since Mac Leans time, supported the British Labour

party faithfully to such an extent the ranks of many CLP's in the West of Scotland contain Irish people disproportionate to their number in the country as a whole.

This political double standard practiced by the Irish here — i.e. on the one hand supporting the republican cause in Ireland, with its quite definitely revolutionary implications for the UK. On the other hand supporting the British Labour party at election time with its quite un-revolutionary attitude to the UK is indicative of both the problems at present and the potentialities for the future.

If the exciting potential is to be realised then action is required. The SNP must start to address itself to the entire range of issues that are involved in any analysis of Ireland and her British troubles.

The party has spokespeople on a plethora of subjects and issues it does not, however, appear to have one on Ireland.

This, I believe, in part explains the appalling ignorance of some, may I stress some, SNP members of quite rudimentary facts of Irish history.¹³

I am not, however, suggesting that the SNP in Strathclyde court the "Green vote" like some New York machine politician.

What is being urged is that if the SNP is to be the vehicle by which Scotland is delivered from English rule, then it must make itself aware of the fact that there is a common heritage and a common experience for Scotland and Ireland, both Celtic countries, dominated for centuries by English rule.

If this can be achieved then the input into the Scottish National movement would be capital. The Irish here with their vibrant separatist tradition still very much alive and their experience of militant class struggle in Scotland could be powerful allies of Scotland's cause.

The Labour party which has relied on the Irish vote for generations as bedrock support would find their safe seats and their councils scythed away from under them. The Labour party, the main guarantor of the British connection in Scotland, would be far more threatened by Scottish nationalism than at present.

Scotland would have taken a major step towards building a national liberation movement. A movement, capable of and dedicated to, prosecuting a successful struggle against the English connection.

REFERENCES

1. NLR 2, p. 5. "The Sense of Nationality in Scotland," by M. Mulholland.

2. In this article the definition of Irish nationality murdering him for political reasons.

The circumstances of Willie McRae's death are bizarre. He was found in his car which had crashed in an upright position off a lonely road in Inverness-shire, and those who found his body, including a doctor, saw no pistol or cartridge cases in the vicinity and they assumed that his fatal injuries had resulted from the car crash.

It was several weeks after the death, when an investigative journalist discovered that Willie McRae had died as a result of a gunshot wound through the head, that the Crown Office (the State's colonial legal administrative body in Scotland) reluctantly revealed some of the details of what they were insisting

is that now generally accepted by Local Authorities with progressive multi-Cultural policies and Ethnic Minority Units, e.g. GLC, Birmingham etc. — it is "Anyone born in Ireland, with Parent(s) born in Ireland, Irish forebears or consider themselves to be Irish".

3. NLR 1, p. 2. "Elements of a Strategy for achieving Independence," by David Bowie. "... the SNP will need to build up a body of support that will remain solid during a period of considerable political turbulence. . . ."

4. The main body of the author's evidence that prompted, in part, this article has been two-fold; his experience over several years in community affairs in Glasgow's Irish community. And on recent evidence of canvass returns from Irish areas in Glasgow's East End e.g. Barrowfield and Gallowgate.

5. In the organisations that would, arguably, count as the expression of the community's collective voice, e.g. IBRG, Conradh na Gaeilge, Comhaltas Ceolteoirí Éireann etc.

6. See John MacLean by Nan Milton, pp. 9, 128 and 129.

7. See John MacLean by Nan Milton, p. 129, states that Connolly was "... the moving spirit behind the secession of the Scottish branches of the SDF in 1903 to form the SLP and he is recorded as having been its first chairman." Also that MacLean: "... after the 1916 rising and his release from prison he had contacts with some members of the Scottish Divisional Board of the Irish Republican Brotherhood."

8. Mac Lean died 30th November 1923.

9. See Michael Farrell's *Northern Ireland: The Orange State*, (Pluto Press), also *Northern Ireland, Between Civil Rights and Civil War*, by O'Dowd, Rolston and Tomlinson and Eamonn McCann's *War in an Irish Town*.

10. This is, of course, exactly what the London propaganda agencies such as the BBC are continually stressing — that the Scots are indeed part of some British Race, British Nation.

11. See *The Irish in Britain* by Kevin O'Connor, pp. 41, 42. "By 1920 the IRA register in Glasgow numbered 4,000 recruits and the financial contribution from among the Scottish community was reckoned by De Valera to be in excess of funds from any other country, including Ireland."

12. The contemporary Irish effort in Scotland is still impressive for the War in the North. Glasgow marching Bands have pride of place in Belfast republican marches often numbering all the other bands put together. The IRA unit that attacked the Grand Hotel in Brighton allegedly operated out of Glasgow's South side for several years.

13. Again the evidence is anecdotal by the nature of things, a group of SNP members at Paisley last year from the East of Scotland seemed to place much credence in the idea that the Gael was foreign to not only most of Scotland but also to Northern Ireland and quoted from Ian Adamson's *The Cruithin — the ancient Kindred* (See Carn winter '85 for a review by Pdraig Ó Snodaigh). From this point their view of Ireland and the Irish could only be described by this Irishman as — British!

McRAE SHOOTING — NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Ever since militant nationalist Willie McRae, 61, was found shot dead in his car on April 6th, 1985, there have been many who openly discounted the official verdict of "suicide" and others have publicly accused the State of



Willie McRae, R.I.P.