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## PART TWO OF OUR EXCLUSIVE INSIGHT INTO THE IRA: HOW EDUCATION MINISTER TAUGHT TACTICS TO PROVOS; MI5 AGENT CARLIN SAYS MCGUINNESS WAS 'FEARED' WITHIN RANKS

**BYLINE:** Chris Anderson**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 28,29**LENGTH:** 1120 words**HIGHLIGHT:** MILITANT: Martin McGuinness in Londonderry in 1971; UNDERCOVER:: AGENT Willie Carlin; POLITICAL AGENDA: McGuinness was an unwilling politician in the early days

MARTIN McGuinness is now one of Sinn Fein's top officials, Stormont's Education Minister, an MP and a member of the Assembly. But according to former MI5 agent Willie Carlin, who worked closely with him in Sinn Fein, McGuinness was a "reluctant politician".

Carlin also describes McGuinness as one of the "most feared and calculating tacticians" within the Provisional IRA.

According to the former agent, who spied on Sinn Fein and republican suspects for over a decade, Sinn Fein only decided to contest the Northern Ireland Assembly elections in 1981.

But it had a big problem - the party could not decide on a candidate for the Derry area.

Carlin recalled how, prior to a Sinn Fein meeting in Derry, Mitchel McLaughlin and another senior republican, Sean Keenan, decided that they wanted McGuinness to be the local candidate.

However, McGuinness himself was unaware of the move until the Sinn Fein meeting took place and he found himself thrown in to the electoral arena by his party colleagues.

Carlin said: "We were all at the meeting - Sinn Fein activists and Provos - when Mitchel proposed Martin as candidate.

"It was agreed and that was that. Martin sat there with his mouth open, totally outflanked. He was a reluctant politician at the outset."

Carlin said Sinn Fein's move into politics was deliberately designed to test the depth of support for the party across the North.

He said McLaughlin became the principal driving force behind the political campaign and described him as shrewd and capable and responsible for having devised the party's long-term political strategy.

By 1982, Willie Carlin had become a key personal aide to Martin McGuinness.

Having first been accepted into republican circles following his 'discharge' from the British Army, Carlin's rise through the ranks of the republican movement was rapid indeed.

With party approval, he became Sinn Fein treasurer in Derry, handling vast sums of money from a series of bank robberies carried out by the IRA.

The former spy also controlled the IRA's fraud and embezzlement scams, which generated the day-to-day financing needed to keep the republican movement ticking over.



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Carlin said one of the IRA's favourite scams involved him setting up a number of local work groups and tenants' associations in republican areas of Derry - all financed by the Northern Ireland Office itself.

He said: "It was a brilliant scheme and many of the guys involved in the projects or working on the sites were in the IRA.

"I provided a lot of jobs for IRA men at the time and they were being paid by the British government!"

Greater trust was placed in Carlin as he became more and more involved with McGuinness and Sinn Fein in Derry.

However, all the time Carlin was passing back information to his MI5 handlers whom he met on a regular basis at a series of pre-arranged locations near Limavady, just a few miles north of Derry city.

The former MI5 agent said Martin McGuinness never suspected his role with British Intelligence.

Indeed, Carlin claimed that McGuinness himself was working with another section of British Intelligence, MI6: "By 1982, Martin McGuinness had been working with British Intelligence for some time through Michael Oatley, codenamed, 'Mountain Climber'.

"The IRA Army Council had sanctioned Martin McGuinness to deal with MI6 since 1974 on an off-and-on basis," he said.

"As such the Brits were actually doing things through Oatley which was making the pathway to politics easier for the Provos and Martin McGuinness".

As part of this facilitation process, Carlin claims he was encouraged to rig the 1982 Northern Ireland Assembly elections, which saw Sinn Fein gain a foothold on the political ladder for the first time in recent years.

"It was all part of the political process of taking the republican movement along two tracks.

"One track was the war against the Crown and the other was the objective of making political gains.

"At that stage I was convinced that the military campaign would end."

Both Carlin and McGuinness were involved with a woman's group in Sinn Fein, which included among its members, Mary Neillis, Mary Lou McLaughlin and Bernie McGuinness.

Carlin said: "Martin involved himself in all issues including abortion which he fiercely opposed, but he still had his contacts with the military side of the movement and would take part in discussions on economic targets for the military campaign. He covered everything."

When convicted spy, Michael Bettany, eventually blew Carlin's cover in 1985, McGuinness could not believe his trusted aide had duped him for years.

"Bettany passed my details to Brighton bomber Patrick Magee who got the information to Sinn Fein.

"At first McGuinness could not accept what he was being told and contacted his own MI6 contact."

The MI6 agent discovered Carlin's real identity and stalled McGuinness, long enough for Carlin to escape a Provo hit squad.

Now, Carlin remains 'on the run'. With no amnesty for former undercover soldiers, they must live with a constant death sentence hanging over them.

And poll results were 'fixed'

FORMER agent Carlin claims he was encouraged to rig the 1982 Northern Ireland Assembly elections. This was because Sinn Fein wanted to get more involved in the political arena

However, by ensuring the election of Martin McGuinness, Carlin claims he helped expose how republicans exploited the electoral system of the day.

Carlin said: "To get Martin elected we worked out ways of stealing hundreds of votes.



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"We would go off around the streets of Derry collecting ballot papers off people and in turn impersonate them at the polling stations.

"We would also take note of when people hadn't voted and then someone would impersonate them by claiming to have forgotten their voting card.

"And, it worked. If it hadn't then McGuinness wouldn't have been elected."

Carlin claimed the impersonation exercise in Derry involved senior Sinn Fein figures including Pat Coyle, who, he claimed had supplied clothes, coats, and wigs etc for use as disguises.

He also claimed one female Sinn Fein member, now involved in politics in Derry, voted a total of 69 times on the day Martin McGuinness was elected to Stormont in 1982.

All of this Carlin said was known to McGuinness and McLaughlin, claiming both turned a blind eye to the illegal measures taken by him and his election team.

Following McGuinness's election success, Carlin passed on details of Sinn Fein's election tactics to MI5.

Shortly afterwards the Government put into place new laws requiring all voters to provide identification at polling stations.

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