BRIAN EARLS EMAILS

There was a huge attempt by his immediate friends and colleagues to deny the diaries and to put up a smokescreen if possible, indeed to frighten anyone off who seemed too interested like American film makers. Simultaneously there was a campaign of nationalists, Republicans and the pious from Yeats to McCartan to repeat the certainties about forgery put together by Mackey and others. He was an eye specialist I think. It was and is a belief thing. Of course until 1959 nobody could say precisely what was in the diaries.

Yes, de Valera wanted people to keep away from the diaries issue.

Archbishop Davidson seems to have been a royal/establishment appointment and not Anglo-Catholic (parents were Scots Presbyterians). High church types either went over to Rome (the gay ones anyway) or were somewhat misogynist and anti-gay to balance that.

1981 note for Strasbourg -

"The small, though vociferous minority of fundamentalist Protestants (about 5% of the populace), was joined privately in opposition to homosexual law reform by the Roman Catholic hierarchy in 1979. The Government Memorial quotes liberally from this statement and presents it, undated, as Appendix D. However, the hierarchy presented no viewpoint to the Northern Ireland Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights in 1976/1977 on homosexual law reform, though it did so on divorce law reform. Its views on divorce were totally ignored by the Government.

The Government does not exhibit the covering letter from Cardinal O Fiaich, which puts the statement in a context of remarks on prison reform and discrimination in employment. Nor does it reveal that this submission was expressly solicited by the Government. In particular, it does not state that the Roman Catholic hierarchy has not published this statement. The public position of the Roman Catholic Church in this regard remains the statement of Cardinal O Fiaich's predecessor, Cardinal Conway:- 'With reference to the law of the State on this matter, this is essentially a matter for the civil legislators'."

Date: Fri, 10 Feb 2012 14:14:19 +0000
Subject: casement again
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Jeff

Thanks for copy of your reply to Manus O'R on Larkin etc.

The following is prompted by pure curiosity - not polemic. Was it the case that there was a sustained Irish nationalist attempt to discredit the diaries, or was the claim that they were a forgery merely a matter of going through the motions?

My mother - who had no interest in Casement - knew something about Mackey, who was the most diligent of the disprovers. I suspect he was a dentist and may have had a surgery in a house where my parents had a flat after their marriage. Anyway I remember my mother a lifetime ago laughing at the absurdity of Mackey setting out with his magnifying glass to disprove the diaries. She added - Lord knows where she could have picked this up - that Mackey was discouraged by De Valera from continuing his enquiries. She did not say that Dev knew the diaries were genuine, but that seemed implicit.

Did Archbishop Davidson belong to the Anglo-Catholic wing of the C of E?  Suspect that Catholics/Anglo Catholics, being less biblically focused, were more nuanced and charitable in their attitude to homosexuality than evangelicals. Do you know anything pointing to the contrary, other than Cardinal O Fiach support of the British government position at Strasburg ( perhaps elicited by the authorities ) ?

Brian