



ANOTHER KENNEALLY SCANDAL

CHILD ABUSER Bill Kenneally, a member of the well-known Fianna Fáil family, is in jail for multiple child sex offences committed between 1979 and 1990. He is currently the subject of a full-blown Commission of Inquiry, headed by retired judge Michael White.

Although he admitted his abuse to a senior garda in 1987, Kenneally waited 25 years to be prosecuted and convicted. Gardai said that the 1987 victim did not wish to give a statement but another victim claimed Kenneally was named to gardai in 1985. The current inquiry is happening because media coverage of Kenneally's 2013 conviction and subsequent political pressure fuelled speculation that Catholic Church and FF connections influenced gardai not to prosecute. The media is right behind this story and appears willing to pursue it to its conclusion.

Another serial paedophile, Patrick O'Brien, admitted abuse to gardai in 2002. His abuse then and previously went unpunished until 2016-18. He was, in fact, an already convicted child abuser, having received a suspended sentence in 1989 for abusing a school pupil and church chorister.

A religious lay worker, O'Brien had no FF connections and the chorister he abused was in the Church of Ireland St Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School. Failure to act on O'Brien's extensive abuse of other pupils was due to Garda inactivity and a concerted church cover-up, led by Dean Victor Griffin and headmaster Brian Weir.

It was only due to the determined,



Patrick O'Brien

lonely, pursuit of O'Brien by the parents of victim Kerry Lawless that O'Brien was convicted in 1989 and received a two-year suspended sentence. Due to his conviction and sentencing being unreported, O'Brien continued to abuse boys and also returned to work in St Patrick's. That was despite church authorities knowing of his abuse conviction.

Kerry Lawless saw O'Brien back working in St Patrick's and was so disgusted he contacted former classmates. They were not aware of O'Brien's 1989 conviction, so complete was the Griffin-Weir cover-up.

On receipt of this information, they contacted gardai, who only then brought O'Brien to book for abuses he committed in the 1970s and '80s. During the course of this investigation, evidence of Garda refusal to prosecute O'Brien in the early 2000s emerged. He was convicted of those offences after the St Patrick's case ended, with very little coverage.

Thus, in October 2016 O'Brien pleaded guilty to 51 sample counts of abusing 14 children over a 33-year period to 2010. Described in one account as the largest number of offences reported against any individual in the history of the state, two days were set aside at Dublin Circuit Criminal Court to hear details of the assaults and it took over 30 minutes simply to read out the charges (see *The Phoenix* 4/11/16).

This story has no FF or Catholic Church connection. It has a Garda and a Church of Ireland connection. The questions the O'Brien scandal poses are similar to those surrounding Bill Kenneally. Will the media, the *Irish Times* in particular, give the O'Brien horror story the same attention as that of Kenneally?

ROLL OF honour or street of shame? A hefty, three-page catalogue of the Government's 68 advisors, national handlers and media manipulators drawn up by seven of the Irish Times's finest was published last weekend.

Introduced as a "Who's who of the people behind the power", they are described as well paid (two-thirds are on over €100,000 pa) but the paper cautions that they must work long and hard under intense pressure as well as make themselves accountable to "demanding" politicians. The poor dears.

A low-life tabloid newspaper would likely be unable to resist attacking these public servants as overpaid, would-be west wingers with previously unheard of resources but who still managed to screw up. The IT, however, is a responsible newspaper and

it knows that an election looms with dark forces preparing to make mischief. Calm, soothing voices must be heard in these dangerous times.

FARAGE IMAGERY SLAMMED

THE *BUSINESS POST* provoked a storm on X recently with a studious and well-meaning article on immigration and how to blunt efforts by the far right to grow its appeal.

Unfortunately, the imagery accompanying the piece attracted far more attention than Aidan Regan's article, even though it was a sober assessment of Ireland's underdeveloped state capacity and the resultant damage this has done to social cohesion.

Regan wrote of the huge increase in the Irish population compared with other EU countries and how the gulf between public services and infrastructure has, consequently, had damaging social results.

However, the photo on the *Post* website, used to illustrate the article's points on immigration, was that used by Nigel Farage on a 'leave' poster during the UK Brexit referendum campaign. It depicted a long line of non-white migrants walking through England's green and pleasant land with a headline, "Breaking Point". It was referred to the UK police for alleged racism and some on social media compared it to images from the Nazi era. British chancellor George Osborne described it as "vile" and compared it to extremist literature from the 1930s.

Many angry tweets filled Irish social media following the *Post* article, with readers accusing the newspaper of using the article as "a disgraceful attempt at clickbait... a dog whistle to the far right" and so on.

Defenders of Regan pointed out that he had written an article about Ireland experiencing much immigration and the best way to suppress racism was to expand much-needed public services.

Regan's article also pointed out that the EU centre-right strategic response to the far right across Europe had been to restrict immigration and he feared that a conservative Irish state and media would follow suit. Regan also argued that we would soon find out if Sinn Féin is "a progressive centre-left party" or "closet conservatives", although there was no reference to the Government parties – Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Greens.

While much social media anger was directed at Regan, some combatants blamed *Post* editorial seniors for the photo and for the headline, "Far right is wrong to say 'Ireland is full' but it is getting there" – a sentiment that appears to endorse the Farage photo that was used online. Either way, the offensive photo was taken down a day after the typhoon on X first raged.



Nigel Farage



" SO, IT'S YOU, GRUMPY! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S BEEN COMMENTING ON MY POSTS. "

**THEY TRUST US
WE BUTCHER THEM**



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