

## A LESSON IN HUMAN HYPOCRISY

In 1994, Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein was a guest on Ireland's The Late Late Show presented by Gay Byrne. Byrne would not shake hands with him. A panel questioned Adams and made their hostility to him clear. Hugh Leonard accused Adams of being morally responsible for the acts of the IRA in which people were murdered without trial. "Morally", he said, "You are a murderer!" Adams smiled through it all and took it on the chin. The more righteous anger was directed at him, the more charm Adams exuded and he got the audience on his side. Leonard - as his reward for speaking the truth and who had not been involved in the horrendous activities endorsed by Adams - was booed by the audience. Adams became the golden boy of the evening.

Is the lesson from all that you never show anger on television? Was that the mistake that Leonard made? If the audience had felt enraged at the atrocities of the IRA they would have been hostile towards Adams. Leonard's anger was not where it went wrong. It was the people having more concern for being charmed than having righteous indignation that made it all go wonky.

That kind of attitude lingers in the Irish to the extent that they attended the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin 2012 to be charmed despite the insincerity of the bishops.