

Church & State

A Cultural Review Of Ireland And The World



**Bedouin
Israelis
Whose
Home
Has
Been
Demolished**

see page 23

Civil Partnership: *The Enlightenment Proceeds*

Lamarck And The Politics Of Darwinism

General MacEoin Brings A Bishop To Order

No. 101

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The Enlightenment Proceeds

The destruction of the family as the means of reproducing the species was implicit in the Enlightenment proclaimed in Europe over two centuries ago.

It was declared that individuals were ends in themselves. If they were ends in themselves, then they were under no obligation to submit to social arrangements conducive to the continuation of the species.

England dissented from the European Enlightenment, and made war on it when the Enlightenment took the form of the French Revolution.

The French Republic proclaimed Enlightenment values as the Rights of Man. It defended itself successfully against the military combination got together to destroy it. Voltaire's satirical joke then became the dominant fact of life in Europe: *"This animal is dangerous: when attacked it defends itself"*. By defending itself against the traditional order of Europe, it made itself a threat to Europe.

England, in the voice of Edmund Burke, rejected the idea of any general Rights of Man. Burke held that Rights were particular to national societies and that the universal Rights of Man proclaimed by the French Republic were a danger to the particular arrangements England had made for itself under the rule of the gentry who came to power after the 1688 *coup d'etat*. Burke's only dissent from the Particular Rights established in the life of this English state was against the Penal Laws applied against the Catholics who were the vast majority of the population in the Irish region of the state.

Burke preached a Crusade for the Rights of Englishmen against the Rights of Man that France was propagating in Europe. Pitt launched that Crusade, and it was sustained for twenty years by the Pittite Whig/Tories shaped by the ideology of Burke.

French ideology was given its most rounded expression in German philosophy during the generation of the French Revolution. But the Enlightenment proved to be the ideology of capitalism. And it was in England that capitalism was being established as a system around which society was formed. In France, and still more in Germany, Enlightenment was a body of ideas held as principles by a stratum of intellectuals that did not hold political power. Developments occurring in actual life in England were reflected in ideology on the Continent, and those reflections were denied in England itself. (It is not always a good thing to know what you are doing.)

England prevailed. Neither the French Republic, nor Napoleon's Empire which carried with it so much of the Republic, was allowed to find a settled place for itself in Europe. England, by means of its financial power, its Navy, and a small Army, kept Europe at war until the reactionary forces were restored everywhere. Europe became monarchical again in 1815. And the Spanish Inquisition was restored in Spain with the blessing of England.

'Legitimacy' was in power throughout Europe. Legitimacy was what the French Revolution had subverted. An inter-

national order was established to ensure that Legitimacy could not again be undermined by a freethinking rebellion here or there. Burke had triumphed.

But capitalism had grown apace in England during the long war against France. And the power of England in the world had grown. English capitalism had become a world force. Arrangements which had served it once became obstacles to it now. Protection had served its purpose. Free Trade became the order of the day for the progressive element—the element standing for the free development of capitalism. The great slave-labour camps in the Caribbean, which had been indispensable to English economic development for more than a century and had therefore been unquestionable, came into conflict with the development of Manchester capitalism, using free labour at home. Slavery, which had been criticised only by a handful of eccentric and irresponsible individuals all through the 18th century, was now found to be an abomination, defended only by a handful of eccentrics.

When France was defeated, Enlightenment ideology was put under curbs by a new European order of things master-minded by England. And then England set about undermining the European international order it had just established. It found that elements of the Enlightenment, which it had just threshed, were required by its own capitalist development. And it found that a united Europe was something it did not want either, even though it was united in a reactionary order it had itself put in place. And Castlereagh, who had organised Legitimist Europe into a system at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, began the work of undermining that system before he got around to cutting his throat in 1822.

England took off into the Anti-Corn Law League in 1838 with a powerful agitation, the like of which has never been since. And there is a sense in which it could be said that nothing much has happened since, other than the expansion of that agitation. The Anti-Corn Law agitation is *"the world in which we live in"*.

Implicit in that agitation was complete individualism—the breaking down of traditions and societies into a uniformity of atoms in a global market. And one of the traditions to be broken down was the gender division.

In the homelands of the Enlightenment, France and Germany, where it was the ideology of hard-thinking intellectuals, traditional life was not destroyed systematically. It was in England that that was done—and in the USA: but the USA, a society built on multiple genocide, there was never a traditional society.

Germany still lives very largely in traditional ways, even though it was in Germany that the Enlightenment was most intensively developed as a philosophy, eg, Kant and Fichte, with Fichte as a systematic Kantian. Enlightenment notions sprang up naturally enough in Koenigsberg—a city which Kant never set foot outside, and which was abolished in 1945. It was a city of the Hanseatic League. Hanseatic cities were trading cities without hinterlands. Speculation in them was not held back by difficulties involved in the governing of nations.

The first criticism is Kant's philosophy was made by a fellow-citizen of Koenigsberg, Hamman, who went on a commercial mission to London, became aware of the social dimension of Enlightenment there, and decided it would not do.

Kant lived a very proper life in the detached commercial environment of Koenigsberg. He did nothing but write and lecture and take sedate evening walks to keep the blood circulating. Hamman lived and his thoughts were subject to the requirements of living. He contributed four children to the reproduction of the species, whom he conjugated illicitly with his "*hamadryad*"—his nymph from the peasantry. He took account of nature, and looked on custom as second nature—as nature speaking in human life. For Kant nature was "*a chasm in thought*". Hamman knew that Kant's destructive *Critique* produced by the application of Pure Reason would not do. And Kant knew it too, because he went on to write a Practical Reason, in which all that he had destroyed was restored. But it was the Pure Reason that became part of the capitalist development driven by England. And it was in England that religion and custom were destroyed as actual facts of life and mediums of thought.

The *coup de grace* was given both around 1890 by Robert Blatchford, perhaps the most influential socialist propagandist there has been in the England language. Blatchford's first idea was to base socialism on the remaining traditional life of England, and to revive *Merrie England*. Then he saw that capitalist development had applied a scorched earth campaign to tradition and that nothing remained to be built on. And he saw that all that made life tolerable for the mass proletariat of England was the capitalist plunder of the resources of the world to feed and entertain it. So he became an advocate for an even stronger royal Navy. And, with custom and tradition gone, religion became nonsense, so he swept that away too with his mass circulation pamphlet, *Not Guilty*. All Dawkins and Hitchens are doing is picking at the corpse made by Blatchford.

This world without custom or religion—this English world—cannot be the world at large. It dominates the world at large in order to live off it, but the world at large cannot live like that, because that form of life is exploitative and needs regions to exploit.

Ireland was once part of the world at large with relation to England. In the last twenty years, it came close to being part of the English world, though a dependent part. At present it is rather lost.

The fact that England and the USA have taken in large numbers of immigrants is often described as a virtue, as hospitality. It arose in fact from material necessity. This should be obvious in the case of the USA, where a small, belligerent, colony exterminated the peoples of half a Continent and brought in people of their own kind to fill the empty spaces. In England the need arose from the decline in reproduction.

Bernard Shaw—Lenin's "*good man fallen among Fabians*"—observed that the English working class cut down on its rate of reproduction in the mid 19th century in order to increase the market value of labour-power, while capitalist development required an expanding labour force. The shortfall was made good by immigration. There has been mass immigration into England since the mid-19th century—beginning with people fleeing from the induced starvation of the 'Famine' in Ireland—with no proportionate increase in the overall population, which has grown very slowly indeed.

In the old Political Economy there was some rule about Demand and Supply balancing through their reciprocal relationship. Demand bought what was there, having been

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Church & State

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created by the production of what was there. But the Imperialist development of English capitalism—which had developed within an Imperialist framework—brought about a geographical and human separation between demand and supply. England demands: Asia and Africa supply.

England is above all else a state. It is a state that is prior to the people in it. And it is a state which, by purposeful use of military, financial and industrial power over many generations, has arranged that most of the rest of the world should supply it with goods and people.

It used to be said that the Family was the unit of society or of the state. That remains the case in much of the world. But in England the condition in which the family is a social unit have been done away with. When people can be imported and knocked into shape there is no need for families. Strong-minded individuals can still produce cohesive families, but they are no longer produced naturally by the custom of the country.

Another English socialist of the late 19th century had a vision of the future that might result from the progressive element in late Victorian culture, and he worried that the danger with ideals was that they tended to be realised.

The implicit ideal of individualist uniformity is the single-person household. and single-person households are the growth sector of society (so to speak).

The Chair of the Institute of Directors in England, Ruth Lee, said a couple of years ago that the decision whether to have children is an individual life-style choice, and that the state should take no account of the family in its economic arrangements. And who could argue the matter against her, beyond uttering a sentimental regret that it should be so, and a wish that the thing should not be stated as baldly?

The family has been dissolved on the ground that it is economically irrational. The bonds of marriage have been so loosened that the ceremony is now little more than occasion for display. One could now marry a different person every year if one could afford it.

When Marx and Engels published *The Communist Manifesto* a hundred and sixty two years ago, they were denounced as preachers of Free Love by a capitalist middle class setting out on its historic adventure, having only just

achieved globalist free trade with the repeal of the Corn Laws, and still imagining itself to be Christian. (The Corn Laws were repealed by a Government of Tory gentry on the pretext that it would save the Irish from the 'Famine' by enabling them to buy cheap food. But what it did was hand over the world to a capitalist middle class with boundless ambition.)

The authors of *The Communist Manifesto* replied that it was not their aim to establish free love in place of the family, but that the free trade capitalism that had just been unleashed would in its development destroy marriage and the family. and it has done so. Is marriage *a la mode* not a kind of free love?

Individuals combine and recombine at will into transient couples. When doing so, some go through the form of signing an easily-broken 'contract of marriage' at each change. Many others do not. An Act has now been passed in Ireland, establishing a 'civil contract' as a kind of marriage substitute for couples who could not bother making a formal marriage, even with the easy availability of Divorce.

Around the time of *The Communist Manifesto* another book was published at the other end of the political spectrum: *The Ego And Its Own* by Max Stern—meaning the Ego and its property. The future was truly grasped by the title of that book.

Forget about the two becoming one flesh etc. That belongs to the era of darkness and superstition, in which humanity has lived from the time of its origin until—well, really, until now.

The Ego is the unit of society. It has its rights—it has its property. And the property rights of Egos which neglect to make a marriage contract to safeguard property when engaging in liaisons must be safeguarded on their behalf by the state. It also provides for settlements about children.

And the rights of other, propertyless Egos to support by propertied Egos who are so careless as to form liaisons with them must be cared for.

The new Act establishes implied contracts after the event for individuals with so little of the sense of citizenship that they could not be bothered to make a dissoluble marriage contract when engaging in their liaisons and thus put their property at risk. And property is sacred.

The same Act also provides a kind of marriage contract for asexual relations

between couples, where there is no possibility of children being produced.

When President Clinton said "*I did not have sexual relations with that woman*", we assume that he took expert advice in the matter and told what he took to be the truth. What he did with her was to get her to suck him off—and children are not conceived in the stomach. Sexual activity is the activity through which children are conceived—or at least are conceivable.

Homosexual marriage strikes out the very idea of marriage as it has been understood through the millennia, by separating it in principle from reproduction. From that vantage point, homosexual relations are only a kind of play. But, since marriage had been undermined anyway in the heterosexual sphere, and the rearing of children is increasingly being taken in hand by the state, why not have mimic homosexual marriage?

Some of those who put the Bill through the Dail gave the assurance that homosexual marriage is out of the question. But those who pushed for it have it very much in mind. And the wind is with them. Property is sacred regardless of sex.

*

The view of this matter expressed here is one that we put close on forty years ago in discussions with various homosexual pressure groups. Some of them agreed with it, others held that biology had nothing to do with it, and assured us that the crude method of reproducing the species by impregnating women would soon be obsolete. (G.B. Shaw in his play about the future, *Back To Methuselah*, expected that eventually people would be hatched in eggs outside the body and reproduction would become more rational and tasteful.) But those discussions were always conducted reasonably, whether there was agreement or not.

However, an encounter with a homosexual group which owned a bookshop in Cork was not so reasonable. The group took offence at some passing remark in an article and threatened that, unless an apology was made, our publications could no longer be sold by them. We published letters on the offending article from Kieran Rose, who made the going for the present Act, and from the Secretary of the group, but we could see no grounds for an apology.

They said, in that case, our publications were out of their shop. We said, So be it. And so it has been ever since. And political censorship by shopkeepers in Cork was and is nothing unusual.

Pat Maloney

Many people attributed the long delay in processing the extradition of Fr. Brendan Smyth to favouritism being shown to a Catholic priest, even to an Opus Dei plot. They were not convinced by the denials.

Now conclusive proof has emerged that the official responsible, Matt Russell, was liberal in his views, rather than Orthodox

Matt Russell & Fr. Brendan Smyth

The man who helped to bring down the Fianna Fail/Labour Government in 1994 and was eventually forced to step aside from his role in the Attorney General's office following the Father Brendan Smyth extradition scandal, has entered into a partnership with his long-term male partner.

Matt Russell, (77), a senior lawyer and now retired entered into a civil partnership with his former law library colleague Fergus Courtney (52), it has emerged.

The two men, who live in Dublin, entered into a civil partnership in Lothian Chambers in Edinburgh, Scotland, on January 23 last, according to the Register of Civil Partnerships there.

Mr. Russell famously denied to a Dail committee that he was a member of Opus Dei, along with former Attorney General Harry Whelehan.

It emerged in November, 1994, that nine warrants for paedophile priest Smyth's arrest had lain unprocessed on the desk of Mr. Russell for seven months. The Albert Reynolds-led Fianna Fail-Labour coalition fell soon afterwards.

Mr. Russell, known as Official A, was a senior legal assistant in the Attorney General's Office and later tendered his resignation to the new Taoiseach John Bruton on 29 May, 1995.

The partnership of the two retired, high-profile barristers in Scotland—where civil partnership was introduced in December 2005—took Ireland's legal community by surprise.

On Thursday, July 1 last, the Dáil in Dublin passed without a vote, all stages of the Civil Partnership Bill, giving new legal rights to non-marital couples.

The Finlay version of the Smyth Affair:

"Out of the blue, a fortnight later, the *Sunday Independent* carried a story by Veronica Guerin about Father Brendan Smyth. Originally mentioned on UTV, but largely unnoticed, it transpired that an extradition warrant for Smyth, a priest accused of sexual offences against children, had lain unattended in Harry Whelehan's office for seven months.

"Suddenly Dick's {Spring} position made a lot more sense. How could it

have happened? And how could anyone be seriously considering the promotion of an Attorney General who had allowed it to happen?

"He asked Albert to seek a report on the matter from Harry. Albert readily agreed. What they got was a short note written by Matt Russell, the senior civil servant in the Attorney's office—who was also the man who had handled the file.

"It said, in effect, that there was no big deal about the delay, and it was completely self-exculpatory. Both Taoiseach and Tanaiste considered it totally inadequate, and a further report was requested.

"This report was made available to Dick on November 10th. {1994}. But it was accompanied by a demand from Albert that Harry's appointment couldn't be delayed any longer, and he scheduled a decision for a government meeting the day the report was delivered... Dick's Ministerial colleagues, and some of his advisers, met in his Iveagh House office after the November 10th meeting... everyone agreed that Harry's explanation for the delay in extraditing the paedophile priest was totally inadequate, and indeed seem to exonerate his office from blame."

13 November 1994:

"Before I left, the phone rang. It was Albert.

"The conversation was brief and stilted. Dick said that he'd be consulting his parliamentary party, and that the situation was now grave.

"Do you know where he is?" he {Dick} said in amazement. 'He's already up in Aras an Uachtarain. The appointment is made!'" (*Snakes & Ladders*. Fergus Finlay. New Island Books. 1998).

The die was cast!

On 17th November 1994, shortly after Albert Reynolds handed in his resignation as Taoiseach, Harry Whelehan also resigned as President of the High Court.

The nine warrants for the extradition of Father Brendan Smyth to the North led to the fall of a Government; the resignation of a Party leader; the resignation of a President of the High Court and the forced resignation of a senior civil servant.

Israel And The Flotilla

Israel's action in the early hours of Monday morning has demonstrated, once again, that it acts with impunity.

Its hijacking of boats carrying much-needed humanitarian aid to Gaza in international waters and the killing of at least nine civilians and injuring of many others is reprehensible. These civilians were on a humanitarian mission bringing medical, building and school supplies to the population of Gaza which has been under a devastating siege for over three years.

This action has come about because, for far too long, Israel has been given immunity by the international community for a host of earlier crimes, including the killing of over 1,400 Palestinians, over 400 of them women and children in its military assault on Gaza in December 2008-January 2009 and the three-year blockade on Gaza, which constitutes collective punishment contrary to Article 33 of the 4th Geneva Convention.

The blockade has made the living conditions of the 1.5 million Palestinians there "inhumane and utterly unacceptable" (to use the words of the Minister for Foreign Affairs Micheál Martin after his recent visit).

The crimes continue: on June 1st, Israel continued its onslaught on the Palestinian people—killing three people in an air strike on the northern Gaza Strip near the town of Beit Lahiya while the attention of the world was focused on the international prisoners.

The time has long since passed for the international community to stand up and declare that it will not tolerate Israel as an accepted partner in the diplomatic community.

Let this renewed international attention on the acts of the Israeli state focus our minds on the central issues—the continuing blockade of Gaza and the occupation of all Palestinian territory.

We call on the Israeli government to immediately end the siege on Gaza. Towards this end and in response to current events, we further call on the Irish Government to: 1. Ensure the MV Rachel Corrie and its crew has a safe, unhindered passage as it proceeds on its journey to challenge the illegal Israeli blockade of Gaza, 2. Take a lead in demanding that the EU suspend its Association Agreement with Israel, which affords it preferential trading rights with the EU. The time for words is over.

The time for action is now.—Yours, etc,
MARIE CRAWLEY, Sadaka – Ireland Palestine Alliance. JACK O'CONNOR, Irish Congress of Trade Unions. MICK LANIGAN, Irish Medical Aid for Palestinians. Msgr. MANUEL MUSSLAM, Roman Catholic Parish Priest of Holy Family Parish Gaza (retired). Rev Dr. STEPHEN SIZER, Church of England vicar. FELICITY MCCARTNEY, Soc. of Friends. JOE FENWICK, Soc. of Friends. RICHARD KIMBALL, Galway Interfaith Alliance. Rev. Canon GARY HASTINGS, Church of Ireland rector. Rev. Dr. MARK GRAY, Presbyterian minister, Banbridge. ROB FAIRMICHAEL, Irish Council of Churches. Rev. Dr. JOHN PARKIN, Methodist Minister, Wexford. Rev. GARTH HEWITT, Honorary Canon, St George's Cathedral, Jerusalem, C/o The Ireland Palestine Alliance, Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2.

Irish Times, 5.6.2010

Brendan Clifford

Review: *A Challenge To Democracy: Militant Catholicism In Modern Ireland*
by Michael Curtis
History Press Ireland, 2010

Catholics And Democracy

If *A Challenge To Democracy* is accurate in its representation of Irish life around the middle of the 20th century, then I don't exist. I could not have lived in that society into my twenties and be what I am. But I am what I am, and I did live in it into my twenties, and it was within it that I became what I am.

The book is about the mind control exercised over the great mass of individuals by networks of moral vigilantes directed by the Catholic Hierarchy. These Vigilance Societies were groups of enthusiastic lay Catholics organised by the clergy for intimate espionage on the populace for the purpose of nipping improper thought and action in the bud by applying remedial action to it wherever a hint of it appeared.

In recent years the British state has been trying to establish a Vigilante movement in its Muslim population. Good (obedient) Muslims have been recruited and trained in espionage methods. Their job is to keep a close watch within their congregations and detect the early signs of "*radicalisation*" in individuals and report on them. This Vigilante campaign was begun by Tony Blair towards the end of his Prime Ministership. During his early years in power, "*radicalism*" was one of his buzz words. At one point he went around East European capitals preaching radicalism to dissenters against established regimes, particularly in Serbia, urging the overthrow of the state by direct mass action outside constitutional forms.

The preaching was supported by funding that was filtered through indirectly. Radical groups with Utopian aims suddenly found that they were being taken notice of and their means of actions were increasing. The nurturing of such groups led to the radical overthrow of the regime. Then the Utopians were left to their own devices and they fell back into impotence.

When the Balkans were sorted out by radical manipulation, including manipulation of Islam which encouraged its

ambitions, Blair began to preach anti-radicalism, especially with relation to the Islam which he had helped to radicalise. He made a remarkable speech about a year before he was made to retire. He said it was really useless for Muslims to commit themselves to the use of exclusively peaceful means in dealing with the matters about which they complained—about Western treatment of Palestine and the Middle East. What they must do was to stop complaining, and understand that they really had nothing to complain about. Because, if they held to the view that they had substantial grounds for complaint, there would be individuals within their community who would not be bound by their commitment to exclusively peaceful (i.e., impotent) methods of dealing with those complaints.

Thus we got the Vigilante movement of good Muslims, spying out the seeds of radicalism in the understanding of individuals in their congregations.

A University Department dedicated to the development of de-radicalising techniques has been established in England, and Lord Bew's son has recently been promoted to a position in it. What a pity it is that we have to live in linear time! Otherwise the son might have preceded the father and de-radicalised him back in 1968, and deterred him from participating in the subversion of 'the Northern Ireland state' by going on the Burntollet March. (But, alas, Lord Bew's Althusserian vision of those times, with its rejection of causative succession of events in linear time, did not prove to be sound. Things still happen one after another, one day after another, and the thing that happened once has happened for ever, and the son cannot redeem the father.)

I don't know how substantial the Muslim Vigilance Societies are. But two years ago there was an authoritative police statement that there were over 200 Muslim terrorist groups in Britain, all dedicated to committing acts of terror. Yet I do not recall a single act of terrorism since that statement was made,

though there have been many prosecutions of groups charged with bad intentions, with draconian sentences handed down.

What has been going on in the British state with regard to its Muslims in recent years strikes me as being very like what went on with regard to its Irish possession during the Young Ireland and early Fenian years.

A very remarkable book about the development of Irish nationalism in the second half of the 19th century was published in Manchester about twenty years ago. It traced Irish independence to a cut in police funding in the 1880s.

The name "*Manchester*" is synonymous with liberalism in English history. English liberalism was very nationalistic in its world view. Its Continental heroes were Mazzini, who preached nationalist terrorism and irredentism, and Garibaldi who practised it—or was it "*insurgency*" in the case of Garibaldi?—and is there a difference?

The English liberal view was that nationality was an organic development of human nature. It was sacred and must have its way so that the world would be right—but not in Ireland of course. Ireland was sufficiently free in some other way by virtue of its membership of the British Empire.

Sufficiently free—it is an idea that recurs in British writing about Ireland, but is it not a contradiction in terms? Free is free, and the slightest restriction is a negation—that is certainly how Britain regards restrictions imposed by others when it disapproves of them.

When Nicholas Mansergh set out on his career as a British academic and administrator, Mazzini was still one of the idols of British liberal culture. Mansergh began his career in the early 1930s, before Irish separatism had become an accomplished fact with the effective revocation of the Treaty. I think it was in his first book that he sought to put Irish nationalism in perspective by citing Mazzini against it. Half a century later Roy Foster recycled that Mazzini reference without attribution. I was puzzled by it because I was familiar with Mazzini, but could not remember him saying anything about Ireland. So I looked around and found that Foster had dug up—or Mansergh had—a newspaper dispute amongst old Mazzinians in 1886, long after Mazzini was gone. One of these old Mazzinians took up a Unionist position in the Home

Rule dispute, and said that Mazzini had rejected Irish nationalism as unauthentic. Another old Mazzinian denied this. He said that the Irish issue had been discussed privately during the Young Ireland period, and that while Mazzini had expressed some doubts in the matter no policy position was adopted.

Mazzini was given a base in England for publishing nationalist terrorist propaganda against the Hapsburg Empire. Young Italy was sacred to England. Young Ireland was anathema. This presented Mazzini with a dilemma. It seems that he thought of making a case against Young Ireland to please his Liberal protectors, but could not bring himself to do it.

Forty years later a Liberal Unionist cited Mazzini against Home Rule and was contradicted by another old Mazzinian. About fifty years after that Mansergh cites Mazzini on the doubtful authenticity of Irish nationalism, without mentioning the contradiction by the old Mazzinian who did not join the Tories. And sixty years on from then Mansergh's snippet surfaces in Foster's History. And soon after that we find it in Brian Feeney's history of Sinn Fein.

Mazzini was woven into British liberal culture for at least a century. I don't know that he ever held a prominent place in Irish national culture. He was after all a great enemy of the Pope. And the Irish nationalists did not need him to tell them what they were. But the English view of nationality in all the campaigns, in which they stirred up nationalism, was Mazzini's view.

And yet a book can be published by a senior lecturer in Politics in Manchester Polytechnic which dismisses the development of nationalism in Ireland as a consequence of neglectful policing due to cost-cutting. And there is no expression of liberal outrage in the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *London Review Of Books*, the *Guardian* etc. And of course revisionist Ireland was silent when Tom Bowden's *Breakdown Of Public Security* was published.

The RIC was a universal network of Vigilance Societies which maintained an intimate supervision over what went on in every locality, reported to the centre, and enabled radical developments to be nipped in the bud. Then a cut in police funding let radicalism get out of control. Maybe it was so, and maybe not. But there is no doubt that British government of Ireland in the 19th century relied on a universal system of close local espionage.

And now Michael Curtis tells me that in Ireland *after* Britain life was contained within a universal system of local Vigilance Societies:

"By the 1940s... there were thousands of Catholic Actionists at work throughout the country; every parish had at least half-a-dozen organisations acting as moral guardians and constantly feeding information to priests and bishops on local and national developments" (p205).

So I have to wonder, Do I exist, or am I imagining it?

There were three parishes that I knew quite well. And I know that in none of them were there six Vigilance Societies.

In the one I knew best, and in which I was a busy altar-boy until the age of twelve, there was no Catholic Action at all during the years when I was becoming aware of things. In the corner of a side-aisle of the old Chapel there was a clutter of poles with circles bearing names attached to the top of them and they were gathering cobwebs. When I asked what they were, I was told vaguely that they were got when it was intended to set up a Sodality or Confraternity. They would have been placed at the ends of pews. But it never took off. When I asked what was a Sodality or Confraternity, I could get no information at all.

At the age of thirteen, when I ceased to be an altar boy (and therefore a stage manager of religion), I found that I just could not stand religion. From then until my twenties I was an alienated observer of religion, making practical concessions such as standing at the door of the Chapel for ten or fifteen minutes and chatter during Mass on Sunday.

When I was about seventeen a Legion of Mary group was set up by the village middle class. Their purpose was to visit people in their homes in the evening and engage in pious conversation. I do not know what it was like because I never experienced it. The Legion group was kept under observation by the 'peasants'. It was noticed which way they left the village in the evening and it was remarkable how many people happened to be out visiting on the line of march that evening. Much of the community felt, like Lord Melbourne, that things had come to a pretty pass when religion tried to interfere in private life. And the Legion got the message. I do not recall whether it disbanded or confined its activity to houses where it was wanted.

I also had some experience of the

parish of Kiskeam. My aunt married a shopkeeper there who was also the Parish Clerk. The busiest time for the Parish Clerk was the Station periods in the Spring and Fall. The Stations were Masses said in private houses. A Station was held in a house in each Townland in the Parish every Spring and Fall. Townlands were territorial units of the countryside. They had nothing to do with towns. I don't know their origins. And I do not know that they had any administrative function. But they existed, and had existential importance. There were, I think, about twenty townlands in each of the Parishes I knew. A Station—which was I think an informal survival from the time of the Penal Laws which Cardinal Cullen's reform did not quite succeed in stamping out, but which was finished off by Vatican 2—was held in a house in each Townland twice a year, and the day of the Station was a Townland holiday.

Well, the Parish Clerk of Kiskeam fell ill just before Station time and it was suggested that I should fill in for him, which I did. I think I was eleven. So every morning I set off with the priest and a box of accoutrements, set up an altar in the kitchen and a Confessional in the parlour, helped the priest to conduct the Mass (including Communion), dismantled the altar, and had breakfast with the priest and the elders of the Townland. The most interesting feature was the collection of the Station Dues, which was one of, I think, three collections in the course of the year for the running of the Church in the Parish. (There was in addition a collection for Rome.) The various households were assessed. The assessment was read out by the priest. Where the assessment was considered reasonable the due was paid on the spot. Where it was considered excessive the sum that was considered reasonable was offered, was refused, and went back in the pocket. I do not recall that this caused any friction or resentment, or that it was a sign of reluctance to pay for the upkeep of the clergy or the Church buildings etc. I assume that disagreements about the proper sum were sorted out over time. I don't know. I took no further interest in the matter. I am only describing what I observed in my capacity as stage-manager of Stations around the Parish of Kiskeam during the high-tide of clerical domination in the late 1940s.

I also had some acquaintance with the Parish of Ballydesmond, where my Culloty grandmother came from. I

sometimes spent the Summer holidays there. I recall no Vigilance Society there. But it had a Secondary School, conducted by lay private enterprise in the spirit of the Hedge Schools. And in the mid-1950s there were two competing lay Secondary Schools conducted as businesses in Boherbue.

In that general area there was very low tolerance of clerical interference with pleasure. Naturally the priests sometimes tried to stop it. That after all is what the Christian religion is about. An enthusiastic curate fresh from the Seminary would sometimes try to do something about pleasure, and the people would make the concession of going to dance-halls deep in the countryside, out amidst the bogs. (There was a famous dance-hall in Clamper, up somewhere near Taur, in an area that seemed to me to be uninhabited.) This made interference counter-productive and it soon stopped. Dancing, Ceilidhe or waltzing, was rarely interrupted in Boherbue, and I recall when it had two dance-halls in operation—in a village of about fifty houses.

During the *Irish Times* furore over Elizabeth Bowen (the English novelist and spy who wrote better spy reports than novels) we were accused of the further offence of denying that William Trevor was an Irish writer. I had not read anything of Trevor's. I had seen a television version of *The Ballroom Of Romance* and took it to be the product of an English observer of life in Ireland, who saw what the English stereotype of Ireland indicated that he should see. Life in rural Ireland as I experienced it in those Dark Ages was not like that at all. But life as I experienced it in the 1940s and 1950s does not seem to have been represented in literature.

England functions very successfully, both in the handling of itself and others, by means of stereotypes. Aesthetes are given ample scope for dilettantism on the margin, but stereotypes carry on regardless in the mainstream, and in moments of truth the dilettantism usually finds a way of living with the stereotypical mainstream. And it seems to me that the English stereotype somehow got a grip on the minds of the educated Irish after independence.

Curtis writes:

"Nationalism and Catholicism were not strange bedfellows... It came as no surprise that both Church and State should share the same platform at the 1923 CTSI [Catholic Truth Society of

Ireland] annual conference to discuss aspects of the future direction of independent Ireland. W.T. Cosgrave and his colleagues had the task of state-building, and their collective style of government during the 1920s was to eschew flamboyance for a sober patriotism and a self-effacing zeal designed to return the country to normality. An impecunious government, burdened by the debt of destruction and faced with expectations that had been elevated unrealistically by the political rhetoric of 1920-1921, was unable to achieve rapid and radical social reform... Throughout the decade, the leaders of Church and State were prominent together at public and state occasions, including the platforms of the CTSI" (p204).

The "*normality*" to which the Cosgrave Government, resting on British authority, aspired to return the country is not specified. And no obvious governmental normality springs to mind. There had been no Irish government of Ireland since the 17th century, if one discounts the 1919-21 period, as Curtis does. The normality was government of Ireland by the representative Government of Britain which had no representative connection with society in Ireland.

If the self-effacing zeal of the Cosgrave regime had extended to deleting itself and returning to Whitehall government through Dublin Castle, that might be described as a return to normality. But what the Cosgrave regime had to do was conduct a subordinate regime on British authority, while at the same time invoking the authority of the elected Government of 1919-21 even as it destroyed the actuality of that Government. It was a tricky, two-faced, business.

There was a Republican state-apparatus in being in 1921. There were Republican police, Republican Courts, and Republican laws, as well as a Republican Army. Order was maintained by the Republican regime when the British regime became incapable of maintaining it, and in fact became the major cause of disorder. The personnel of the Cosgrave regime of 1922-3 had formed part of the Republican regime of 1919-21, and had not doubted its legitimacy or its ability to conduct stable government if the British Government stopped interfering.

But in 1922-3, for fear of Britain, they began to destroy what they helped to construct in 1919-21. But they had to do this without disowning the Republic or the legitimacy of the Elections that produced and sustained it. If they had disowned the Republic of 1919-21 they

would have been unable to establish a Free state regime under the authority of the Crown, even with British guns. They had to present themselves as a continuation of the regime that they were destroying. Their project was profoundly duplicitous. The possible justification of it is that, by appeasing the British Empire, they warded off the thorough British reconquest by "*the methods of barbarism*" (Boer War methods) that was threatened, and maintained a base for future operations against Britain.

It is understandable that they did not say this very clearly at the time—though some of them said it clearly enough. But what reason is there, ninety years later, why the academic historians cannot describe the 'Civil War' realistically in those terms? I take it that the reason is that they cannot think outside the stereotype set for them by Cambridge and Oxford Universities, by which most of them were moulded.

What was "*the debt of destruction*" by which the Cosgrave Government was burdened? It was the cost of the destruction wrought by the British Government in its effort to bring them to their senses. They came to their senses—returned to Curtis's "*normality*"—under the 'Treaty' ultimatum. They signed up for Government under the Crown, thereby constituting themselves into rebels in their 1919-21 activities, and they had to pay the costs of rebellion. British Constitutional authority was conferred on them in 1922 and they became responsible for the costs of their rebellious rejection of Crown authority in 1919-21.

Britain declared war on Germany in August 1914. In 1919 it held the new German Republic liable for the costs of the war it waged on Germany, and the new German Republic agreed to bear those costs for much the same reasons that the Free State agreed to bear the costs of the British war on Ireland. In November 1914 Britain declared war on Turkey, conquered its Middle East region, invaded Greece to compel it to declare war on Turkey, and in 1919 it sent the Greeks, as its proxy, to invade Asia Minor and destroy Turkish power in its heartlands. The Greeks were threshed. The Turks tore up the Treaty which the imprisoned Sultan in Constantinople had signed. The British did not risk a military showdown with the Turks after the Greeks failed and they withdrew. The Turks did not undertake to pay the costs of the British war on them. The humiliation of it caused the

British War Coalition to fall in the Autumn of 1922, just as it was bringing its Free State into operation in Ireland.

There was a rebellion in Kenya in the 1950s. It was put down by very drastic action indeed. Little has been written about it by historians. An account published a few years ago estimated that a third of a million Kenyans were killed by intimate police action. In another context killings of that kind would unhesitatingly be described as murders by the British propaganda. There was at the time no real doubt that the British regime conducted interrogation and re-programming—de-radicalising—by means of torture, and that it operated slave-labour camps. But *"the methods of barbarism"* were successful. The rebellion was suppressed. A kind of Kenyan Government was patched together to take the place of direct British Government. That Kenyan Government was—to use the fashionable language of the present-day—utterly corrupt. It was, of course, never described as corrupt. Its function was to protect British interests in Kenya—including the quite recent British settlements in the best lands—while excusing Britain of formal responsibility. As long as it did that it was a good government in the eyes of what we call 'the world'.

In recent years the world has been deluged with the propaganda of Human Rights for the purpose of overthrowing regimes of which the West disapproves. Some Kenyans who survived torture by the British regime noticed this and they went to law against Britain to secure a remedy for the violation of their human rights by Britain. British law gave them the brush-off. It told them that responsibility for all such matters had been undertaken by the succession-regime in Kenya.

The Irish case lies between the Kenyan and the Turkish. The Free State regime, as exercising Constitutional British authority in Ireland, accepted the obligation of compensating servants of the Crown for their suffering in the rebellion—but ten years later the Anti-Treatyites took over and repudiated the 'Treaty'.

In those ten years the intimate intertwining of Church and State—informal in the sense of not being written into the Constitution, but real in the sense of being necessary to the political survival of the duplicitous regime—was accomplished. The Free State regime soon

gave up the devious Republican strategy preached by Collins, but it never established a vigorous imperialist sentiment in its place and its continuation would have been problematic if the Catholic Hierarchy, which had interests beyond Ireland, had not gone all out to stir up pure and simple Catholicism in support of Britain.

Curtis abstracts the Church from political conditions all the way through, from the mid-19th century. The Church achieved secular positions under the British regime which it could only have achieved with the consent of the regime, but this is not dealt with. The remarkable protest in Munster against the incorporation by Redmond of a Catholic Society, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, into the structure of the Home Rule Party, is not mentioned. A novel by a priest who turned against the Church is mentioned, but not the popular novels of Canon Sheehan in which the position of the Church in modern society is portrayed as being problematical. We are told that—

"Any hint of democracy or any hint of equal participation in the government of the Church was opposed to Catholic social teaching... The ideal of social equality... was seen by the Irish Catholic Church as a chimera... Workers must be taught to know their place" (p18).

REMEMBERING DEDAN KIMATHI WACIURI

Old and tortured they meet the enemy
on sticks, crutches, battered physiognomy.
They are The Muingi—(Brits called
them Mau-Mau)

The Movement rattled Whitehall's Lord
Haw-Haw.

Enter now Kenya's tortured history:
Dedan Kimathi fought England's thievery.
Taken from his hospital bed, trussed,
banged,

this field-marshal questioned, tortured
and hanged.

The Land and Freedom Army died that
day.

Scream freedom—the kind with built-in
decay.

These old castrated and raped warriors
walk London 2010 with chorea,
losing the battle for compensation
to liberal-imperialists with affectations.
Dedan Kimathi has no known grave,
his murderers think his being erased
but these old men shuffling up Whitehall
awakens a memory that appals.

Wilson John Haire
31th January, 2010

The Christian Brothers are entirely outside my experience. We didn't have them in North Cork. But I have come to realise that they were the most influential teaching body in Ireland for a couple of generations and that they very much did not teach workers to know their place. They were a medium of upward mobility and seem to have been resented as such by the middle class elite of the Home Rule movement. And, because Christian Brothers boys were active in the Rising and in the construction of the Republic, modern Home Rulers have charged the Brothers with teaching Rebellion—though as far as I have been able to discover they did no such thing. What they did was educate people in the lower depths and engender a sense of ability in them. In 1914 they supported Redmond's position on the Great War, under the slogan of democracy and the rights of nations, and they eased off in their support of Britain only when Britain gave the lie to itself by invading Greece in order to make it go to war. They are not listed in the Index to Curtis's book and are only mentioned in passing in the text.

As to *"democracy... or participation in the government of the Church"*, they are things which are different in kind. I do not see how a Church which claims a connection with the Creator of the world could be conducted as a debating society. It might be that religion is nonsense—all I can say is that I have no sense of religion, and never had—but the world seems to be unable to get along without it. And, if it is to have a worthwhile existence, it cannot be subject to the whims of fashion.

Curtis makes much of the campaign for decent literature. He tells us about the Cork Angelic Warfare Association, though not about Canon Sheehan. Nor does he set up any standard in the matter of pornography etc. by which the decent literature campaign is found to be absurd. For myself, I assumed from long ago that the world would go the way it has gone in such things, and as far as that goes I am pretty pleased with it. At the same time I think Canon Sheehan by far the best Irish novelist. Tolstoy approved of Sheehan, but Sheehan did not approve of Tolstoy. I read Tolstoy's *Power Of Darkness* when I was young and it struck me as a marvel. Sheehan thought it appalling. That's life.

Must pornography have freedom to develop or should a line be drawn? If a line is drawn, no matter where, there is censorship and it is no use deploring censorship activities in the way that

Curtis does.

Should the act of live sex performance in theatres—which is perhaps not pornography in a pedantic sense—have freedom to develop, or should it be allowed covert space for development by connivance, as in Paris. (But of course nothing can be covert in the uniformity of modern liberalism.)

Pornography is incapable of general definition. Thomas Moore (of the *Melodies*) published pornography. It was pornography when he published it. It was no longer pornography when I reprinted it—but something else was.

Curtin also writes about the Film Censorship. He makes no mention of the political censorship of films on Irish themes, in Hollywood as well as England, exercised by the British Film Censor. I think that is a much more serious matter than what he does mention.

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The whole book is written in abstraction from political circumstance. And the assumption is that Ireland became independent in 1922 and decided in freedom how Church/State relations should develop. In historical reality, it was not like that at all.

Report

"UK legal dodge to avoid Kenya guilt"

...The Foreign Office has said four elderly Kenyans alleging that they suffered serious physical and sexual abuse at the hands of the British during the Kenyan 'emergency' of 1952 to 1960 should not be allowed to proceed with their claim because of the law of state succession.

The government argues it is 'not liable for the acts and omissions of the Kenyan colonial administration', claiming the Kenyan government was now responsible for events that took place while Kenya was a British colony. But a cross-party group of MPs will this week publish an open letter demanding an apology and the creation of a welfare fund to help the alleged victims through old age.

Allegations that the British abused suspected Mau Mau fighters have continued since the Kenyan government lifted a 30-year ban on membership in 2003. ...The British government recently acknowledged that suffering was experienced 'on both sides' during the Mau ...

But the government is refuting liability for the case, in which the claimants describe allegedly being castrated, sexually assaulted and beaten during their detention by the British and say they are still suffering consequences.

The case could open the way for up to 12,000 Kenyans to seek redress. It was filed at the high court last year. Daniel Leader, a lawyer at Leigh Day, represent-

ing the claimants, said: 'One ... was castrated for supplying a cow to the Mau Mau.'

The nature and scale of this abuse was unparalleled in modern British colonial history. The claimants are among the poorest in Kenyan society, and they still live with injuries from that period.

...the government decision to have the case struck out on technical grounds of

state succession—the principle that countries assume liability for their own affairs after independence—has infuriated human rights campaigners, who accuse the UK of shirking its responsibilities for rights abuses in former colonies..."

Afua Hirsch, legal affairs correspondent
The Guardian, 25th January 2010

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jan/25/kenya-colonial-torture-mau-mau>

General Sean MacEoin, T.D.

The following is a short extract from

The Anglo-Irish War by General Sean MacEoin, Tom Barry, et al. Extracts from *The Red Path Of Glory, With The IRA In The Fight For Freedom, 1919 to the Truce*. Introduction, Brendan Clifford. 196pp. Index. ISBN 978-1-872078-14-4. Belfast Historical & Educational Society, 2010. **£12, £9.99**

MacEoin Brings A Bishop To Order

[General MacEoin, in fighting the British forces during the War of Independence, had a couple of priests in his command area. To a considerable extent they were acting under his orders, a fact which got them into trouble with their Bishop. Here is how MacEoin sorted the matter out:]

"Father Montford had returned to his house, and I slept there some nights... One morning Father Markey came down to Father Montford's, and they both went into conference in the dining room while I lay in a small room overhead. There was a knock at the halldoor. Maggie McDowell, the Curate's housekeeper, who was a member of Cumann na mBan, opened it to admit the Most Reverend Dr. Hoare, Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise. He was admitted to the dining room where pastor and curate had been in conference, and he immediately challenged Father Markey with being absent from his house while no one could tell where he was to be found. To this Father Markey made no reply, and he was then challenged to state why he had left the body of a Catholic lying on the road for twenty-four hours. His Lordship demanded to know the history of the case, and in a loud voice he condemned Father Markey's action. As the parish priest made no reply to all this, his Lordship inquired whether he was dumb, and then informed him that he was suspending him. Father Markey interjected: "My Lord, You are not aware of the facts." "Then what are the facts", the Bishop demanded again; but the parish priest made no reply. Turning to Father Montford, the Bishop asked: "What did you do in all this." "Nothing, my Lord", he replied; "it was in the upper part of the parish". His Lordship then told Father Markey that all who had taken part in the incident would be condemned from the altar on the following Sunday. Father Markey said that he could not and would not do that, and repeated that his Lordship was not aware of the facts. The Bishop then left

and slammed the hall door as he went.

When he had gone I appeared on the scene and inquired of Father Markey why he had not given him the facts. Father Markey replied that it would only be an embarrassment to him, and that what he did not know would not trouble him. I then referred to the suspension, and he said, "that's all right".

On the following Sunday, his Lordship having spoken sternly from the pulpit and condemned us, I decided to go myself to Longford to give him the facts of the situation. He received me at the Bishop's Palace, and I explained to him that I was a properly appointed officer, serving a lawful government through its Minister for Defence and his Headquarters Staff; that the Government had been voted into office by the elected Parliament of the Irish people; that I was fighting a defensive battle against the enemy; that this was a mother country and that the Irish Bishops had declared that it was entitled to its freedom. I showed him that every operation of ours was carried out in accordance with the usages of war, and that we took life only in self-defence and in defence of the nation and its Parliament. His Lordship then said: "As a loyal son of the Church, do you not think that you should have informed me of all this before now? How did you expect that we were to know of the organisation of the armed forces? There has been no declaration by the Government or Parliament to the effect that you are acting under their control, but now that I see that you are a properly constituted force my words of condemnation do not apply to you. You are not privateers, but the armed forces of the State. I wish you success." He then gave me his blessing and I took my leave having, for the future, a real friend in the Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise. His attitude following my explanation of the facts did not surprise me, for as a young priest he had served three months in jail for his support of the Irish tenant farmers during the Land War."

Julianne Herlihy

The Fall of the Irish Catholic Church

Part 4.

The Poisoned Fruit

"Depressing thought: every conformist group has its own equivalent of the scourge of anti-Semitism, a scourge inflicted on any minority it dare not understand for fear of having to think things through. Your "Jew" (your "slacker", your spoilsport, your inconvenient non-booster) is whoever distracts you from your television set. Or who asks "why" instead of "how". Catholic-baiting is the anti-Semitism of the liberals."

Peter Viereck, *Shame and Glory of the Intellectuals*. Boston. Beacon Press. 1953.

"In this world we have seen the Roman Catholic power dying—for many centuries. Many a time we have gotten all ready for the funeral and found it postponed again, on account of the weather or something... Apparently one of the most uncertain things in the world is the funeral of a religion."

Mark Twain.

"They make slaughter and they call it peace."

Tacitus.

"But today one doesn't need to have any symptoms at all to be regarded as traumatised. The 'condition of victimhood' is democratically available; the past itself can lodge a 'thorn in the spirit'. 'All children' according to Alice Miller 'suffer trauma and permanent psychic scarring at the hands of parents.'"

London Review of Books, 8th July 2010.

It is a fact that the Irish have a unique understanding of human nature. Divorced from the Dublin-led media/political elite and left to their own devices, they show themselves to be gracious and forgiving. Elsewhere in the world it is different, see especially the recent headlines and stories in the US/UK which outed in the most savage way the failings of one of the world's most eminent sportsmen, Tiger Woods. It was left to the people of Limerick to show a decent-hearted understanding of his all too human failings. Because of this, the locals drew the ire of some of the commentariat, who suggested that they were in thrall to the golfer's superstar status and gave him (*gasp!*) an easy ride. The puritan's pose was thus easily seen for what it truly was—a need to see the poor sportsman sporting what the Salem-

born author Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-'64) called *"The Scarlet Letter"* and really being treated as the adulterer he was *alleged* to be. The young children who grouped around the golfing legend for his autograph/photograph we were instructed to believe were in some danger of not realising what a *sinner* was in their midst. The national dailies pinched their already pinched faces and held their noses while this event was internationalised for God's sake. What would the world think? The Dublin journalists who count (in their little minds) seem to be terrified that the world will laugh at us (obviously not them), but we ordinary Irish got to have a good time and I heard from many golfing friends that the *craic* was mighty and all in all a great success for Limerick and that native developer/entrepreneur J.P. McManus at whose home Tiger stayed. So a good news story all round though not the impression one got from reading/listening to the national media.

I heard our Taoiseach, Brian Cowen, TD asking the media to be more responsible in their reporting of our economic situation and, instead of the relentless negativity, to try and have a more nuanced approach. Like that's going to happen anytime soon? But what really interested me was that, just before a recent announcement by the Government that savage cut-backs were to be brought in for the next Budget, the Taoiseach in answer to wide-spread fear over the closure of residential care for the long-term ill, stated that he would be having on-going discussions with the Brothers of Charity. The latter, if one still remembers, was one of the many Catholic organisations that were demonised by the reports that were set up to inquire into *the abuse of children in institutions of care*. Yet here was our Taoiseach with narry a care stating that they were still the people at the coal-face who needed to be told about a certain loss of some state aid to that particular vulnerable sector.

What struck me as most unfortunate was that, at the time, this governmental message was delivered from the beauti-

ful and opulent surroundings of Farmleigh. The elite inside the walls and the demos outside. But the more Fianna Fail has taken to the trappings of former colonial living, with gilt-edge salaries/index-linked pensions/Gulf Stream jets/helicopters/chauffeur gardai-driven Mercedes etc.—the more the people have deserted them. Unfortunately this is also true of the Opposition and therein lies the rub.

The media also seem only capable of cant and displays of awful fury vented towards one or two people who seem to stick in their craw for whatever reason. Seáni Fitzpatrick is one such and Senator Ivor Callely seems to be another. It was totally unacceptable to see the stalking of Callely when buying his messages in the local Centra and the door-stepping of his family when the lights came on in his Clontarf home (photo of same included) in the *Irish Daily Mail's* 6th August 2010 paper.

So the question that has been vexing me is where has all this come from? This *persecution*—because it is nothing less—seems to coincide with the increasing anglicising of our society. And that this is mainly an urban phenomenon—actually Dublin, and really driven in no small part by *The Irish Times*, RTE and the *Irish/Sunday Independent*. It is no coincidence that Cardinal Brady was recently to have delivered a lecture at Oxford but it was ultimately pulled and no-one flinched about such naked anti-Catholicism.

The Guardian, 19th April 2010 in its G2 section had an interview with Philip Pullman—author of the best-selling *His Dark Materials*, "a trilogy of fantasy novels that was marketed at young adults but found popularity among older readers". The cover of the magazine has a photo of Pullman and in huge print his dictum: "I hope the wretched Catholic church will vanish entirely". Inside there is another photo of the author with Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, whom he credits with inspiring his latest book *The Good Man Jesus And the Scoundrel Christ* and, who should have given the said book a brilliant review in the *Guardian* newspaper (where else?) but Rowan Williams himself whom Pullman calls "a good and kindly man". Well of course it was the said Williams who wasn't shy about commenting negatively on the Irish Catholic Church and only when the media (UK actually) reacted did he retract his bilious anti-catholic statements.

Another person who was recently given great air-time by Pat Kenny on his RTE 1 show was Christopher Hitchens who was promoting his memoir *Hitch-22*. This man preaches a gospel of hate. Here is a recent pronouncement:

"I think the enemies of civilization should be beaten and killed and defeated, and I don't make any apology for it. And I think it's sickly and stupid and suicidal to say that we should love those who hate us and try to kill us and our children and burn our libraries and destroy our society. I have no patience with this nonsense" (*I Don't Believe In Atheists: The Dangerous Rise of the Secular Fundamentalist*. Chris Hedges. Continuum. London. 2008).

That Hitchens was spouting anti-Muslim hatred is par for the course. Should he have tried the same on with the Jewish people—then we would really see how soon he'd bow—like the Irish comedian Tommy Tiernan. But what is there about the Americans—and Hitchens who now delights in telling everyone that he is an American citizen—that they actually can conceive of themselves as custodians of 'western civilization' no less? In their engrossing study in 2000, *Empire*, Hardt and Negri teases out this question. They state that, as the US twice had to come to the rescue of Europe with its armies, it also bought into the myth that military rescue was accompanied by "a rescue of political and cultural terms". Hence:

"Once American culture was raised to the status of an international model, the significance of what was specifically American had to change: what had been characteristically American became now representative of "Western culture" as a whole. In this way American art was transformed from regional to international art and then to universal art... In this respect, post-war American culture was placed on the same footing as American economic and military strength: it was made responsible for the survival of democratic liberties in the "free" world".

Hitchens has also elsewhere written that "my particular atheism is a Protestant atheism". Tina Beattie's book, *The New Atheists: The Twilight of Reason and the War on Religion* (Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd., London, 2007) advances the theory that this—

"new atheism is the product of a post-Protestant intellectual environment associated with white conservative men (WASP's, to use an American expression) and primarily concerned with questions of evidence,

proof and rationality... The new atheists are uniformly condemning in their treatment of religion, but their primary targets are Islamist extremism and American Christian fundamentalism, and it is helpful to bear this in mind when considering their arguments."

But I think that Beattie is missing a huge chunk of history here which has therefore shrunk her range of study. The WASP community first and foremost have always targeted Catholicism—their old arch-enemy. "Evolutionary science", according to Chris Hedges; swiftly—

"became for many a surrogate religion. It was used to promote racism and pseudoscience, such as eugenics, a theory of biological determinism invented by Frances Galton, Darwin's first cousin (who was knighted in 1909). Darwin included Galton's eugenic theories and Herbert Spencer's theory about the "survival of the fittest" in the 1874 second edition of 'The Descent of Man'. He called 'Hereditary Genius', Galton's treatise on the biological nature of intelligence and moral character, "remarkable" and Spencer "our great philosopher"...".

If we in Ireland are now taking our moral instruction from such sources, in which the Pope is regarded as the anti-Christ, then it is surely time to assess what is going on and how such a situation has come about. If we think for a minute that the historical role of child care is really what its all about then we need to think again.

In the Ryan Report it was stated that the Christian Brothers themselves operated losses up to 1971 amounting to £111,737. In today's equivalent this self-funding by the Brothers was the equivalent of ≈10m. In 1971, a 3-bed house was about £4,000 and today, even with the credit crunch, it would amount to ≈400,000. An acre of land would fetch around £100 in 1971 and today would be worth ≈10,000. In the Kennedy Report, 1970, the Reformatory and Industrial Schools described the grant-aid paid to Industrial Schools as "totally inadequate" and recommended that "Separate grants should be available (by the State) to cover new buildings and maintenance, renovation and modernisation of existing buildings."

But in US/UK the Eugenics movement was prominently to the fore, advertising quite literally getting rid of such "scum" that "the poor" produced. The Secretary of the International Birth Control Movement, Margaret Sanger, was an early convert to the idea the

modern world could only be saved by "the limitation of unwanted births". Margaret Sanger was born into poverty and, though she had a devoutly Catholic mother, Anne Purcell Higgins, her father Michael Hennessey Higgins was a Non-Conformist who above all hated Catholicism. He therefore would not allow his wife to practise as a Catholic and would not allow their children to be instructed into the faith. When her mother died, Margaret was wanted at home but after much fighting she left and became a kind of "apprentice nurse" at a hospital in New Jersey. There she met a young social anarchist architect William Sanger who ran away to marry her in 1902. She soon had three children, Stuart in 1903, Grant in 1908, and Peggy in 1911. She was bored with mothering and soon fell in with the "free love" movement by her meeting with Emma Goldman. Her husband, though a radical, could not endorse this type of behaviour but his wife did much to his grief.

After being thus radicalised, Margaret went back to nursing and concentrated on midwifery. She slowly began a campaign for contraception and after visiting Paris saw new types of contraception for sale and back again in the US was forceful about sexual freedom and after some police harassment she left for London. There she met up with her powerful rival Marie Carmichael Stopes, with the latter branching out her own movement: *The Society for Constructive Birth Control and Racial Progress*.

"The first clinic that was allowed to dispense advice and contraceptive products without legal restriction was set up by Marie Stopes and her second husband, the aviation pioneer Humphrey Verdon Roe, on 17th March 1921 in the north London district of Holloway".

"In May 1921 Marie Stopes organised a public meeting on constructive birth control at the Queen's Hall in London. On stage in front of a packed house, Stopes resplendent in a shining white dress berated the audience about the perils and expense of allowing "wastrels" to breed. She got applause at every opportunity. The only people who could become parents, she insisted, were those who could "add individuals of value to the race".

Amid the hubbub that followed her speech, a man stood up and called out; "As a Roman Catholic Priest I protest", but he was roared down and it is probable that Stopes didn't even hear him. Had Stopes been allowed to preach similar arguments in Ireland, and had not the

Catholic Church had a strong presence here—who is to say that we would have ever had to deal with the consequences of children in care?

After the First World War, even David Lloyd George, the first post-war Prime Minister, warned "*an audience that it was not possible to run an AI empire with a C3 population*". These alphabetic categories were used by the army to label the physical qualities of recruits. There was widespread panic amongst the Establishment that the gene pool had been lowered by the war slaughter. In a Foreword, to Marie Stopes' *Contraception* published in 1928, Sir James Barr, onetime President of the British Medical Association, testily observed that "*while the virility of the nation was carrying on the war the derelicts were carrying on the race*".

Stopes is admired today by many feminists who would be astonished at some of her deepest convictions. She allowed that "*To let nature take its course was not the way to rear an imperial race*". When her own son later chose to marry a woman with glasses, she cut him out of her will and refused to go to the wedding on the ground that he had wilfully ruined a fine genetic inheritance. Stopes saw "*race suicide*" as the chief danger faced by the genetically favoured as a result of "*excessive breeding from the inferior stock*". At this stage, Stopes had swelled her ranks of followers with the most powerful of the political, scientific and cultural elites:

"These included the most distinguished in their field: the economist J.M. Keynes who helped set up the Cambridge Eugenics Society before 1914 and remained a life-long supporter; the sexologist Havelock Ellis who wrote pioneering books on sex before 1914; the zoologist Julian Huxley, grandson of Darwin's chief disciple Thomas Huxley and an early science celebrity; the psychologist Cyril Burt, pioneer of intelligence testing of schoolchildren and, as a result, a convinced hereditarian; the Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw, whose *Man and Superman* played on eugenic themes; William Inge, Dean of St. Paul's, almost certainly the best-known churchman of his generation, who wanted an ideal British population of only 20 million, all with 'certificates of bodily and mental fitness'; and so on" (*The Morbid Age: Britain Between the Wars* by Richard Overly. Allen Lane, London. 2009).

The American Paul Blanchard also makes a very dubious precursor for

modern views on sexual liberalism. While his statements on contraception and abortion make him sound congenial to modern and even feminist stances on many issues, one of his main grievances against the Catholics is their refusal to support eugenics laws, and especially the sterilization of the biologically unfit. He is contemptuous of the Church's dogmatic insistence on the human quality of severely deformed children, of what he calls "*monstrosities*", which the clergy nevertheless deemed worthy of baptism.

Blanchard's anti-Church views were reflected in the political activism of two major American liberal secularist organisations, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State (POAU) founded in 1947, and for the latter he served as a lawyer.

Recently, in the Irish media there has been a debate on the event of the 50th birthday (?) of the contraceptive Pill. In the *Irish Examiner*, their resident Doctor, Pixie McKenna, praised Margaret Sanger and wrote that she was a Catholic. Without seeing fit to mention the context of the latter's life's work which pitted her against the Catholic Church—this was for those of McKenna's readers who are fully committed to pro-life ideology a rather wilful distortion of the facts. When Margaret Sanger was 13, she secretly was baptised and confirmed a year later in July of 1894—an act of defiance against her authoritarian father. After her mother's death in 1899, Margaret fled after refusing to look after the rest of the family and left her pleading father for a more exciting life elsewhere. As far as is known she never came back.

Those interested in witnessing how thoroughly and crassly eugenic Sanger really was, and what kind of intellectual company she kept, should read *The Birth Control Review*, edited by Sanger from 1917-1938. Ironically, it was at University College Cork, at a talk on *Elizabeth Bowen: Visions and Revisions*—hosted by the School of English, 6th November -7th November 2009—that the academic and award winning author Clair Wills, Professor of Irish Literature at Queen Mary College, University of London in speaking of 1950s Ireland alluded to Sir Francis Galton and Eugenics. To our astonishment she made a connection to the latter and *Catholic social ideas*. My jaw is still on the floor but more of that for the next issue. ©

Report

"From The Archives"
The *Irish Times* recalled the following from its issue of 2nd July 1873. It will be recalled that Ireland was still governed from Westminster at this time

"Turning Street Arabs Into Useful Citizens

Three years after its foundation in 1870, Artane Industrial School was raising funds through a public concert, helped by this report in The Irish Times... Joe Joyce

"He who has a trade, and is industrious, has a fortune." These words are painted in big letters on one of the rough brick and timber structures that stand on the Artane School grounds, and convey a truth which the daily exercises of the place drive home to the minds of its youthful scholars. Of these there are at present about 400. Most of them are orphans; only some 15 or 16 have both parents living; too often the father or mother is, for all moral or material benefit to the offspring, a Cypher or a negative quantity.

The true parents of this numerous household are the benefactors whose liberality purchased and equipped the place, the State which contributes a weekly 5s to the maintenance of every rescued child, and the fraternity of Christian Brothers who give their patient labour, their self-denying lives, their whole hearts to the good work they have taken in hand. That work is the conversion of the street Arabs—or the boys who are in visible danger of becoming such—into useful, self-supporting citizens—into soldiers of the great industrial army who will strengthen and support the State, instead of preying on its vitals.

...Among the 400 boys collected here there is not a peevish or a listless face. They are happy because they are fully occupied, and because the natural activity of childhood finds in their case a vent in wholesome, useful work . . .

The daily programme is to rise at six a.m., and one hour in trade work before breakfast. From nine to two, trade work; then dinner, and from three to five trade work again, with an interval of half-an-hour for play. After tea, two are given to school, and all are in bed by 9 p.m. The boys are comfortably clad, and look well nourished and cheerful..."

Tom Doherty

A reply to Trocaire

Zimbabwe Makes Its Way

The *Sunday Tribune* of 18th April 2010 published an article, *Zimbabwe At 30: a tale of broken promises* by Justin Kilcullen, Director of Trocaire.

Trocaire's website describes itself as "*the official overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland*". Evidently a body with some influence within the Church, so the pronouncements of its Director deserve serious attention.

The article begins with a quotation from Robert Mugabe on the eve of independence, predicting a prosperous future for the nation. (Mr Kilcullen rather spoils this by referring to Zimbabwe as already being a "*land of great prosperity*": unfortunately the prosperity in those days was confined to the colonialists—but perhaps he has himself a colonialist perspective. We shall see.)

There follows a list of the misfortunes which have fallen upon the people of Zimbabwe in recent years. No direct explanation is offered as to the cause of these misfortunes, but we are supposed to infer, from the contrast with the preceding "prosperity", and from the title of the piece, that Mugabe broke his promises so now Zim is down the pan.

Some interesting facts

Mr. Kilcullen provides a couple of statistics: "*between 1990 and 2008, average life expectancy fell from 61 to 44. Infant mortality climbed from 53 to 81 per 1000 births in the same period*". Yes, terrible, but who or what was to blame? Mugabe's Government? Drought? HIV? Perhaps other factors?

But first, what is interesting is Mr. Kilcullen's choice of dates. Why 1990? Zimbabwe won its independence in 1980. Let's look at the situation then: life expectancy was 56 and infant mortality was 86 per 1000 births. So in its first decade there was significant improvement in both. What happened after 1990 to change the direction?

Mr. Kilcullen also refers to Zimbabwe's education system as "*the best in Africa*" in 1980. Now, apparently it "*has all but collapsed*".

Perhaps it was the best in Africa. But not beyond improvement, because improve it surely did after Independence.

In 1979 among black children only 42% of primary age were at school, and of those less than 20% were able to progress to secondary education. 45% of black adults were illiterate and a further 12.5% were classed as semi-literate.

Following Independence, free primary schooling was introduced. Enrolment increased from 819,000 to 2,260,000 in 1986. Secondary enrolment increased from 76,000 to 546,000. Literacy became the highest in Africa at over 90%.

It is notable that, even though the education system "*has all but collapsed*", that in 2007 UNESCO found a literacy rate of 91.2%

Wonderful, aren't they, statistics?

What happened in the 1990s?

Mr. Kilcullen doesn't tell us. But sure as hell he wants to hang it on Mugabe and ZANU-PF. Perhaps Robert Mugabe had a mid-life crisis and decided to undo all the good work of his own Government?

Maybe there's a different explanation? And sure enough there it is, right under Mr. Kilcullen's nose. As one of those Christians who love the developing world he must have heard the word "DEBT" once or twice. Didn't you have that Jubilee 2000 thing over in Ireland? Here in England it was the greatest Christian outpouring since the Pope's visit, and there was CAFOD, Mr. Kilcullen's sister organisation, trying to outdo Christian Aid in their number of banners. And then a repeat performance for the G8 at Gleneagles, with *Make Poverty History*.

It's the usual sequence: debt, IMF/World Bank, ESAP, more debt. The *Economic Structural Adjustment Programme* is the only significant factor which distinguishes the Zimbabwe of the 1990s from that of the 1980s. Everything stems from that: decline in living standards, bread riots, strikes, spontaneous land invasions. Eventually, under pressure from the people, Robert Mugabe defied the Washington Consensus and was punished by the West. The IMF effectively embargoed Zimbabwe. And now Kilcullen blames the victim!

Trocaire and the MDC

The Trocaire website has numerous references to the **Movement for Democratic Change** and individual MDC members. I don't think it's unfair to say it has an MDC perspective on events in Zimbabwe. The ZANU-PF perspective is not represented to my knowledge. And this may be why Mr. Kilcullen's account of Zimbabwe's recent past is so selective. The MDC economic programme is effectively a reversion to a variant of ESAP, a buckling down to the demands of the IMF and other bodies.

The MDC and Non-Governmental Organisations such as Trocaire tend to get upset if they are called agents of Imperialism. But, whatever their intentions, ESAP was imperialism's policy—and if they join those trampling on the Zim Government for refusing to implement it, where does that leave them?

Unfortunately Mr. Kilcullen ends his piece with the story of a woman who was badly treated by Government forces in Zimbabwe (no-one can deny such things happen and are unjustified). The unfortunate bit is that this particular woman was presented with an award by the chief mouthpiece of Imperialism, Secretary of State Clinton. The words "sup", "devil" and "long spoon" come to mind.

The Catholic Church in Zimbabwe

It is a shame that Mr. Kilcullen should effectively bring his organisation into disrepute. Many Catholics supported the liberation movement, some morally, some practically.

And the most famous Catholic in Zimbabwe is of course Robert Mugabe. The Church educated him, and a formative influence was his school head, Fr. Jerome O'Hea, who not only funded Mugabe's teacher training but taught him about Ireland's fight for freedom.

On the other hand the last Archbishop of Bulawayo, Pius Ncube, called for a popular uprising against a duly elected Government, and for Western intervention—even appearing to wish for Mugabe's assassination. The Vatican was kinder, inviting Mugabe to John Paul II's funeral, where the famous handshake with Prince Charles occurred. (I wonder how the oldest diplomatic service in the world could seat the two so closely, but the Vatican works in mysterious ways sometimes.)

Shortly afterwards, in a presumably unrelated episode, Ncube was required to resign his Bishopric following revela-

tions of adultery. And the Bishops of Zimbabwe have since then been somewhat more circumspect in their public statements.

Britain Rats

The only thing that can be said for Mr. Kilcullen is that there have been others who have attacked Mugabe, and being more powerful than he. They have done great harm to the people of Zimbabwe. He accuses Mugabe of "*broken promises*": if anyone can be justly accused of broken promises it is the British Government which at Lancaster House undertook to fund the buying out of the colonial landowners.

The most important broken promises were those given by the British Govt at Lancaster House. They promised to fund the buy-out of white colonialist farmers. Mugabe's mistake was not to pin them down to the detail of that.

The anger of any self-respecting Irish person should be directed at Clare Short, who as Britain's Secretary for Overseas Development used her Irish origins as an excuse for breaking that promise: one of the worst instances of political hypocrisy that I have ever seen is her conflation of Clare Short, the individual "of Irish origin", with Clare Short, the member of Her Majesty's Government. Very memorably, that famous socialist, Clare Short, when Overseas Development Secretary, said that she felt no obligation to Zimbabwe: as an Irishwoman she did not inherit the obligations of the British Empire (or words to that effect: I think I phrase it more eloquently than she did).

Mugabe also made the mistake of accepting the burden of repaying the illegal debts that the Smith regime had from various Western banks (mainly Austrian and Swiss) who had defied UN sanctions. It is fair to criticize Mugabe for being too soft in the Lancaster House negotiations, and then over-reacting 20 years later. However such criticism should be moderated by the fact that, at the time, he was under enormous international pressure to make a deal. The South African airforce's bombing of Zambia intimidated Kaunda and Mugabe feared the loss of support from the front-line states. If China had been as strong then as it is now, it might have been a different story.

The white farmers, a great proportion of whom had only stolen the land as late as the 1960s, should have returned home to England: instead they expected inflated prices for their ill-gotten gains.

Manus O'Riordan

Super 'Souper' Spoofer Snookered

I have never been one to argue that Eoghan Harris is without talent. Indeed, in September 1985 I would have been one of a tiny minority to argue that his Abbey Theatre play *Souper Sullivan* had merit, notwithstanding a cringe-inducing scene where Harris had featured comely Protestant maidens dancing at the crossroads. But when leading members of Harris's Workers' Party sneered at his play in my presence (but never, of course, to Harris's own face), I vigorously defended his initiative in telling the Famine years story of the West Cork Church of Ireland rector William Fisher and his *Teampall na mBocht* (the Church of the Poor). If "*souperism*" as a general phenomenon embraced a reprehensible Protestant crusade to 'convert' starving Irish Catholics into Protestants in exchange for soup, or else face being consumed by that Famine Holocaust, a noble exception to the rule certainly deserved to have his integrity portrayed.

There was nonetheless significant Protestant dissatisfaction with Harris's treatment, not least on the part of the *Irish Times* drama critic, David Nowlan, who wrote that "*Eoghan Harris would seem, on the basis of his **Souper Sullivan**, cheerfully to have run the risk of being accused of trying to proselytise through drama; if only he had written a real drama to sustain the accusation*" (27 September 1985).

When Nowlan further reported on a press conference called by Harris to denounce those critics who had failed to appreciate his genius, *Irish Times* Editor Douglas Gageby mischievously gave it the headline of *Author Drops Critics In The Soup*" (1 October).

Gageby did not, however, limit himself to a frivolous response. He felt that the subject matter required more serious debate. On 3rd October, under the heading of *Souper Sullivan Plays Around With History*, Gageby afforded the opportunity to a West Cork parish priest, Father Christy Walsh, to provide a detailed, well-documented, critique of Harris's thesis, while also affording Harris the right of reply.

Perhaps I'm being naive, but I'm still inclined to give Harris the benefit of the doubt on that one, notwithstanding his subtitling of his product as *A Play for Protestants* and his own advance description of it, as reported on 23rd September, as "*a rattling good yarn*" and "*a play he hopes is not fiction*". I don't have a problem in accepting Rev. Fisher as an exception to the rule. The principal problem with Harris, however, is that he has canonised Fisher as the defining rule, and has been *raiméising* about 'souperism' ever since.

Twenty-five years down the road from his high drama, Harris reached new depths of the ridiculous in the *Sunday Independent* this past 27th June when, during the course of a meandering sermon entitled *Obama Is Literally A Black Protestant*, he opined:

"My mother had not a sectarian bone in her body. Indeed, she insisted that we take off our school caps when we met the local Church of Ireland minister. But, like her Roman Catholic neighbours in Roscommon, she reflexively applied the terms 'black Protestant' and 'souper' not so much to Protestants who lived on our road, but to Protestants as she had been taught to regard them historically. The purpose of tribal terms like 'black Protestant' and 'souper' was to put a question mark over the Irishness of Irish Protestants... Let me add my tuppence worth by trying to pin down concretely what 'black Protestant' and 'souper' meant in Catholic nationalist discourse... The term 'souper' is also more subtle than it looks. In 1984, when President Ronald Reagan visited his ancestral home in the Tipperary village of Ballyporeen, the international media—and indeed some Irish hacks—were baffled by a slogan whitewashed on one of the roads: 'Reagan is a Souper'. The crude explanation was that calling Reagan a 'souper' meant his ancestors were Roman Catholics who 'took the soup'—that is, converted to Protestantism for food during the Famine. But if you asked my mother she would have given a more complex reading, like this: '*Reagan is not the proper spelling of Regan. That means the Regans must have changed the spelling some time—probably when they reneged on their*

Roman Catholic religion. The new spelling signals that they are no longer Roman Catholics so nobody is embarrassed'."

This was so off-the-wall that, the following day, I submitted a letter entitled *A Reagan Boreen Going Nowhere*. A truncated version—cut by more than a third and retitled *What's In A Name?*—was published on 4th July. The full letter is published below, the sentences in italics being those edited out by Harris's family newspaper:

"Sometimes facts must be allowed to get in the way of a story, no matter how colourfully told. Regarding Eoghan Harris's attempt to attach a sectarian historical significance to how the late President Reagan spelled his name, the transition from Gaelic surnames to their Anglicised versions was quite a haphazard affair. My Ballingearry Gaeltacht grandfather Micheál Ó Ríordáin changed his name successively from Reardon (under which name his two elder children were registered) to Riordan and finally to O'Riordan. His father-in-law Micheál Ó Críodáin became Creed, whose brother, however, became Creedon. My Clonakilty native Irish-speaking maternal grandfather Laurence Keohane was a second cousin of the "Yanks are coming" songwriter George M. Cohan, which variation on the original Ó Ceocháin his grandfather chose to adopt on arrival in the USA."

*"In the Famine year of 1848, my Clonakilty maternal great-grandfather Michael O'Regan suffered childhood eviction from the townland of Carrig, across the Ballinascarthy road from the Croppy's Crossroad, at the hands of the infamous landlord Bence Jones. But my ancestors did leave behind them a place name called to this day—if not written as such—"Reagan's Boreen". In true West Cork fashion, my relatives are perfectly at ease with writing their surname as O'Regan, being called Regan, and having it pronounced Reagan. The Ballyporeen/USA Reagans were no more Protestant than were the Cohans Jewish, and there is no basis for Eoghan Harris's speculation that the difference in spelling from Regan signalled a change of religion on the part of the President's ancestors. *The President's father, Jack Reagan, was in fact a Catholic Irish-American, while Ronald's elder brother Neil remained a life-long Catholic. At the age of 14, however, Ronald himself was baptised into the Disciples of Christ, the Church of his Scots-Irish mother, Elle Wilson. It was as simple a personal religious option as that. Any other convoluted thesis is a Reagan Boreen going nowhere.*"*

Even in its truncated form, my minimalist intervention provoked Harris's ire. His response was published directly under mine:

"What has that longwinded lecture on well-known naming habits in the 19th century got to do with my well-founded belief that those who wrote 'Reagan is a Souper' were acting on (wrong) sectarian assumptions about the spelling of his name?"

But those sectarian assumptions were Harris's, and his alone. Harris's flight of fancy came to 1,190 words, of which 380 were devoted to his gobbledegook fantasies on terminology, of which I've done him the justice of quoting 250. My response was cut from 330 to 200 words, and while I can accept cutting the Reardon/Creedon references as unnecessary to my basic argument, the censoring of details of the Reagan family's actual religious beliefs lets Harris off the hook.

Incidentally, 25 years ago on 23rd September 1985, Harris had told the *"Reagan is a Souper"* story rather differently, that it had been scrawled on some *"toilet walls in West Cork"*. Now these scrawlers held absolutely no illusions about Reagan's ancestry. They were alluding to the then well-known fact that Reagan himself had converted from the Catholicism of his father and brother to the Protestantism of his mother.

The sectarianism of the slogan lay in the false implication that he had done so for material gain. Rather than defend the genuine character of Reagan's professed religious beliefs, Harris has decided to persist in playing silly sectarian games. In that same 1985 interview he referred to Cork *"where he grew up without speaking to a single one of the Protestants who used to attend the church next door"*. Lacking the good-mannered sociability of his fellow Irishmen, and belatedly feeling ashamed of his own sectarian shunning of his neighbours, Harris has made the rest of us—whether Catholic, Protestant or Dissenter—suffer ever since from his sectarian obsessions.

(See www.indymedia.ie/article/81199 for the *Sunday Independent* suppression, in February 2007, of Manus O'Riordan's reply to Senator Eoghan Harris on Sinn Féin the Workers' Party's *Waffen SS* activist)

Letter To Editor

in reply to Stephen Richards' remarks on the

Irish Language

A Eagarthóir a chara,

Stangadh nach beag a baineadh asam nuair a léigh mé an méid a bhí scríobhtha ag Stephen Richards (C&S 100):

"Irish," adeir sé, "isn't actually the native tongue of anybody on the island. It isn't a minority language at all. All Irish speakers are bilingual at least ... and I doubt if any of them are more fluent in Irish than in English."

I gcodarsnacht:

"Ulster Scots is certainly ... the distinctive native tongue of an ascertainable and numerically significant group of people in the here and now, but the problem is that it's not really a language."

Mar sin, más rud é go bhfuil Béarla agat mar bharr ar do theangaidh dúchais - chan cainteoir dúchais ar chor ar bith thú! (Nó b'fhéidir gur cainteoir dúchais Bhéarla 'i bhfírinne' thú?) Ach má tá leagan neamhchaighdeánach den Bhéarla agat le cois do chuid Béarla na Banríona, chan "hamely tongue" atá i gceist, ach "distinctive native tongue" - cé nach "fíorthéangaidh" atá inti!

Tá meascán mearaí anseo eadar dhá choincheap, mar atá: dátheangachas (bilingualism) agus dághluaiseachas (diglossia). Más duine dátheangach thú, bíonn dhá theangaidh éagsúla ar do thoil agat; más duine dághluaiseach thú, thig leat raogha a dhéanamh eadar leagan caighdeánach do theangaidh dúchais agus canúint áitiúil.

Ach an féidir nach dtug Stephen sciúird ariamh ar an Ghaeltacht? Nó nach rabh sé de shuim aige ariamh ina bheo a bheith ag éisteacht le sliocht as Raidió na Gaeltachta? Agus cad chuige a bhfuil amhras air fá dtaobh de líofacht cainteoirí dúchais? Chan "*cupla focal na Shinners*" atá i gceist anseo!

Bhfuil an fear bocht comh bodhar le slis? Nó bhfuil sé den bharúil nach bhfuil ach aon "fhíorthéangaidh" amháin le cluinint i nÉirinn, mar atá an Béarla?

Is mise le meas,
Niall Cusack

V O X

Civil Partnership

On Thursday, July 1 last, the Dáil passed without a vote, all stages of the Civil Partnership Bill, giving new legal rights to non-marital couples.

Justice Minister Dermot Ahern said *"it was one of the most important human rights pieces of legislation the House had dealt with"*.

Labour's Brendan Howlin, said the Bill gives real, practical benefits to thousands of people and brings the country further along the road to equality.

Environment Minister John Gormley thanked the Justice Minister for his work on this Bill, which was part of the Programme for Government.

Minister Gormley said the Bill was an act of tolerance, and a step forward.

Earlier Green Party TD Ciarán Cuffe said the legislation was about granting civil rights to people who had been denied them for years.

He said the legislation had not gone as far as the Green Party would like, but acknowledged that it represented important progress on a journey that would take years to reach its final destination.

Civil rights groups also say it will transform the lives of thousands of couples.

Three Fianna Fáil Senators opposed the measure when it came before the Seanad.

Fine Gael TD Seymour Crawford appealed to the Justice Minister to bring in a conscience clause to allow people who have objections to presiding over a civil partnership ceremony to opt out.

Bethany Home

"It has been claimed that the graves of children who died at the Bethany mother and baby home in Dublin have been located in Mount Jerome Cemetery at Harold's Cross.

"The Bethany Home was run by evangelical members of the Church of Ireland but had no formal connection

Civil Partnership

Bethany Home

Eminent Scientist and Speaker

with that church. It operated at Blackhall Place in Dublin from 1921-34 and at Orwell Road, Rathgar, until it closed in 1972.

"It was also a place of detention for women convicted of petty theft, prostitution, infanticide and birth concealment. In 1935-36 the home was required to register child mortality, under the Maternity Act of 1934.

"According to Griffith College lecturer Niall Meehan, more than 40 children from the home were recorded as having died between March 1935 and December 1936, when the home had 19 babies resident on average per month.

"The information was discovered in Bethany Home minutes by Mr. Meehan who then traced the unnamed children to Mount Jerome Cemetery where most are said to be in adjoining unmarked common graves.

"Next Wednesday at noon two men who were born at the home, Derek Leinster and Patrick Anderson-McQuoid, will stage a reading of the names of the children believed to have been buried at Mount Jerome.

"They will also formally launch the Bethany Survivors' Group and an appeal for a permanent memorial to be set up for those who did not survive at the home" (*The Irish Times*, 22.5.2010).

Eminent Scientist and Speaker

Earle Hackett, who has died aged 88, started talking *"on the wireless"* by chance, but it became one of his passions.

Having gone from Ireland to Adelaide, Australia, in 1958 to be Deputy Director of the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Research, the cultivated pathologist and haematologist had quickly become an energetic force in the circles of Max Harris, Geoffrey Dutton and Ken Inglis, as a book reviewer, art critic and wittiest after-dinner speaker in town. He was soon appointed chairman of the board of the Art Gallery of South Australia (SA), and chairman of the SA Crafts Council.

P A T

Earle Hackett was born in Cork in 1921 to a well-off Church of Ireland family, who had been doctors for four generations. His father was a dentist and doctor, and from an early age Earle was already referred to as *"the little doctor"*.

He later recalled that *"a woman named Nora O'Riordan came every day to do the ironing, and then spent the rest of the day talking to me. She wove a web of words about what might be what, and where might be where; quite a simple enquiry from me would provoke half an hour of answering; she was, I think, the only positive teacher I ever had, and she could not read or write."*

Aged seven, he was sent to Epsom College in England to rid him of the Cork brogue and learn to *"talk proper"*. He studied arts and medicine at Trinity College, Dublin, and graduated as a pathologist and haematologist in 1946. His thesis on blood groups of the Aran Islands is still quoted.

He edited the College magazine and was an all-Ireland half-mile champion athlete. He became reader in pathology at Trinity and, with a senior colleague, set up the first blood bank in Ireland. He married a nurse, Eileen Carroll, who had been born of Irish parents in Swaziland, and they had three children, Jane, Sue and Johnjames. With little prospects of promotion, or excitement, in 1950s Ireland, he applied for the Adelaide position, and moved his young family to Australia in 1958.

As well as his busy cultural activities in Adelaide and the ABC, Hackett played a leading role in the medical profession, and was president of the College of Pathologists of Australia. Finding administration irksome, he retired early from his official positions in Adelaide and freelanced as a broadcaster, medical writer and boulevardier.

Earle Hackett: born April 26th, 1921; died April 5th, 2010

(*Irish Times*, 1.5.2010).

Stephen Richards

'Where Did It All Go Wrong?'

This was the famous question asked of George Best by a waiter in a London hotel at a time when, superficially at least, everything seemed to be going all right. The same question has exercised historians, sociologists and cultural commentators in relation to the withering away of the Christian faith in Britain that has been so evident in the decades since 1950. Not just in world terms but even in European terms the phenomenon has been startling.

The life of Peter Hitchens, born in 1951, younger brother of the more famous Christopher, has spanned the period; and in his book, *The Rage Against God* (Continuum, 2010) he's preoccupied with this question. I had expected it from its title to be more of a polemical book, Hitchens being one of these figures who, as they say, is 'no stranger to controversy', but instead I found it to be reflective and elegiac in tone, with a large element of autobiography, and a reluctance to score debating points, although he can't resist one or two. This is somewhat at odds with the image of the pugnacious tabloid columnist who is continually angry about things, but it's good to know that he has a more mellow side, where he's resigned rather than indignant.

I have noticed though that in recent times his anger over the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has become more muted. He is probably just as angry as he was, but it may be that after a certain stage the repeated expression of that anger becomes pointless, in journalistic terms anyway, because the damage has been done. The Right in general and the Conservative Party in particular, have been hamstrung by their lack of moral courage at a time when they could have made a difference. It's not often in political life that you have a chance to be morally right, populist, and politically smart, and the Tories blew it. Possibly Hitchens realizes that to keep on bleating from the right about the disaster is wasteful of energy.

Having started off as a (literally) Bible-burning socialist revolutionary type of person he experienced a gradual change of mind and heart and now, like St. Paul, is aligned with those people he formerly persecuted, or would have

persecuted given half a chance. The difficult balancing act for him is that he's trying simultaneously to honour what might be called traditional English values, of reserve, stoicism, good manners, social deference and so on, and to repudiate the culture of British militarism and the vision of national identity as being bound up with glory in foreign fields, that led to two world wars and many subsequent military adventures. This tension is what makes his book so interesting. He's not out to kill the patient; in fact he loves the patient and wants to save it from this fatal growth. However, he realizes the patient is too far gone: the growth is spreading, and it has really destroyed the patient's physical integrity. In the same way the imperialist urge in British life has hollowed out all that was formerly admirable in the national character, including real Christian piety. The subsequent failure of the imperialist ideal has left the nation without any real culture or beliefs to fall back on. This seems to be at the heart of Hitchens's thesis.

Bloomsberries

I was unaware until recently that there is a line of physical descent from the evangelical Clapham Sect of the late eighteenth century, that included social reformers like Zachary Macaulay and scientists like Michael Faraday, and the Bloomsbury Set (a bit of a sect too, in its own way) of the early twentieth. It seems odd that with the passage of time family, social, political and ecclesiastical groupings can end up standing for something antithetical to what they stood for before; and yet there may be an underlying continuity. These things don't happen overnight.

D.H. Lawrence wasn't exactly a Bloomsberry but he was patronized by Lady Ottoline Morrell and others; and one of the chief characteristics of his writing is his moral earnestness. He was on an evangelistic mission to 'free up' sex from the shackles of prudery, romanticism and what used to be called smoking-room jokes. He ran up against some ingrained cultural attachment to all three. But it was a cause, like the campaign for moral reformation supported by Wilberforce, and the current

campaign to do away with "homophobia", which seems to be a hydra-headed monster indeed.

The Non-Conformist Renaissance

If we look at English Nonconformity, by the death of Queen Anne in 1714 it seemed to be a spent force. The Revivals that swept over large parts of England and Wales from the middle decades of the eighteenth century onwards had had their origin in the Established Church of England. The Wesleys and Whitefield never wanted to be anything other than faithful sons of the Church; and the Methodists were almost an accidental denomination. But as a result of those same Revivals new life was breathed into the old Baptist and Independent Churches, and the English evangelicals entered the nineteenth century in good heart.

As Brendan Clifford has emphasized, in 1832 the Nonconformist, non-Oxbridge middle classes came into their own with the passing of the Great Reform Act. I think that Brendan thinks that something began to 'go wrong' with the political direction of the country after that. I would suggest that this wasn't an immediate thing. The Evangelicals were certainly concerned about social reform, including prostitution, working conditions and so on, but that was all in the context of their overarching concern for personal and corporate godliness. The great days of early Spurgeon and the 1859 Revival still lay ahead, which could be called a high water mark for the nineteenth century evangelical movement. (1859 was of course also the year that Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published.) There were other outlets too for evangelical energy, in opposing the Oxford Movement within the Church of England and the perceived growing ambition of the Roman See. The Nonconformist Conscience kept largely at home.

Insofar as the evangelicals were political, they tended to be followers of Gladstone. The Liberal view of those days I suppose was that wars were disagreeable but sometimes necessary. They got in the way of trade and prosperity. The general feeling up to the 1870s or so was that the Empire had expanded far enough and any further expansion would be a drain on national resources.

Applied Ethics

An early example of what is now called Liberal Imperialism was the Gladstone's "bag and baggage" campaign

against the Turks in relation to the Bulgarian massacres of 1876, even though in the event there was no military intervention; and at the time of the Congress of Berlin in 1878 it was Disraeli in charge anyway. However, the genie of an ethical foreign policy was out of the bottle. That's not to say that an ethical foreign policy is more suspect than an unethical foreign policy, but in a more democratic age with an electorate subject to emotional swings there was a danger of unpredictable swings in policy.

That was all very well, but the Liberal ambition to do good in the world was still a long way from the imperialist drive. It may be that the two things began to coalesce in connection with the death of General Gordon at Khartoum in 1885, which had the same traumatic and galvanizing effect on the British public that the death of General Custer eight or nine years previously had had on the American public. In both cases the effect on the native peoples was catastrophic. The unfinished business of empire-building was now welded to a moral and even a theological imperative. In 1898 at Omdurman Gordon was well and truly avenged.

The Imperialist Urge

This set off the rhetoric of *"the Cape to Cairo"*. The minor detail was that Egypt wasn't legally a British colony at all but was just subject to overweening British 'influence', which spelled trouble later. Then the two diamond-rich Boer Republics were in the way; and German East Africa was also in the way. The Boer War was meant to be a *tour de force* to round off Great Britain's century, but didn't turn out that way. It was won at the cost of a great deal of time and money, and against the background of a loss of morale. However the Empire didn't see fit to pull in its horns but thought it could do better next time, in a European theatre. The Boer War was the last fling of the Tory Imperialists, and there had been a number of dissenting Liberal voices. The Liberal Government of 1906 wasn't elected on an imperialist ticket but it soon turned out to have an even bigger imperialist vision than Cecil Rhodes.

What I'm saying here is a very simplified version of what I've got from Pat Walsh. My point is to illustrate how by the early years of the last century the notion of an independent moral critique of war and foreign affairs had been swallowed up within the imperial vision.

The Empire had become its own moral justification, and the things that were done were justified in the doing of them. The people who gave away their consciences weren't stupid. What had happened was that the new imperialist propaganda made adept use of what seemed like an appeal to the conscience, and the civilizing mission of the Anglo-Saxon race, so as to justify things that were unconscionable. It's very difficult to stand back and do a critical evaluation when you're going to seem like some kind of crank. This is what happens when morality becomes the view of a majority in a society at a given time. There is no longer any sense of there being an independent court of appeal, and this is all the worse when it's paraded as *"Christian morality"*.

Some Foreign Field

Rupert Brooke, product of Rugby School and King's College Cambridge, and the subject of every ennobling cultural influence all his life, was able to write to Cathleen Nesbitt in October 1914 that the central purpose of his life, *"the aim and end of it, now, the thing God wants of me, is to get good at beating Germans. That's sure."* He was pretty cynical about almost everything else. His religion and ethics had boiled down to killing Germans, although I fear he didn't kill any. Raymond Asquith, memorialized by John Buchan as the ideal scholar and gentleman, was of similar ilk. He was already long bereft of any sense of moral purpose in life, so the war came just at the right time for him. It covered over a moral vacuity. If the War hadn't come along the ruling class would have had to bring it about.....

The Art Of Remembrance

Which brings us back at last to Peter Hitchens. His view seems to be that the imperialist world view became an *ersatz* religion owing something to a loss of belief in Biblical religion, and something to a syncretism between the two types of religion:

"Almost all these {war} memorials are more or less explicitly religious, but some very pointedly so. In the Buckinghamshire town of Beaconsfield the monument (upon which a light burns at night) is adorned with a carving of Christ crucified. Some compared the sacrifice of 1914-18 with the sacrifice of Calvary, an understandable if theologically dubious parallel. A memorial panel in my own parish church bears the words 'The Great Sacrifice'."

He goes on to say that Britain is unusual in its sheer number of war memorials. In America—

"the only memorials comparable in emotional force to the British ones are those in Southern small towns, recalling the lost cause of the Confederacy. The sole sizeable monument to the dead of the 1917-18 war that I have seen stands outside Union Station in Kansas City, Missouri.

"The only country with a comparable cult of heroic death is Russia, or, to be strictly accurate, the former Soviet Union... What is the thing that is being worshipped in these places? It may counterfeit the majesty of the great churches, and imitate their mystery and grandeur. But it is not God. It is an attempt to replace God, an attempt which failed."

It dawned on him only when he was living in Moscow in 1991 that his generation had been a victim of the same kind of brainwashing. He doesn't intend to be disrespectful towards those who were the casualties of the wars unleashed by the proponents of the imperialist ideology:

"The proper remembering of dead warriors, though right and fitting, is a very different thing from the Christian religion. The Christian church has been powerfully damaged by letting itself be confused with love of country and the making of great wars. Wars... are seldom fought for good reasons, even if such reasons are invented for them afterwards. Civilised countries become less civilised when they go to war."

This last sentence reminds me of Hugo Hamilton's *The Speckled People*, where the narrator tells how his German mother's friends and family loved to listen to him and his siblings talking. They had grown up speaking German after the style of their mother who had grown up before the War. Apparently the post-1945 German intonation was harsher. Hitchens continues:

"The churches were full before 1914 {which may be true but doesn't imply universal church attendance}, half-empty after 1919, and three-quarters empty after 1945. And I would add that, by all but destroying British Christianity, these wars may come to destroy the spirit of the country. Those who fought so hard to defend Britain against its material enemies did so at a terrible spiritual cost. The memory of the great slaughter of 1914-18 was carried back into their daily lives by millions who had set out from quiet homes as gentle, innocent and kind, and returned cynical, brutalised and

used to cruelty....Perhaps worse than the deliberate, scientific killing of civilians was the sad, desperate attempt to pretend to ourselves later that it was right and justified. In this way the pain and damage were passed on to new generations, who had no hand in the killing."

Twin Tracks?

If the post-1918 generation drew a moral from what had happened, it was this: "*we're not going to be caught that way again*". Partly as a result of incompetent British foreign policy the 'war to end wars' was fought all over again twenty years later, and the nation still responded to the call, if with less bravado than in 1914.

In the intervening years the Socialists had got off the soapbox and gone into Government. The rise of Labour seemed to represent a rejection of the Imperialism that had dominated English political life for a generation, but this was more rhetorical than real. There was still an Empire to run; and the Labour leaders had to operate in that context. The focus of Labour concern was the plight of the industrial working (and unemployed) class. The Socialists didn't take much time to analyse what had gone wrong that had brought the country into its distressful state. A sentimental attachment to the League of Nations took the place of serious thought.

But among the industrial working classes and the Labour-supporting intelligentsia the imperialist hollowing out of religious belief had resulted in a readiness to absorb the alternative vision of a secular socialist millennium, of which the new Soviet state was the pioneer. Despite a wobbly period from 1939 to 1941, these people were able to take part in what they no doubt saw as the western theatre of Great Patriotic War, and in doing so they were joining hands with the remnants of the old Imperialism, men like Churchill. The two godless ideologies, superficially antithetical, each with its icons and its teleology, bolstered each other.

Hitchens sees Churchill as the focus of a national quasi-religious cult, not dissimilar to the cult of Stalin. He was both a charismatic aristocrat and a man of the new Socialist age, with his trademark cigar and the military-style fatigues. He was also one of the sponsors of the Welfare State even though he had to campaign against it. It was envisaged that the years of collective suffering in the War would create a national purpose supervised by socialist planning, a

dictatorship of the proletariat using the forms of constitutional democracy.

Even today it seems to be a badge of honour for Labour and New Labour figures to claim that their orientation is somehow in the blood, just as somebody might claim to be a 'lifelong' Manchester United supporter. Their philosophy isn't something they've arrived at after mature deliberation but is a visceral thing. Maybe it's all to do with the current need to be 'passionate' about everything, but it may also go back to a remembrance that Labour is a secular substitute for religion. Peter Mandelson in his recent book, *The Third Man*, tells us that in his childhood the Labour Party was virtually the family religion

The Man Of Destiny

Churchill's career was far longer than Cromwell's but the two men unleashed a similar type of reckless destruction on the world. The latter's self-belief was reinforced by his reading of Scripture, while the agnostic Churchill needed no external validation. As Chesterton points out, excessive self-belief isn't a sign of psychological health, which modern psychiatric case studies may teach us too. A.J. Balfour commented wittily on Churchill as historian, "*Winston has written a big book about himself and called it **The World Crisis***". In his *magnum opus* on Marlborough, on which he employed a number of researchers, his illustrious forebear was used in a sense as a vehicle for his self-vindication. No doubt he saw himself as following in Marlborough's footsteps: the leader who returns after years in the wilderness to rescue his country and save the whole of Europe from tyranny.

Apart from Clive Ponting's, I haven't found the biographies of Churchill at all interesting; and Ponting's is necessarily sketchy. Martin Gilbert and Roy Jenkins are both very bland, and it appears as if by the accumulation of detail and documents they're somehow normalizing his bizarre exotic otherness. I'm not sure if there was a pot that he didn't have a hand in stirring from 1900 to 1950: the Boer War; the days of the Home Rule crisis (when he was feted on the streets of West Belfast); his period as First Lord of the Admiralty leading up to Gallipoli; his measures to put down the General Strike of 1926; the Peel Commission on Palestine; the Abdication Crisis, and so on into the next World War. And then there was the Iron Curtain speech at Fulton, Missouri, that Iron Curtain having been in large part his own creat-

ion. Not forgetting of course his disastrous mishandling of the Indian crisis.

I gather that in the recent favourable account by Max Hastings of Churchill as war leader there is quite a bit of detail about Churchill's obsession with the eastern and Balkan theatre, which was like a rerun of his approach in the Great War, and led to misery for the Greeks and other nationalities. He seemed to have few qualms about the massive bombing of civilian population centres in Germany, just as he didn't seem to suffer many sleepless nights over the tens of thousands he sent to their deaths at Gallipoli, about the Cossacks he repatriated to Stalin's Russia, or about the consignment of the liberated peoples of Eastern Europe, including the Poles, to Soviet domination.

The Wasteland

What seems to be going on here is an Imperialism so out of control as to have become like a travesty of itself, a *reductio ad absurdum*. There is no internal consistency of policy and no serious engagement with the implications of what is being done. As with Matthew Arnold's Sea of Faith, the retreating roar of Imperialism, represented by Churchill, left behind a purposeless vacuum. Socialism also, especially since the late 1980s, has lost whatever moral coherence it ever had and has degenerated into New Labour. The interests of the working class have been subjugated under the agendas of multiculturalism, secularism, feminism and the 'issues around' sexual orientation.

British national life is now characterized by a lack of national life, except with regard to the mishaps of the England soccer team and the exploits of the celebrity class, which overlaps with the soccer players. The seemingly competing imperialist and socialist visions of how the world should be arranged, both with a hinterland in 19th century evangelicalism, came to have very little Christian content about them, and then lost whatever coherence they had as the post-war world developed paradigms that the British could not easily adapt to.

Strangely enough, those parts of the world where Protestant Christianity has made huge advances over recent decades—China, Brazil, South Korea—have had little exposure to British colonial government. It may be that the Empire didn't have much time for Christian missionary activity *per se*, or that its representatives didn't give a particularly good example

of Christianity in action.

So, the political, cultural and religious energies of the British people now consist in a lot of purposeless thrashing about, combined with relics of half-remembered beliefs and ideologies. If the English were traditionally portrayed as private, stoical people, it was understood that it was because they harboured feelings too deep for words. We now live in an age of emotional, financial and sexual incontinence, and the feelings that are so obviously on show couldn't be described as deep.

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Tom Cooper

Report

"Envoy's absence a setback to good relations

I see the new British prime minister David Cameron, along with the incoming secretary of state for Northern Ireland Owen Paterson, have endorsed a proposed visit by Queen Elizabeth to the Republic sometime during the new British government's term of office.

In his first interview as prime minister on matters relating to Ireland, Mr Cameron said he wished to see "very good relations between Britain and the Republic of Ireland".

These good relations alluded to by Mr Cameron suffered a sizeable setback when the British ambassador to Ireland, Julian King, failed to attend the Great Famine commemoration in Co Mayo recently. Was it a considered decision or just political incompetence that the representative of the state that ruled, or perhaps misruled, Ireland during the famine years, despite a formal invitation, felt unable to attend the commemoration of the catastrophe which saw Ireland lose 2.5 million of her poorest children to starvation and emigration? This famine happened despite an abundance of food and despite Ireland being an integral part of the wealthiest and most powerful empire in the world."

Irish Examiner, 31.5. 2010

Pat Walsh

Part One

The Berlin-Baghdad Express

I was recently alerted to the publication of a book, *The Berlin Baghdad Express*' by Assistant Professor Sean McMeekin of Bilkent University at Ankara and Yale. It has the subtitle *The Ottoman Empire and Germany's bid for world power, 1898-1918* and has been enthusiastically received by Dr. Brendan Simms, the Chairman of the Henry Jackson Society and Professor of History at Cambridge University, in a review published jointly in *The Belfast Telegraph* and *The Independent* (25.06.10). Simms writes, comparing the danger felt by England a hundred years ago with that of Ameranglia, when it looks at China today:

"Today, Western powers worry about the 'China model' with which the Beijing government is winning over large swathes of Africa, building dams and bridges, disbursing development aid with no (human rights) strings attached in exchange for political influence and access to crucial mineral resources for the Chinese economy. A hundred years ago, they fretted about Germany in the Middle East, which was busy transforming the Ottoman Empire with railroads, military advisors and credits, in the hope of displacing the once dominant Anglo-French influence. The centrepiece of this endeavour was the famous Berlin-Baghdad railway, designed to connect the German capital with the Ottoman provinces in Mesopotamia, and eventually the Persian Gulf. Once completed, it would not only open up the region to trade and development, but transform the whole strategic landscape. It would then have been quicker to move troops from Central Europe to the Gulf than by ship from Britain."

The Henry Jackson Society, which has revived geopolitics for the new era of imperialism, describes its objectives as: "*The pursuit of a robust foreign policy... based on clear universal principles such as the global promotion of the rule of law, liberal democracy... and the market economy.*" It also "*Supports a 'forward strategy' with the maintenance of a strong military, by the United States, the countries of the European Union and other democratic powers, armed with expeditionary capabilities with a global reach.*"

And yet Germany, in 1900, and China, in 2010, expanding the market economy through peaceful penetration—no thanks! That seems to be a job reserved for Ameranglia whose Manifest Destiny it is to carry progress into the darker reaches of the world—like Iraq, Afghanistan (and Iran?)—to the lesser breeds, by fire and sword.

Well, our fire and sword seem preferable to their peaceful penetration at any rate.

On the rear cover of *The Berlin Baghdad Express* we are treated to a quotation that is supposed to chill our blood: "*Let the Americans have the planes, the Russians Siberia, the French and Belgians and British various malaria ridden lands in Africa. Germany would build her own economic empire in the very cradle of Western civilization.*"

This statement, presumably, is supposed to take us aback at the temerity of the Germans in wishing to build a world Empire. And yet all it really says is that Germany wished to expand its commercial interests into the area covered by the Ottoman Empire—the operative word being 'economic'. What surely is so shocking about that—particularly when it is compared to the expansionist and genocidal characteristics of the other empires named.

When we open the dust-cover the historian Norman Stone comments that "*this superb original book is the reality behind Greenmantle.*" And in the acknowledgements at the back of the book McMeekin gives special recognition for inspiration to John Buchan for "*the great first world war yarn Greenmantle.*"

John Buchan is famous for his novel writing—and in particular for *The Thirty Nine Steps*, the prequel to *Greenmantle*. But he was not merely a novelist. He had been with Alfred Milner's colonial kindergarten in South Africa acting as the Proconsul's Private Secretary and remained close to the Round Table/Chatham House group for the rest of his life.

In December 1916 when the Wellington House Propaganda Bureau became the Department of Information it was

placed under the direction of Buchan, on Lord Milner's recommendation to Lloyd George. Wellington House was a secret propaganda department set up at the start of the War, originally under the direction of Charles Masterman. Buchan and other famous literary figures and historians of the time were recruited to the propaganda drive through a secret meeting held just after the declaration of war on Germany. This was kept a close secret—even though it was the largest single gathering of writers for a state purpose in British history. The intention was to establish a propaganda drive against Germany which would use the talents of all these writers in the construction of a great output of material that would demonize the enemy from all possible angles—accusing them of terrible atrocities, having violent natures and instincts, producing aggressive and expansionist ideas etc. etc.

And, when Turkey was enlisted as another enemy in the 'war for civilization' the focus moved from Germany to the Turks. The big problem Wellington House was confronted with in creating negative propaganda against the Turks was the notion that existed in England at the time which can be summed up in the phrase *'the Turk is a gentleman'*. This came about because the traditional view of the Turk in Britain presented him as a clean fighter and an honorable and honest opponent. The propagandists therefore attempted to overcome this view with a great output of atrocity propaganda against him.

A classic example was Mark Sykes's famous article in the Times called *The Clean Fighting Turk—a spuriously claim'*. Sykes, at the same moment, was involved in carving up the Middle East with the French at the same time as Britain was promising an Arab state to Sharif Hussein for a Holy War on the Young Turks.

Another example, amongst dozens of others, was the book called *Crescent And Iron Cross* by E.F. Benson. Benson was a famous novelist and writer of ghost stories. As far as I know he had little interest in the history of the Ottoman Empire or Turkish affairs before the Great War. Suddenly he produced a book from information supplied to him which demonized the Turks and made all sorts of allegations about the Ottomans and particularly their treatment of the Armenians.

This book illustrates the Wellington House method very well. Information

was collected by unknown propagandists and rewritten by the author as if it was his own work. And this approach was applied in numerous other publications, which seemed to be written by well-regarded private individuals and published by independent publishing houses but which were really collaborations by secret propagandists who organized the production and distribution of the work on a massive scale and directed it at influential individuals. Much of the information in these publications was common to many and had a single original source. However, the sheer volume and range of all these publications produced the effect of poison gas in the trenches—attacking all the senses and creating something that was very difficult to avoid penetrating the mind.

Two and a half million books and pamphlets reached an audience of at least 13,000 contacts in the United States. The United States was a particular target of the Wellington House propaganda because the Americans were very distrustful of Britain's motives in the Middle East. In order to justify the war on Turkey—which, however, the United States never joined, and the conquest of the Middle East—Britain felt it had to project an image of the Turks as being wholly unfit to govern anybody and to be the enemies of progress everywhere. The idea was to implant in the American mind the view that, once Britain had liberated the Arab areas from the Ottoman Empire they would all become Gardens of Eden and that the British Empire only had the noblest of motives and the interests of native peoples in mind in fighting and conquering in the region.

Colonel Buchan also worked as war correspondent for the *Times* and the *Daily News*, sending back reports from the Front that were designed to raise the confidence of the masses that they were winning the War. His work involved placing selective information in the public domain, writing books on battles, and compiling the lengthy *History of the War* over 24 volumes, published by Nelsons in monthly instalments. And Buchan was also responsible for the notorious 'corpse factory' story which alleged that the Germans were boiling the corpses of their soldiers to produce oil from body fats in order to overcome the shortages produced by the Royal Navy blockade.

Buchan saw his novel-writing as very much part of the War effort. *The Thirty*

Nine Steps, published by Hodder and Stoughton in 1915, but set before the War, capitalised on the German spy fever prevalent in England to sell 25,000 copies in three months. *Greenmantle* was the sequel to *The Thirty Nine Steps*. It featured the same main character of Richard Hannay, and was published by Hodder and Stoughton again.

In *Greenmantle* the hero, Hannay, is called in to investigate rumours of an imminent uprising in the Muslim world, and he undertakes a journey through enemy territory in Germany and Austro-Hungary to meet up with his a friend in Constantinople. Once there, Hannay and his colleagues attempt to thwart the German plot to use Islam in a *jihad* to help them win the War.

Belief in *"the power of the Jews"* was a commonly held preconception in Britain during the first half of the twentieth century and the other great fear lay in the power of Islam, and its imagined potential to unite all Moslems in the British Empire in a *jihad* to throw out Westerners. And Germany and Turkey, along with the Jews and Islam, come together in a most powerful cocktail of menace in the British imagination in Buchan's war/spy novel, *Greenmantle*. The gist of it is that the Germans and their Turkish allies are plotting to cause a great uprising throughout the Muslim world that will throw the whole of the Middle East, India and North Africa into a Holy War against the British infidel and his Empire.

What we see in John Buchan and the Wellington House propaganda is the application of fiction writing to the production of a general consciousness that becomes 'fact.' And it was no accident that so many British novelists were employed in the production of propaganda, alongside the academics and historians who turned their hands to fiction disguised as fact, and trading on their previous reputations.

When Sean McMeekin produces *"the truth behind Greenmantle"* he is acting in the same spirit as Wellington House.

This becomes clear in the following passage on page 100 of *The Berlin-Baghdad Express*:

"Few decisions in world history have been as fraught with consequences as Turkey's entry into the first world war. From the closing off of the Straits for three years to Russian commerce—a major cause of the economic upheaval which led to the Russian revolution—to the creation of the modern Middle

East out of the wreckage of the defeated Ottoman Empire, the Turks decision to fight in 1914 lies at the root of the most intractable geopolitical problems of the 20th century, many of which are still with us today. Although never formally saddled with war guilt for having provoked the conflict, as their German allies were, the Ottoman leaders who pushed Turkey into the war still bear a heavy responsibility, in no small part because they took the final plunge without anything resembling the kind of public support found in the West and belligerent countries."

So this book is not just about a railway but how the Germans and Turks were apparently responsible for the great catastrophe of the First World War and the current problems manifest in the Middle East and the world today. And that is despite the fact that they lost that war and had no responsibility for the subsequent settlement.

McMeekin's argument is one that I've not seen in print since the wildest British propaganda of the Great War—which attempted to link the 'Crescent and Iron Cross' and (in the title of E.F. Benson's book) in a bid for world power. His argument is basically that the Berlin to Baghdad railway was the centrepiece in a German attempt to destroy the British Empire and conquer the world for itself in alliance with the Ottoman Empire and Islamic jihad.

McMeekin's book is peppered with the phrase 'jihadist' in describing Germany's attempts to encourage the Moslem world to resist the assorted invaders from the Christian West—Protestant Britain, Catholic France and Orthodox Russia (and later Italy and Greece). McMeekin describes all manner of spying and intelligence work conducted by the Germans whilst ignoring totally the same type of work which the British intelligence agencies engaged in at the same time by people like Compton Mackenzie and Basil Thomson.

It was certainly true that both the Germans and British attempted to engage the Moslem world against their enemies. After the declaration of war by Britain on Turkey, the Sultan/Caliph quite legitimately called on the Moslem world to resist the aggressors in defence of the Islamic state. In response to this the British attempted their own Holy War, recruiting Sharif Hussein by holding out the prospect of him becoming Caliph of the Moslem world and ruling over a new Arab state. And for insurance purposes the British also recruited Hussein's rival in Arabia, Ibn Sa'ud and

his Wahhabbi followers to provide a more fundamentalist jihad for the British war effort.

However, the real point of the matter lies in which side was legitimately pursuing this strategy. The Germans were on firmer ground since they were attempting to mobilize the Moslem world to throw out the Western Christian invaders which were occupying Muslim lands. They also had the long-term intention of helping to preserve the Moslem world as a necessary part of world civilization. On the other hand, the British strategy was to manipulate Islamic fundamentalist impulses in order to disrupt the Ottoman Islamic state so that Moslem lands would fall into the hands of the Western Christian powers and Britain would remain a 'great Mussulman power' in charge of most of the Islamic world.

Therefore, the character of the German influence on the Moslem world was if anything secular and anti-imperialist whereas the character of the British influence was primarily religious and imperialist.

But McMeekin is not content with blaming the Kaiser and the young Turks for the problems the Middle East faces today; he is also determined to throw in the Islamic world with Hitler. And the following passage shows why he is so admired by the Henry Jackson Society:

"The anti-Semitism which gripped so many Germans after 1918 was born of the poisonous brew of self-pity in a people which, by all rights, had done pretty well for themselves in the world and were substantially responsible for the catastrophe which had befallen them in the first world war. Since Hitler was defeated in 1945, there has been a

tendency to say 'goodbye to all that', as if the exposure of the Nazi death camps truly taught the world a lesson they will never forget. And yet the toxic self pitying disease which gave rise to Nazism is still abroad in the world, if no longer so prevalent in Germany itself. At its most glaringly obvious, the syndrome manifests itself in common Arab anti-Semitism, with Israel blamed for every evil which has occurred in the Middle East in modern times. But there is a subtler version of the virus coursing through the veins of the West, such as in the fashionable Third Worldist autocritique which decries every sin of European imperialism while absolving the world's most wicked postcolonial regimes of responsibility for their crimes. Zionism, whatever its merits or demerits as a political program, had emerged from the heart of German Judeo-Christian culture at the time of its greatest flowering... The German Emperor spent his civilizational inheritance promoting an atavistic version of Pan-Islam devoted to the destruction of that civilization and to the murder of the Christians and Jews who had forged it. It was a breathtaking error in judgment, and we are all living with the consequences today" (p366).

So the message seems to be that it was Germany's attempt to create a world empire through the Islamic world that was responsible for Hitler (rather than Britain's Imperial example, racial theories, Great War and its catastrophic effects on Europe with the post-war settlement and Balance of Power policy.)

It is as if John Buchan returned from the grave to write a history of Europe and the Middle East as a kind of sequel to *Greenmantle*.

(Next month we examine some further aspects of the book)

Report

Max Blumenthal on
*"The Summer Camp Of Destruction":
Israeli High Schoolers assist
The Razing Of A Bedouin Town*

Not Lebensraum, Not The Hitler Youth

Al-Arakib, Israel—On July 26, Israeli police demolished 45 buildings in the unrecognized Bedouin village of al-Arakib, razing the entire village to the ground to make way for a Jewish National Fund forest. The destruction was part of a larger project to force the Bedouin community of the Negev away from their ancestral lands and into seven Indian reservation-style communities the

Israeli government has constructed for them. The land will then be open for Jewish settlers, including young couples in the army and those who may someday be evacuated from the West Bank after a peace treaty is signed. For now, the Israeli government intends to uproot as many villages as possible and erase them from the map by establishing "facts on the ground" in the form of JNF forests. (See video of of al-Arakib's demolition here).

One of the most troubling aspects of the destruction of al-Arakib was a report by CNN that the hundreds of Israeli riot police who stormed the village were accompanied by "busloads of cheering civilians". Who were these civilians and why didn't CNN or any outlet investigate further?

I traveled to al-Arakib yesterday with a delegation from Ta'ayush, an Israeli group that promotes a joint Arab-Jewish struggle against the occupation. The activists spent the day preparing games and activities for the village's traumatized children, helping the villagers replace their uprooted olive groves, and assisting in the reconstruction of their demolished homes. In a massive makeshift tent where many of al-Arakib's residents now sleep, I interviewed village leaders about the identity of the cheering civilians... What I discovered was more disturbing than I had imagined.

...Israeli high school students... appeared to have volunteered as members of the Israeli police civilian guard... Prior to the demolitions, the student volunteers were sent into the villagers' homes to extract their furniture and belongings. A number of villagers including Madyam told me the volunteers smashed windows and mirrors in their homes and defaced family photographs

with crude drawings. Then they lounged around on the furniture of al-Arakib residents in plain site of the owners. Finally, according to Matyam, the volunteers celebrated while bulldozers destroyed the homes.

"What we learned from the summer camp of destruction," [Arab Negev News publisher Ata Abu] Madyam remarked, "is that Israeli youth are not being educated on democracy, they are being raised on racism."...

The Israeli civilian guard, which incorporates 70,000 citizens including youth as young as 15 (about 15% of Israeli police volunteers are teenagers), is one of many programs designed to incorporate Israeli children into the state's military apparatus... The volunteers' behavior toward Bedouins, who are citizens of Israel and serve loyally in Israeli army combat units despite widespread racism, was strikingly reminiscent of the behavior of settler youth in Hebron who pelt Palestinian shopkeepers in the

old city with eggs, rocks and human waste. If there is a distinction between the two cases, it is that the Hebron settlers act as vigilantes while the teenagers of Israeli civilian guard vandalize Arab property as agents of the state.

The spectacle of Israeli youth helping destroy al-Arakib helps explain why 56% of Jewish Israeli high school students do not believe Arabs should be allowed to serve in the Knesset—why the next generation wants apartheid. Indeed, the widespread indoctrination of Israeli youth by the military apparatus is a central factor in Israel's authoritarian trend. It would be difficult for any adolescent boy to escape from an experience like al-Arakib, where adults in heroic warrior garb encourage him to participate in and gloat over acts of massive destruction, with even a trace of democratic values...

Full report and more photos at: <http://maxblumenthal.com/2010/07/the-summer-camp-of-destruction-israeli-high-schoolers-join-in-the-destruction-of-a-bedouin-town/>



Hard work, driving people out of their homes!

Here the Israeli volunteer youths lounge on the furniture they have brought out of a house. One of them is enjoying a snack!



Great fun looking through the possessions of others!

Lamarck In England:

The Rise And Fall Of Robert Edmond Grant

Introduction:

Darwin published his *Origin Of Species* in 1859. For more than fifty years before that evolutionary theory had been a controversial aspect of English scientific life (with religious, political and literary by-blows and spin-offs). From at least the 1830s it was clear that evolution's day was coming. What was unclear was just which of several theories would carry that day, and which social and political groups and which individuals would benefit from the victory.

At the same time the English working class was making its organizational debuts on the radical fringe of the Whig Party, to a large extent and not all to its advantage under the direct tutelage of that party. In the more independent phases of this making of itself the class adopted consciously more extreme versions of bourgeois secular and democratic ideas.

The pauper press which supported the Owenite and Chartist movements propagandized a materialism, not the least of which was a clearly evolutionary, frequently Lamarckist view of biological and geological questions.

In the *Oracle* (4 June, 1842) its editor William Chilton—

"...accused the scientific barons of sacrificing knowledge on the altar of religion to retain their socially privileged position-making science "the disgusting car of vice, which they help to drag through the mire of human ignorance". They were being treacherous to true science. Eminent naturalists, in league with the political masters

whose "interests {are} to keep us in this position," lacked the "honesty" to admit the materialist meaning and subversive implications of real science. "This is the unkindest cut of all; coming as it does, from those who should pour the balm of hope upon the despairing and wounded spirit; instead of which, "They smile, and murder us while they smile!"..." (Adrian Desmond, *Artisan Resistance And Evolution In Britain*, 1819-1848, Osiris, 2nd Series, Vol. 3 (1987), pp77-110).

The *Oracle*, *Investigator*, *Movement* and *Reasoner* were on the working class fringe of Whig politics, making propaganda from and for the evolutionary fringe of English science, which throughout the first half of the nineteenth century was taking its lead from the French Jean-Baptiste Lamarck.

Lamarckism

The immediate problem for Lamarck was the same that exercised the "spectrum" of respectable Christian scientists centred on the geologist Sir Charles Lyell and the mineralogist Reverend William Whewell which was considered in the first article of this series: how to account for the fossilised remains of animals and organisms which were known no longer to exist. The English Christian Scientists saw this problem of species apparently having ceased to exist as one of organic origins. Lamarck, living in the less cluttered intellectual atmosphere of Revolutionary and Napoleonic France saw the problem rather more clearly as one of organic extinction.

That is not to say that Lamarck's

France was any friendlier to evolutionary ideas than the England of Whewell and Lyell. Nor is it to say that Lamarck, for whom a belief in natural balance was paramount, believed that existing species died out, any more than he believed new species were continuously being created.

While English naturalists continued to argue that species found in the fossil record had been wiped out in planet-wide catastrophes (along the lines of Noah's Flood), or that God was in a cycle of continuous creation of new species, thirty years before the first edition of Lyell's *Principles Of Geology* established a new uniformitarian orthodoxy in place of that increasingly discredited catastrophism, Lamarck wrote:

"A universal upheaval which necessarily regularizes nothing... is a very convenient means for those naturalists who wish to explain everything and who do not take the trouble to observe and study the processes of nature" (*Sur les fossiles*, "Système des animaux sans vertèbres" (1801), p407. Quoted in *The Inspiration Of Lamarck's Belief In Evolution* by Richard W. Burkhardt, Jr., *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Autumn, 1972), pp413-438).

Lamarck's studied observation of the processes of nature, in which he came across the fossilised remains of the shells of marine organisms that differed from any currently existing led him to a theory of species mutability, evolution by any other name. He wrote:

"I agree that it is possible that among the fresh or marine shells one never finds shells perfectly similar to {these fossils}... I believe I know the reason for it. I am going to indicate it succinctly, and I hope that then it will be perceived that although many fossil shells are different from all the marine shells known, that in no way proves that the species of these shells are destroyed, but only that these species have changed in the course of time, and that presently they have different forms from those of the individuals whose fossil remains we find" (ibid, Lamarck pp408-409; Burkhardt, p429).

Lamarck explained his findings, not as catastrophe or continuous creation nor yet the constant bloodbath of Darwinism, but simply as the result of environmental changes which had caused changes in the habits of living things, giving rise to changes in their form and structure. Changes, mutability, evolution.

Lamarck's position that "It is not at all the form either of the body or its



The bulldozers
move in

parts that gives rise to habits or the way of life of animals, but, to the contrary, the habits, the way of life, and all the influential circumstances which have with time formed the body and parts of the animals" (ibid, Lamarck p17; Burkhardt, p428) was a statement of gradual, peaceful, evolution within a balance of nature. Darwin's later reconceptualization of the process as universal war and constant genocide was a typically English statement of a "balance" of unbalanced power.

Lamarck was truly, as Darwin was not, an antidote to teleological doctrines of the White Man's Preordained Rise To Civilization. He did not see war and genocide operating within nature as the motive force of progress producing at long last Pall Mall Man. He had few illusions on that score, acknowledging the only possible species extinctions to be those caused by man, writing—

"By his egoism too short-sighted for his own good, by his tendency to revel in all that is at his disposal, in short, by his lack of concern for the future and for his fellow man, man seems to work for the annihilation of his means of conservation and for the destruction of his own species. In destroying everywhere the large plants that protect the soil in order to secure things to satisfy his greediness of the moment, man rapidly brings about the sterility of the ground on which he lives, dries up the springs, and chases away the animals that once found their subsistence there. He causes large parts of the globe that were once very fertile and well populated in all respects to become dead, sterile, uninhabitable, and deserted. Neglecting always the words of experience, abandoning himself to his passions, he is perpetually at war with his own kind, destroying them everywhere and under all pretexts, so that one sees formerly great populations become more and more diminished. One could say that he is destined to exterminate himself, after having rendered the globe uninhabitable" (*Homme, Nouveau Dictionnaire d'histoire naturelle*, 15 (1817), 270, quoted in *Lamarck, Evolution, And The Politics Of Science* by Richard W. Burkhardt, Jr. *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Autumn, 1970), pp275-298).

Robert Edmond Grant

The leading light of English pre-Darwinian evolutionary theory was Robert Edmond Grant, who was a Scot. (For most modern historical purposes national distinctions within Great Britain are irrelevant, with Wales and Lowland

Scotland amounting to little more than Greater England (the embryo of global Greater Britain), and Highland Scotland by the beginning of the 19th century well on its way to being cleared of inconvenient Gaels, but respecting this particular it is worth mentioning that Grant was born and brought up in Edinburgh, for that city's long-standing continental connections may have influenced his awareness of and openness to French ideas.)

Travelling often to France, Grant became very friendly with Etienne Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, a colleague of Lamarck's who shared his views on species mutability but not his strict materialism. Grant picked up Lamarckism from Geoffroy without serious compromise to his own materialism.

Back in Edinburgh Grant taught the young Charles Darwin (who was studying medicine there in 1825 – 1827) and introduced him to the freethinking Plinian Society.

Adrian Desmond refers to:

"...a famous passage in his Autobiography [in which] Darwin recalled his amazement when Grant one day 'burst forth in high admiration of Lamarck'..." (Robert E. Grant: *The Social Predicament Of A Pre-Darwinian Transmutationist*, *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Summer, 1984), pp189-223).

Despite his evolutionary views and materialism, in 1827 Grant was appointed to the Chair of Zoology at the new Benthamite University College London, which had been founded only a year before to provide (with Edinburgh and a few others) a more open alternative to Oxford and Cambridge (*see note 1, On Religious Tests).

When Grant joined it, the new University College London did not have a Charter and so could not grant degrees. It combined with the Anglican King's College London as the University of London and as such petitioned for a Charter in 1834. This was granted in 1836. All of which is only to say that from 1827 on Grant had his work cut out.

Thus—

"Grant's fortunes were inextricably linked to those of the new university at a time of intense political jockeying, and it is impossible to understand him without appreciating this turbulent background. We must also remember that he was attempting to demarcate his subjects—comparative anatomy and zoology—that is, to forge disciplines independent of both anatomy

and natural history. He fashioned them along Continental lines, to which end he traveled to Paris almost yearly to learn new techniques. He had to found a museum single-handed, prepare three lecture courses almost from scratch, and provide adequate accompanying dissections; and all this despite a penalizing financial system. By its very nature the "joint-stock" university had to show a profit, which was returned to the shareholders. The professors had therefore to split their earnings (derived from fees) with the proprietors. Grant also had to supply and pay for his own dissection material, although the council did cover the cost of museum specimens (often belatedly). As a result, many of the extant letters from Grant to Horner (from 1828 to 1831) are pleas for more space, more specimens, and more money" (ibid).

But, for the moment, he managed. Indeed his star was rising.

Between 1829 and 1833 he was elected to the Councils of the Linnean, Geological and Zoological Societies. In 1836 he became a Fellow of the Royal Society. In 1837 he succeeded Peter Mark Roget as Fullerian Professor of Physiology at the Royal Institution. From which high point it was a long way down.

Richard Owen

In the 1820s Grant met and became friendly with the anatomist Richard Owen. They presumably were still friendly in 1831 when he introduced Owen to Georges (later, Baron) Cuvier, French naturalist and zoologist, a geological catastrophist and very much an opponent of Lamarck.

By 1834 Owen had determined to oppose Lamarckism in England and so he set himself to destroy Grant. His first move was to attack Grant's position in the Zoological Society.

According to Desmond:

"Owen was elected to the council in March 1832, Grant a year later. Both played a prominent part in the administration of the society. For example, they worked together on the publication and museum committees. Grant was particularly active..."

"...Owen supported what the *Lancet* called 'a malignant and odious junto,' which determined to oust Grant at the elections in April 1835. The ostensible reasons for the junto's move are not clear, but possibly pertained to disputes on the management of the institution. Intrigue was rife, and the fellows were split. A confused month of intense lobbying ended with the junto's successful removal of Grant by a general vote. He was the only practic-

ing scientist to be balloted out, and it was the more iniquitous in Wakley's eyes because Grant had become the 'main pillar in the institution'. Reserved by nature, Grant retired quietly from the society, refusing to have anything more to do with it. In so doing he lost a major platform and possibly a potential source of funding; more important, he lost access to valuable dissection material. In contrast, Owen went from strength to strength, and in 1840 was finally given sole rights 'to dissect when- ever and whatever he liked' at the Zoological Gardens. This was the first sign that Grant's institutional power base was shrinking, and with it his ability to research and publish effectively" (ibid).

Owen's campaign against Lamarckism brought him recognition and financial rewards from the Anglican gentlemen of science (led by Revd. William Whewell whose natural theology featured in the first part of this series), who had very quickly gained control of The British Association for the Advancement of Science (founded in 1831). In 1838 the Association awarded him £200 to draw up a report on British fossil reptiles. In 1841 they gave him another £250 for publication of the illustrations of the completed report. Those are very large sums of money.

In 1842 £300 of Civil List funds was put aside for scientific purposes. £200 of that went to Richard Owen.

A biographical sketch of Grant published in Thomas Wakley's *Lancet* in 1850 spoke of the sequel as being his "lapse into absolute penury" (quoted ibid).

This was not entirely due to Grant's Lamarckism giving rise to Owen's vendetta. More directly at fault were the inadequate financial arrangements of the University, which left him reliant on such student fees as he could raise, out of which he had to pay the University 10%. Then, rather than take a College of Physicians examination to practice in London, Grant, who was already a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, preferred to join Wakley in working for a thorough-going reform of the medical profession (see Note 2: Wakley and the *Lancet*).

In 1841 "...a box of fossils from Tasmania destined for Grant in 1841 somehow became relabelled and ended up with Owen at Lincoln's Inn. Despite protestations from Owen, Grant satisfactorily proved that a switch had occurred" (Note 68, *Richard Owen's Reaction To Transmutation In The 1830's*, Adrian Desmond, *The British Journal for the History of*

Science, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Mar., 1985), pp25-50).

What Owen was doing was making it impossible for Grant to continue the career that was at the heart of a very broadly considered politics of radical reform, politics that the Tory Owen detested. And Grant's former pupil, Charles Darwin, did his little best to assist Owen in his campaign.

Darwin

Darwin had returned from his travels on board the *Beagle* in October 1836. At the end of the month he met Sir Charles Lyell whose *Principles Of Geology* he read while abroad. That night Lyell introduced him to Richard Owen and Owen's colleague on the Zoological Society, his fellow Tory, William Broderip who had helped him (and the Peelite William Buckland) organise Grant's exclusion from the Society.

Shortly after this Darwin arranged for Owen to look over and catalogue some of the many animal specimens and fossil bones he had brought back with him from South America.

At about the same time Grant, who years before had introduced Darwin to the study of corals offered to work up the polyps which Darwin had brought back, a specimen haul which would have given Grant's career a much-needed boost. Darwin, in the words of Desmond and Moore "rebuffed him", because "He hated loudmouthed radicalism" (Adrian Desmond & James Moore, *Darwin*, Penguin Books, 1992, p203).

Darwin was himself too busy to work on corals. He tried to interest his brother Erasmus, who was also too busy. The polyp specimens rotted. But Darwin's relationships with the leading anti-evolutionists Lyell, Owen, Sedgwick and Whewell flourished.

Well then, root and branch of Grant's radicalism was his loudmouthed transmutationism. Within a few months of seconding Owen's campaign against Grant, in July 1837, Darwin began the first of his own transmutationist notebooks that would become *Origin Of Species* and *Descent Of Man*. Quietly, very quietly. Secretly. Well aware of the politics of his science. Determined to produce just such science as the politics required.

To be continued.

Note 1: On Religious Tests. In 1827, under the 1662 Act of Uniformity, which was still in force, all Professors and Readers and all College Heads, Tutors and Fellows at the Oxbridge colleges were obliged to 'conform to the liturgy of the

Church of England', and students on graduation were required to subscribe to the 39 Articles.

From 1834 there was intense controversy over attempts to remove the Anglican subscription tests at Oxbridge, with the future Cardinal John Henry Newman, the future Liberal Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone, and the ancient mariner Samuel Taylor Coleridge in a determined and successful opposition to any relaxation whatsoever in the measures. That year a Bill to admit Dissenters to Oxford and Cambridge passed the Commons but was killed off in the Lords.

The Oxford and Cambridge University Acts of 1854 and 1856 then allowed non-Anglicans to take first degrees at Oxford and Cambridge Colleges. In 1871 the religious tests were abolished.

Note 2: Thomas Wakley and *The Lancet*.

Thomas Wakley had established the crusading medical journal *The Lancet* in 1823 as a vehicle for general practitioners' opposition to the monopoly held by Royal College Fellows. It was a broadly based magazine, which for a while had William Cobbett on its Editorial Board, and in the 1830s and 40s had a circulation of more than 4,000. Wakley was elected in 1835 as radical MP for Finsbury, which he represented for 22 years.

On 14 September, 2001, the former Vice-Chancellor of the Queen's University Belfast delivered the John Snow Lecture at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland. A transcript was published the following year as *John Snow, Thomas Wakley, And The Lancet*. And so I quote:

"Quackery, chicanery, nepotism and charlatanism were Wakley's ultimate enemies, an unreformed and unregulated profession which allowed them were his immediate ones, and this put him on a more or less permanent collision course with the *status quo* and the medical corporations and their atavistic leaders, and he was forever railing against 'The dull, feeble exclusiveness of the Royal College of Physicians, the tyranny and ineptitude of the Royal College of Surgeons, and the pettifogging malice and rapacity and imbecility of the Society of Apothecaries, whose Warden and Court he forever referred to as 'the old hags of Rhubarb Hall!' The medical corporations were to him an abscess on the body of the profession which had to be incised..."

As MP Wakley was an opponent of the Malthusian Poor Law and a spokesman Chartist causes.

In *The Lancet* in 1846 he described Robert Edmond Grant as "at once the most eloquent, the most accomplished, the most self-sacrificing, and the most unrewarded man in the profession". (Desmond, op. cit.).



Darwin's Political Economy: *Red In Tooth And Claw*

There is a tendency among some Darwinists to attempt to draw a distinction between the 'good' doctrine of the master which they are happy to espouse and a "Social" Darwinism which they claim is a perverse, illegitimate, adaptation of the original. A quite usual way of proceeding is for them to deny that Darwin ever applied his theories to human societies or licensed others who were inclined to do so.

Thus, in his *The Blind Watchman*, the daring Richard Dawkins (usually up for any bit of a controversy, but perhaps he had his selfish genes on backwards that day) has this, and this only, to say about Social Darwinism...

"...others confuse Darwinism with Social Darwinism, which has racist and other disagreeable overtones" (Penguin, 1991, p250).

In *Ever Since Darwin, Reflections In Natural History*, Stephen Jay Gould wrote:

"This fallacious equation of organic evolution with progress continues to have unfortunate consequences. Historically, it engendered the abuses of Social Darwinism (which Darwin himself held in such suspicion)..." (Penguin, 1990, p. 38).

This without citing or quoting any evidence of Darwin ever expressing any such suspicion of the likes of his cousin Sir Francis Galton who pioneered the "Social" Darwinist science of Eugenics. In fact Darwin had nothing but praise for Galton whose eugenic project he endorsed (expressing only a slight misgiving about the current state of politics being able to accommodate eugenicist policies). It was Galton who took the initiative upon Darwin's death that led to his glorious funeral at Westminster Abbey.

Another strategy is to claim that at least Darwin himself never attempted to apply his theory of natural selection to social policy.

One piece of evidence which comes in handy for Darwinists who take this line is Darwin's response to Marx sending him a copy of the first volume of *Capital* (this was part of a kind of bulk mailing, on the same day Marx sent a copy to Herbert Spencer).

About four months later, on October 1st 1873, Darwin replied:

"I thank you for the honour which you have done me by sending me your great work on Capital; & I heartily wish that I was more worthy to receive it, by understanding more of the deep & important subject of political Economy. Though our studies have been so different, I believe that we both Earnestly desire the extension of knowledge, & that this in the long run is sure to add to the happiness of Mankind."

Darwin there claims an ignorance of political economy, which would be a good reason for him never seeking social applications of his theory. But really its an odd claim given his account of the circumstances in which the theory of natural selection (the survival of the fittest, as he followed Spencer in calling it) first occurred to him.

According to himself his theory of natural selection was a projection into the natural world of a scientific law which was first discovered in the very human world of political economy.

Looking back in his *Autobiography*, Darwin wrote:

"In October 1838, that is, fifteen months after I had begun my systematic enquiry, I happened to read for amusement *Malthus on Population*, and being well prepared to appreciate the struggle for existence which everywhere goes on from long-continued observation of the habits of animals and plants, it at once struck me that under these circumstances favourable variations would tend to be preserved, and unfavourable ones to be destroyed. The result of this would be the formation of new species. Here then I had at last got a theory by which to work...."

In the first draft of the *Origin of Species* (his 1844 *Essay*) Darwin had written that his theory of evolution "...is the doctrine of Malthus applied in most cases with ten-fold force".

Parson Malthus's truly horrible book, which no-one in his right mind would ever read for amusement, is more properly called the *Essay on the Principle of Population*. It was first published in 1798 and went through 6 editions in the Parson's lifetime. Briefly stated the principle of population is simply that population, if unchecked, increases at a geometric rate while food supply increases at only an arithmetic rate.

Thus the poor are always with us and always increasing. Thankfully as they increase so they starve, fall ill and die. No matter what measures are taken to ease the sufferings of the poor, their suffering must inevitably continue for the food supply which only increases arithmetically can never catch up with the population which is forever galloping away at a geometric rate of knots.

Chapter 3 of the *Origin of Species* makes really amusing science of this principle of population:

"A struggle for existence inevitably follows from the high rate at which all organic beings tend to increase. Every being, which during its natural lifetime produces several eggs or seeds, must suffer destruction during some period of its life, and during some season or occasional year, otherwise, on the principle of geometrical increase, its numbers would quickly become so inordinately great that no country could support the product. Hence, as more individuals are produced than can possibly survive, there must in every case be a struggle for existence, either one individual with another of the same species, or with the individuals of distinct species, or with the physical conditions of life. It is the doctrine of Malthus applied with manifold force to the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms: for in this case there can be no artificial increase of food, and no prudential restraint from marriage. Although some species may be now increasing, more or less rapidly, in numbers, all cannot do so, for the world would not hold them...and so on and so on..." (Penguin edition, 1974, pp. 116-117).

And so having made natural science out of political economy Darwin continued to hold by the political economy. He was still holding by that Malthusian political economy just a year before Marx sent him a complimentary copy of *Capital* and he replied denying that he knew enough of the subject to appreciate the gift.

What follows is taken from Richard Weikart's article *A Recently Discovered Darwin Letter on Social Darwinism* which was published in *Isis* (the journal of The History of Science Society) in 1995 (no. 86, pp. 609-611):

"Heinrich Fick was a law professor at the University of Zurich who believed that Darwin's theory could be fruitfully applied to legislation. On 7 March 1872 he delivered a speech in Zurich, "Ueber den Einfluss der Naturwissenschaft auf Das Recht" ("On the Influence of Natural Science on Law"), which he published in the same year in *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*. He sent Darwin a copy

of the essay, in which he argued that the military policies of most European countries were detrimental to their national health and vigor. Requiring the strong young men to serve in the military while exempting the weak, he insisted, would grant a selective advantage to the weaker members in the human struggle for existence. They could marry earlier and would avoid death in battle. He suggested that the government place some restrictions on marriage for those ineligible for military service. Further, he used Darwinism to oppose attempts to create socio-economic equality, for this too would benefit the weak and lead to degeneration.

"The following is Darwin's full response:

July 26 {1872}
Down
Beckenham, Kent

Dear Sir

I am very much obliged for your kindness in having sent me your essay, which I have read with very great interest. Your view of the daughters of short-lived parents inheriting property at an early age, and thus getting married with its consequences, is an original and quite new idea to me.—So would have been what you say about soldiers, had I not read an article published about a year ago by a German (name forgotten just at present) who takes nearly the same view with yours, and thus accounts for great military nations having had a short existence.

I much wish that you would sometimes take occasion to discuss an allied point, if it holds good on the continent,—namely the rule insisted on by all our Trades-Unions, that all workmen,—the good and bad, the strong and weak,—should all work for the same number of hours and receive the same wages. The unions are also opposed to piece-work,—in short to all competition. I fear the Cooperative Societies, which many look at as the main hope for the future, likewise exclude competition. This seems to me a great evil for the future progress of mankind.—Nevertheless under any system, temperate and frugal workmen will have an advantage and leave more offspring than the drunken and reckless.—

With my best thanks for the interest which I have received from your Essay, and with my respect, I remain, Dear Sir

Yours faithfully
Ch. Darwin

"Darwin's response to Fick demonstrates conclusively that Darwin was not averse to making social and economic applications of his theory. He clearly linked economic success with selective fitness and thought his theory supported individualist economic competition. "



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Stop Supermarkets profiting from the Occupation

Under international law, Israel's settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are illegal. By selling settlement produce, supermarkets are complicit in their illegal activity and profiting from Palestinian suffering. We need to stop them. Act now to tell the CEOs of Sainsbury's, Tesco, Morrisons, Waitrose and Asda to stop selling settlement produce in their stores. Take action at www.waronwant.org/stopsupermarketsprofitingfromtheoccupation.

Wilson John Haire

Clontonacally

Clontonacally is a poem from 1993 that I have reworked. Clontonacally Public Elementary School, Carryduff, County Down, opened in 1938. It was a Protestant school where sectarianism was dealt with severely by headmaster Alexander Tombe and his staff. Other Protestant schools in Down promoted it by having the Union Jack waved through the classrooms each morning and the taking an oath to the monarchy. Clontonacally had no pictures up of monarchs (nor any mention of them) and had no Union Jack on display. They had religious studies in the mornings but Catholic children were excused this by being allowed to start school at 10 am instead of 9.30 am. The local Presbyterian clergyman made one visit a year. Though his vicarage was beside the school, he was not encouraged to pop in when he felt like it. Out of 82 pupils there were about 12 Catholics. The area was notoriously sectarian with attacks on Catholic homes, including my own, but the headmaster Alexander Tombe thrashed it out of the school. He was successful in turning around some of his more sectarian pupils. His attitude saved me from loathing Protestantism by knowing that it didn't have to be like this. A tough Victorian flogger, his heavy hand never blinded me to his humane side. I was no angel but a fist-fighter and a saboteur. He thrashed all with equality.

Red-bricked, bang in the middle of green fields,
its steam radiators a wonderment,
shuts out the elements, the vehemence,
Clontonacally its humans it shields.
A miracle in Nineteen Thirty-Eight.
Public Elementary but conceived
of architecture humane, it relieved
those of a persuasion that created hate.
A roll of eighty-two, rich farmers' sons
to the rural poor, gym-slips and patent
leather shoes, plaits, the taste of Paris buns,
collars and ties, blue ointment, and cretonne,
spit-through jerseys, shaven heads, the shunned,
cut-down wellingtons, war not so latent.

2

The breathy smell, rancid lard on stale bread,
sweet, those who constructed the meccano-set.
Cut-sticks, hay-rope bows, the dead feral cat,
she was vengeance for the sneering things said.
Watching teacher eat her Hovis sandwich,
aromatic smell above the chalk and ink,
always a half left, who will get the wink,
daughter of the tinkers the dirty witch.
Headmaster said Sadie Thompson had died.
Redder platter faces of the farmer's sons,
pale faces of poor, emotions can't hide,
the fear of scarlet-fever from the scum,
rich kid's hankies, poor kid's sleeves, as they cried.
Invalid Sadie they bullied for fun.

3

Still the farthing, the silver three-pence-piece.
The shell-shocked from World War One, sometimes drunk,
volunteers for the next one, though pre-shrunk,
wants another bite at the bloody feast.
A hundred million dead from World War Two.
Now I stand before these gates, rusting, chained,

wondering through world war and school what was gained.
Sectarianism still sticks like glue.
Padlocked against all but decay, keys lost.
A sudden wind sweeps through the cedar trees,
from the roof the hatchet of a blue note tossed.
The crows balance as clowns before they flee.
The sea of black tarmacadam embossed
by blind dandelion spore in its spree.

4

These are the plots I 'Dig-For-Victory.'
Mr. Tombe plants the apple-tree sapling;
the schoolboys pretend to applaud happily.
Better do, he carries a stick of hickory.
Mina, out of sewing class, is punished,
sent down to dig the earth with these rough boys,
they throw sods of earth, make nanny-goat noise,
grabs a boy, knocks him down, the grass burnished,
now a many-limbed monster and snapping,
roll over the sapling and hear a crack.
Tombe lifts them by the neck as if rattling.
The empty classroom, awaiting a whack.
Anger cooling but courage not lacking,
they sit thinking and plotting, back-to-back.

5

The sun slowly dances on the ceiling,
the hands of the clock races towards three.
Mina, at the window, decides to flee.
Escape two deer leaping high and reeling,
down the narrow road they skip to freedom,
followed by the caretaker of the school,
old and slow and loyal, and a prize fool.
Then on to a deep dry ditch, their fiefdom.
Touching of hair, soft as a duckling's down.
The blood surges, the heart leaps, and breathless.
A new emotion invades without a sound.
Waiting for punishment, growing restless.
Mr. Tombe arrives with tae and frowns,
six lashes, but joy lives, their love deathless.

6

Mr. Alexander Tombe, headmaster,
balding and ragged, itching, a hen in moult.
He gave sectarianisms a jolt.
No John Knox, no John Calvin in plaster.
He damned the bingeing gargoyles for a while.
No unshaven pope hung purple in death.
No Orange sash, nor flute screams out of breath.
No lambeg drum thundered to pour out bile.
Presbyterianism in silence
without its red, white and blue dressing,
its union jack, its slogans, its violence.
A van Gogh in the plots is harassing,
an autumnal equinox brings pestilence.
The cedars shake their massive heads in distress.

13th March, 2010

"As a Nationalist, I do not regard as
entirely palatable the idea that forever and
a day Ireland's voice should be excluded
from the councils of an empire which the
genius and valour of her sons have done
so much to build up and of which she is to
remain"

—John Redmond, 1886

Nick Folley

The Irish Times New Anthem

Back in 1996 an absorbing and entertaining book entitled *Culture Shock!—Ireland* appeared, penned by one Patricia Levy. It was, I thought, quite an accurate snapshot of Ireland at the time. I recommended it to foreign friends who had begun to move here as the economy began to grow and jobs attracted people from abroad.

On leafing through it again recently I was struck by just how much had changed. It seemed to describe more an Ireland of the 80s and early 90s than an Ireland at the dawn of a new millennium. We have had 15 years of seismic cultural change. Endless Tribunals have scratched the surface of the corruption in this country, opening some people's eyes to the dirty unpatriotic side of politics. The Catholic Church has fallen from grace thanks to clerical abuse. An inflow of money after voting the 'right' way in the Maastricht Treaty and Eurozone has bred our own versions of Gordon Gecko, our own belated version of the 1980s 'greed is good' creed.

But alongside these 'organic' changes there have been other, more deliberate attempts to remould the national identity into something else. There has even been a remarkable amount of openness about this. The Reform Movement have made it their stated aim, though the Ireland they would like to mould resembles more the old, British Commonwealth version than any new vision. We have been assailed by calls for Ireland to 'commemorate and honour' its participation in British Imperial wars and other ventures—a direct contradiction of our own Republican and egalitarian foundations. Even our own national representatives—who, one would have thought, could be expected to promote the Republican ideals on which this state is based—have added their voices to the clamour.

Most recently Michael McDowell has suggested that July 12th be made a national holiday. The only way in which McDowell could make such a call is if Ireland's own national holidays—St. Patrick's Day—or more important from a political perspective, the Easter 1916

Commemoration—meant little or nothing to him. McDowell and others have quoted the 1916 Proclamation grotesquely out of context to support their call; referring to the paragraph about "*cherishing all the nation's children equally*" and the orange stripe on our flag.

In reply to this it must be said, firstly, that Protestantism does not equate with Orangeism and only a minority of Protestants in this country are Orangemen. Secondly, the nature of Orangeism is inimical to the inclusive Republicanism this part of the 1916 Proclamation refers to. Orangeism is about bigotry and exclusion and these cannot be 'cherished' without some of the other nation's children suffering as a result. Perhaps someday, when Orangeism has disappeared from our political landscape as an ideology, we can enjoy the pageantry of a July 12th parade, but that's a story for another day.

So it is hardly surprising that there should also be attempts to rewrite our National Anthem—the song that is supposed to espouse the *esprit de corps* of a nation. The most recent appeared in the *Irish Times* of March 19th this year. The paper explained proudly—

"A new national anthem unveiled by *The Irish Times* on Tuesday quickly became a radio hit, capturing the modern mood in a way *Amhrán na bhFiann* doesn't quite manage"

While I didn't hear it on any radio station I listened to, I was able to hear it via a link on one of the *Irish Times* webpages. It goes something like this—

"Ireland, Ireland!"

by The Duckworth Lewis Method

"Ireland, Ireland damp sod of the earth
Lost on the surf of the north Atlantic
Ireland, Ireland, mountains and mist
Vodka and chips, it's so romantic
Joyce and Heaney, Beckett and Wilde.
Bill O'Herlihy, Dunphy and Giles
Evans Hewson, Mullen and Clayton,
Westlife and Jedward, the pride of our
nation!"

Ireland, Ireland, once we were poor
Then we were wealthy, now we are poor

again

Cows and horses, donkeys and sheep,
Munster and Leinster, Connacht and

Chinese, Polish, Africans too
Doing the jobs we don't want to do
An Irish stew, a nation of nations
Working for peanuts in petrol stations
Ireland, Ireland you are the best
Place to the west of Wales and Scotland
Sometimes it's heaven, sometimes it's
hell
But I'd rather be Irish than anything
else!"

Perhaps the *Irish Times* is hoping that life will imitate art and that their new anthem will remould Ireland as well as reflect it. This alternative 'Irish Anthem' sung by The Duckworth Lewis Method is catchy and no doubt tongue-in-cheek but also underlines all that is wrong with such proposals.

Most national anthems were composed in the 19th-century during a phase of nation-building, Ireland's *Amhrán na bhFiann*—composed by Peadar Kearney in 1907—being relatively young by international standards. So the idea that it's outdated is relative too—it is certainly more up to date than the early 18th-century 'God Save the Queen'.

Reference to passing fads like Jedwards is guaranteed to ensure *Ireland! Ireland!* will sound dated in a year or two. Anthems were composed with the aim of lending a certain gravitas to the new nation-states. *Ireland! Ireland!* has more in common with Monty Python or Noel Coward novelty tunes—an Englishman's concept of an Irish Anthem. I love Monty Python, but not as my country's National Anthem. If we don't take ourselves seriously, we can be sure no one else will either. Indeed part of what's currently wrong with this country can be traced to its ruling class and many of it populace treating it as a Mickey Mouse country, a personal fiefdom to be run for their own benefit rather than a serious state with the potential to be a model society. What needs to change is this attitude, not our anthem.

We could do worse than take a leaf out of Italy's book—visitors to the Vittorio Emanuele Monument and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in piazza Venezia in Rome may be surprised to see the police blow their whistles and wag fingers indignantly at tourists who act disrespectfully or noisily on this national monument.

