

# Church & State

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*A Pluralist Review Of Irish Culture*

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Historic Bandon: see page 7

Morality & Theocracy In the Middle East

Knights Of Columbanus In The GPO

The Non-Conformist Conscience, US Style

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No. 85

Summer 2006

Price: Euro 2 / £1.50

# Morality And Theocracy In The Middle East

Senator Mansergh has condemned Iran as a theocracy, and on that ground he has justified the Euro-American determination to keep it defenceless. The only effective weapon of defence in the post-1945 (or 1948) world is the nuclear bomb with a delivery system.

The classification of Iran as a theocracy is highly questionable. The present state has its origin in an uprising of the Iranian people against the autocracy of the Shah. With the fall of the Shah it ceased to be a bastion of Western power in the Middle East. It now has government which is representative of the general culture of society. That culture is Islamic.

Saudi Arabia is an Islamic theocracy. It is governed by a ruling family chosen by Allah. The Saudi theocracy does not submit itself to election by the people. But, since it is aligned with the West, the last thing the West wants is to democratise it. The Saudi theocracy is an agent of Western dominance in the Middle East, which a democracy would not be likely to be. The Saudi regime is therefore not described as a theocracy. Only states which are marked down for destruction by Ameranglia and the EU are described as theocracies. The term is therefore devoid of objective content in the Western media.

Israel too is a theocracy. The Jewish right to take control of Palestine rests on a Covenant which the Jewish God made with Moses thousands of years ago. Britain in 1917 decided to give effect to that Covenant for its own Imperial purposes. Then both the League of Nations and the United Nations adopted the substance of the Mosaic Covenant in breach of the spirit of their own man-made Covenant.

Senator Mansergh says: "*The state of Israel was created by the international community*" (Irish Times, 17.12.05).

The UN vote which on 29th November 1947 authorised the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine was in practice a vote authorising the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians from Palestine. All of the Middle Eastern states voted against the project: Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, as well as Greece and Cuba.

34 states voted for it, including the European states of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Iceland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden. Also in support were the British Dominions: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and S. Africa, though Britain itself abstained. The vote in favour was bulked out by the client states of the USA and the USSR.

Ireland was excluded from the United Nations at the time, on account of its wartime neutrality, but there can be little doubt that De Valera—who opposed partition on principle—would have voted against. What the Coalition would have

done is more unclear.

There were ten abstentions, including Britain, Yugoslavia, China (under Chiang kai Shek a client of the US), and Ethiopia; and also six Latin American states which defied US pressure.

Britain was the governing power in Palestine from 1918 to 1947. It opened the region to Jewish immigration in 1919 and worked with the Jewish Agency to establish the infrastructure of the Jewish State and to marginalise the Palestinian majority. When preparing in 1939 for its second war with Germany, it attempted to abort the Jewish colonisation in order to mend fences with the Arab Governments. But, although the Jewish settlements were still far short of what was required for a Jewish State, they had still become too large and too well armed for Britain to handle.

In 1945 an unrestrained Jewish terrorist offensive was launched against the British administration. The British response was the greatest washing of hands in history, putting Pontius Pilate in the shade. It abdicated responsibility for carrying through what it had begun in 1917 and referred the matter to the United Nations. And then, as a Permanent Member, it did not allow the Security Council to deal with it. That is how it came to be dealt with by the General Assembly—the only serious matter the General Assembly was ever allowed to deal with.

But the General Assembly is only a talking-shop. It has no Executive power. Executive power was deliberately made the monopoly of the Security Council when the UN was established. The General Assembly could not control the implementation of its motion to establish a Jewish State, and Britain prevented the Security Council from doing so.

The Jewish population of Palestine was still very much a minority in 1947, despite a quarter of a century of extensive immigration. The General Assembly therefore decided to divide the region into two states, allocating more than half of the territory to the Jews, who were considerably less than half of the total population. And there was a bare majority of Jews in the territory awarded for the Jewish State.

(The UN resolution also laid down that the strategic area of Jerusalem be under international control and provided for a common market between the two proposed States.)

A Jewish State could not be constructed with any semblance of democratic process in a territory where the native population was still about 48% of the whole. The Jewish nationalists therefore, when given the green light by the General Assembly motion, set about an ethnic cleansing of their territory. The General Assembly did nothing to hinder them. Nor did the British administration in its remaining six months. (The UN vote authorising the establishment of a Jewish State was in November 1947: the British administration withdrew from Palestine in May 1948.) And then the Jewish nationalists enlarged their territory by conquering half of the remainder of Palestine, including part of the area the UN intended to be under international control.

The pre-1967 borders, which are now taken to be the legitimate borders of the Jewish State, are not the borders set by the General Assembly motion in 1947.

The Jewish claim to Palestine never limited itself to the territory awarded by the UN in 1947, or to the territory conquered in 1948, or even to the territory occupied in 1967. The land God gave to Moses extended across the Jordan.

The Palestinians, systematically disabled by a generation of

British rule, could not defend themselves against the Jewish expansion of 1948. But a couple of Arab states intervened and stopped the Jewish conquest at Ceasefire lines beyond the territory specified as Jewish in the UN resolution.

In 1956 Israel broke out of those Ceasefire lines under terms of a conspiracy with Britain and France to attack Egypt, but was forced to retire, along with Britain, under an ultimatum from the United States. Under the doctrine of the aggressor pays, it should have been punished by having to withdraw from territories it had illegally occupied in 1948. But it was not. Indeed, eleven years later, it occupied the whole of Palestine west of the Jordan in what it claimed was a “pre-emptive war”.

The ‘international community’, as Senator Mansergh puts it, awarded part of Palestine to the Jews for a Jewish State, and stood idly by while it took the rest. The conquest and ethnic cleansing of 1948 are now accepted *de facto* as legitimate by the UN, even though we are told unceasingly that the basic purpose of the UN was to ensure that such things would never again be legitimate. And resistance to Jewish conquest by the Palestinians is held to be illegitimate by the UN, and the USA and EU declare it to be a form of terrorism which endangers the world.

What is morality in this context?

Leaving God aside, the moral authority that gave Palestine to the Jews included Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Panama, Paraguay, Nicaragua, Peru, the Philippines, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Even if they had not been clients of the United States, acting under pressure from Washington, where would they have got the moral authority to impose a colonial settlement on the other side of the world, at the expense of the inhabitants, and against the will of all the Governments of the region? And why should the victims recognise that assertion of moral authority as valid?

It was said in 1947 that President Truman backed the formation of the Jewish State in order to get the New York Jews off his back. But a generation later the US came to see Jewish nationalist dominance in the Middle East as vital to its interests.

There is overwhelming physical force on the side of Israel. Why debase the idea of morality by even mentioning that miserable UN resolution, which was never implemented, and whose terms were broken on the Jewish side within a month, and have long since been forgotten.

The Jewish State was, and remains, a colonising project involving conquest, terror and ethnic cleansing. It cannot end until the victim population is either exterminated or utterly broken in spirit. There is a realistic maxim that whoever wills the end wills the means. Britain set the thing in motion, and Churchill and his colleagues knew what it implied. And the Governments who voted for it in 1947 also knew what it implied. And the Jewish nationalists ever since have only been doing what the Great Powers gave them permission to do. Those Great Powers were not simpletons who thought it could be done nicely.

The strongest will within the early stages of the Jewish conquest was Jabotinsky’s. He described it frankly as a conquest in which the native population would have to be broken. Public relations considerations in the early stages required that Jabotinsky should be almost disowned, but as

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**Church & State:**

<http://www.watholbooks.org/magazines/cands/index.php>

**The Heresiarch:**

<http://heresiarch.org>

**Athol Books:**

<http://www.atholbooks.org>

**Aubane Historical Society**

<http://aubane.org>

There is a great deal of interesting reading on each and all of them. Go surf and see!

### **Church & State**

**Editor: Pat Maloney**

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Euro 10 (Sterling £7.50) for 4 issues from

**P. Maloney,  
C/O Shandon St. P.O., Cork City.**

All Correspondence should be sent to this address.

Jewish power grew stronger his view was increasingly acknowledged.

Sharon declared that it was his intention to punish the Palestinians until they beg for mercy. That is what his successor, Olmert, is doing as we write—though the helpless Palestinians gain a kind of victory by refusing to beg.

Sharon formed a new Party before his collapse and Olmert won an election with it. The name of the Party, *Kadema*, is an explicit recognition of Jabotinsky as the true prophet of Israel.

\*

Anthony Marecco, the last legal survival of the Nuremberg Trials of 1947, died recently. An *Irish Times* obituary says:

“He believed devoutly in the conventions established at Nuremberg that the conspiracy or common plan to make aggressive war was a criminal offence. Under this convention, he said, not only Saddam Hussein, but arguably also British prime minister Tony Blair and US president George W. Bush could be tried in the international Court at the Hague” (6 June).

The Nuremberg Trials were show trials. They were held under specially invented laws that were promptly set aside once the Germans had been punished. International Law was decreed by the Great Powers to consist of decisions of the Security Council of the United Nations, and the Security Council was prohibited from finding any of its five Permanent Members to be in breach of it.

The UN is for some a pleasant illusion. But it is an illusion which occupies the space which genuine international law and justice should occupy. The devout can believe in it. But we prefer to look the unpleasant reality in the face.

Kadima was also the name of the Zionist publishing house he had founded with a group of friends in Odessa in 1904, which marked the beginning of Zionist activity throughout Russia. When, at the end of last year, Ariel Sharon left Likud to form a new party of the center-right, Kadima, a move widely welcomed as creating a fresh middle ground in Israeli politics, he was therefore paying the profoundest tribute to Jabotinsky—Likud’s forefather, founder of militant Revisionist Zionism, visionary of the Jewish radical right.

After Theodor Herzl and David Ben-Gurion, Jabotinsky is perhaps the most renowned figure in Zionist history, although he remains more controversial. For the Labor Zionist founders of the State of Israel, he was a pariah. He split with the Zionist Organization on the issue of Jewish self-defense (he was imprisoned by the British in 1920 for possession of firearms and for provoking disorder) and of armed struggle against the British in Palestine. He had also proclaimed that the goal of Zionism was the creation of a Jewish state, at a time when Zionist leaders preferred to keep quiet about their aims. “*I, too, am for a Jewish state*”, one of his closest collaborators commented, “*but I am against using the words*”. Jabotinsky was ostracized for speaking the truth. Because he recognized Arab national aspirations as legitimate, he had no interest in denying that the Zionist struggle would be violent. According to Jabotinsky, a group of Arabs approached him in 1926: “*You are the only one among the Zionists who has no intention of fooling us*”, Egyptian intellectual Mahmoud Azmi is reported as having thanked him for not disguising the true nature of his aims.

(The Nation 26th June 2006)

To read the rest of this fascinating essay, go to <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20060626/rose>

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## Report

Extract from article  
by Jacqueline Rose

### The Zionist Imagination

In 1917, after the British conquest of Palestine, the Jewish Battalion, which Vladimir Jabotinsky had campaigned for since the outbreak of World War I and which had participated in several of the battles, was allowed to rename itself the Judean Regiment. The regiment chose as its insignia a menorah with the Hebrew word “*kadima*”, meaning “*forward*” or “*eastward*”. This was not the first time Jabotinsky had used the word.

thinking how one can justify the undeniable contradictions that exist in the international arena. Can one be a follower of Jesus Christ, respect human rights, present liberalism as a civilisation model, announce one’s opposition to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and WMD, make “war on terror” one’s slogan and work towards the establishment of a unified international community—but at the same time have countries attacked, lives, reputations and possessions of people destroyed and, on the slight chance of the presence of a few criminals in a village, for example, set the entire village ablaze?

“Or because of the possibility of WMD in a country, it is occupied, around 100,000 people killed, its water sources, agriculture and industry destroyed, and the country pushed back 50 years. At what price? Hundreds of billions of dollars and tens of thousands of men and women—as occupation troops—put in harm’s way, their hands stained with the blood of others. On the pretext of the existence of WMD, this great tragedy came to engulf the peoples of the occupied and occupying countries. Later, it was revealed no WMD existed...”

“There are prisoners in Guantánamo Bay who have not been tried and have no legal representation, and their families cannot see them... European investigators have confirmed the existence of secret prisons in Europe too...”

“Mr President, I am sure you know how—and at what cost—Israel was established: many thousands were killed in the process; millions of indigenous people were made refugees; hundreds of thousands of hectares of farmland, olive plantations, towns and villages were destroyed. This tragedy is not exclusive to the time of establishment; unfortunately, it has been ongoing for 60 years now.

“A regime has been established that destroys houses while the occupants are still in them; announces beforehand its plans to assassinate Palestinian figures; and keeps thousands of Palestinians in prison. Is support for this regime in line with the teachings of Jesus Christ or Moses, or liberal values?...”

“If the prophets Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Ishmael, Joseph or Jesus Christ were with us today, how would they have judged such behaviour? Is there a better way to interact with the world...”

(Read the rest of this powerful speech in The Guardian online: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/story/0,,1772608.00.html>)

(See also page 25)

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## Report

“How can US global policies be reconciled with the teachings of Jesus and other prophets of the monotheistic religious”

### President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s Letter To President George Bush

(extract)

“For some time now I have been

Stephen Richards

REVIEW: *God's Politics: Why the American Right gets it wrong and the Left doesn't get it* by Jim Wallis  
Pub. (UK) 2006, by Lion (lionhudson) at £9.99 pp374

## The Non-Conformist Conscience, US Style

This UK paperback edition of Jim Wallis's book boasts prominent endorsements by Gordon Brown and *Independent* magazine. One quells one's misgivings however and plunges on, hopefully.

Wallis, from an unpretentious upbringing among the "Brethren" in the Midwest, has come to be the founder and best-known spokesperson of a radical evangelical movement called the *Soujourners*. This title is intended to evoke a parallel with the Old Testament patriarchs who "*confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth*" (Hebrews 11: 13). The implication is that their successors have no stake in the present-day power structures of the US

It is self-evident that American Christendom is a very big tent, as recent developments in the Episcopal Church alone have demonstrated. In many of its permutations the claim to historic Christian orthodoxy is tenuous or isn't even made. Confusion is the distinguishing feature of the US denominational scene.

This ongoing ferment recalls the England of 1647-1660. What is surprising though in both instances is not how many mad people there are but how many sane people there are, and in this latter category Wallis must surely be numbered. Sanity isn't always enough though.

Among the Protestant evangelicals quite a few interesting debates are going on, about such matters as "*open theism*" (i.e. that God doesn't know the end from the beginning), and the question about whether Old Testament civil law should be a matter of aspiration in a Christian society. Wallis by contrast is reluctant to get bogged down in exegetical or theological issues and, where he touches on them, paints with a broad brush. He is interesting not so much for himself but because he effectively represents a strand of evangelicalism formed in its youth by the Civil Rights movement (Martin Luther King Jr. is "*America's greatest religious leader*") and consolidated in middle age by the anti-apartheid movement. He is an evangel-

ical liberal, not liberal in his theology in the commonly understood sense, but liberal *vis-à-vis* the religious right.

His method is to work out a prophetic role (in the sense of "*forthtelling*" not foretelling) in relation to both parties while associating himself with neither. At times he projects the specious common sense of Blairism with its "*triangulation*". Examples of this are to be found on nearly every page. Here is one picked at random:

"The tragedy is that in America today one can't vote for a consistent ethic of life. Republicans stress some of the life issues, Democrats some of the others while both violate the seamless garment of life on several vital matters."

Wallis may be wrong here about the parties he criticises, but even if his generalization is right he simply isn't interested in exploring why pro-abortionists and anti-abortionists may all consider themselves philosophically consistent in their support for or opposition to the death penalty. The problem isn't really to do with consistency one way or the other, it's to do with *Weltanschauung*, with the moral "*universe next door*".

On one level Wallis has some useful things to say about the Iraq war. He recalls sitting on the same panel as Rowan Williams in the summer of 2002 in England:

"Archbishop Williams offered an observation that for me became the most insightful statement of the year-long run-up to the war. He said (quoting psychologist Abraham Maslow), '*When all you have is hammers, everything looks like a nail*'."

"The United States has the biggest and best hammers in the world. But they are the only 'tools' we seem to know how to use."

But Wallis is too fair-minded, or is it subtle, to leave it at that:

"Saddam Hussein and his government had cruelly repressed the Iraqi people and were a real threat to

other countries in the region and potentially to the world. He had used chemical weapons and had stockpiled biological weapons, and he was trying hard (though unsuccessfully, we have learned), to acquire nuclear weapons. The United Nations had repeatedly demanded that Iraq stop its violations of human rights, stop threatening peace in the region..." and so on.

So it looks as if a punitive attack on Iraq was at least excusable? Actually no:

"But a military attack was simply not the right way to pursue those legitimate goals. Instead, international law, political wisdom, and collective action around moral principles could have guided our actions."

Step forward, Woodrow Wilson!

Wallis goes on to define the just war conditions without seeming to give any attention to the question of whether other recent military adventures by Britain and America fulfil those criteria. I take the view that the only approximately just war of recent times was the Falklands war, which was just in its *casus belli*, more or less proportionate in the way it was fought, and fair in its outcome. British territory had been invaded by an annexing power, and in the struggle to reclaim the territory Britain didn't consider it necessary to bomb Buenos Aires. There was a proper declaration of war and so forth, whereas declarations have now become somewhat *passee*, like old-fashioned proposals of marriage.

I doubt very much whether Aquinas would, or Wallis should, give their respective support to the first Iraq war, or to Blair's and Clinton's wars in the later 1990s. Wallis has nothing to say about them. This may be because American soldiers did not lose their lives in any numbers, or because there was a UN blessing which is for some the equivalent of a divine blessing. George W. Bush at least believes in the assertion of moral force by military power. Blair believed in it only while he was talking about it, and Clinton, one suspects, not at all. But this didn't prevent the both of them from conducting a disgraceful war of aggression against Serbia simply because they could. The bombing of the TV station in Belgrade was in a sense worse than the destruction of the twin towers in that it was carried out by democratically accountable states, not by a maverick terrorist organization. The Belgrade bombings also acted as a dry run for the pulverizing bombing of Baghdad a few years later.

No doubt I'm preaching to the converted here. I think though that Wallis

is more nearly right when attempting to analyse the Islamic, or "*Islamist*" terrorist phenomenon.

"But in addition to the vocation of protecting innocent lives against military retaliation and defending our Arab or Muslim fellow citizens, some American religious leaders began to take on the prophetic role of answering why [September 11] happened or, as many have put the question, 'Why are so many people angry at us?'

"It is indeed impossible to comprehend adequately the terrorist attacks of September 11 without a deeper understanding of the grievances and injustices felt by millions of people around the world...

"The truth is that the United States has not been an honest broker for Middle East peace and has not sought the proper balance between Israeli security and Palestinian human rights... American and Western appetites for oil have led to a corrupt and corrupting relationship with despicable Arab regimes... The United States sits atop and is the leader of a global economy in which half of God's children still live on less than two dollars a day, and the United States will be blamed around the world for the structures of injustice that such a global economy daily enforces... We desperately need a Lincolnian quality of self-examination in this historical moment."

But

"we should be clear not to imply that America... deserved that great day of evil as some kind of judgment, as Falwell, Robertson [influential figures on the religious 'right'] and some left wing critics have suggested."

And

"the root of the terror attacks is not a yearning for economic justice for the poor and oppressed of the world. It is motivated rather by the ambition of a perverted religious fundamentalism for regional and global power; one that rejects the values of liberty, equality, democracy and human rights...

"And if we are to tell the truth about America let us also tell the truth about the terrorists... The evil of bin Laden and his network of terror may have been foolishly strengthened by the support of the CIA during the Cold War, but this evil is not a creation of American power. Indeed, to suggest, as some on the Left have done, that this terrorism is an 'understandable consequence of US imperialism' is a grave mistake of both moral and political analysis. The terror is not just a reaction to the 'American Empire' but the radical assertion of an ambitious new religious and political empire of

their own."

While the bandying about of the word 'evil' isn't exactly helpful, Wallis is I think more or less right. Brendan Clifford has argued very forcefully that radical Islam is a sort of bastard child of a century of a perverse Western, especially British, desire first to remake and then to meddle in the structures of the Middle East. So we can't complain about the agenda to restore the Caliphate as we were instrumental in destroying the original, more benign, Caliphate. Thus the fact that international Islam has no proper boundaries or structures within which it can develop is largely down to us. Also, as Wallis also says, we tried to play Cold War chess using the Mujihadeen as pawns and helped to build up their fighting potential, and, as Wallis doesn't mention, we facilitated the establishment of Al Qaeda training camps in Bosnia. Of course too there was the establishment of the state of Israel.

I remember many years ago when Brendan was in more Unionist mode, indeed in very Unionist mode, he ridiculed the Nationalist historians for attributing to the late Bill Craig the capabilities of Bishop Berkeley's God. The Nationalist argument was that Craig's heavy-handed response to the Civil Rights marchers in the North was at least partly to blame for the transformation of a movement of peaceful protest into one of armed resistance to the state. It caused the iron, as it were, to enter into the soul of the northern Catholics. He is saying the same kind of thing about the rise of armed Islam as those Nationalists were saying then. Indeed he, and they, and Wallis are at one here.

But Wallis also recognizes, correctly, that this Islamic movement has an internal logic of its own that doesn't simply spring out of a reaction to Western policy. To argue otherwise is almost patronizing towards a great world religion that was engaged in wars of conquest a thousand years before America was thought of. By 1095 AD the Seljuk Turks had overrun the Byzantine Empire and were already knocking on the gates of Constantinople, while in the west the Almoravids controlled most of the Iberian peninsula. The Spanish Christians slowly pushed back the Muslim states over the next couple of centuries. The attempts by the Crusaders to regain Jerusalem and the lost Christian lands in the east were less successful. The point is that the Crusades were defensive wars which stemmed for a while the Turkish advance.

From the early 15th century Vienna

was looking like the next domino, and it was another 250 years before that threat was finally lifted, following which the Ottoman Empire started its long slow decline. During that period most of its Muslim subjects were content to exist within that context. The Christian and Jewish subjects had to 'thole it' as they say in these parts. They were subjected not only to the kind of disabilities endured by Irish Catholics in the era of the Penal Laws but also to periodical pogroms, such as the massacres in Bulgaria which caused Gladstone to fulminate in the 1870s, and, most infamously, the Armenian massacres of 1915, which Norman Stone is anxious to downplay. While in Austria holocaust deniers can be locked up, even for ambiguous things they said in 1989, in Turkey the wrath of the state falls on those who seek to assert the massacres of 1915. And this is modern secular Turkey, member of NATO and secret ally of Israel.

Anyway, I have wandered far from base camp here. My point is that Islamic terrorism isn't simply reactive, and moreover isn't totally inconsistent with Islam in its historical development. Islam has rediscovered its God-given destiny. In the post-colonial, post-Cold War century the time seems to be right to resume the historic struggle. The richest of the Muslim states, Saudi Arabia, where Christians aren't even allowed to meet informally to worship in their own homes, has bankrolled this armed expansionism in Africa and Indonesia.

On their own terms the Islamists are quite right. If we, whether as Christians or as secular liberals don't want to live in the kind of society they are intent on foisting upon us, how do we respond? The kind of argument about Old Testament law that is going on in American evangelical seminaries in an abstruse sort of way has a lot of unpleasant practical significance for the Christian communities of southern Sudan, northern Nigeria and Pakistan, to name only three. This is also the question I would like *Church & State* contributors, among others, to be addressing. Maybe the more appropriate title should be *Mosque & State* because that is where the debate is going to lie, if indeed we are allowed to have a debate.

In a recent issue Brendan Clifford defends the worldwide Muslim hysterics over the Danish cartoons on the interesting ground that Islam is a thoroughgoing religion taken seriously by its adherents, while Christianity has been a toytown religion for the past couple of centuries, so Muslims are really hurt and upset by such cartoons

whereas Christians are only pretending to be hurt by the daily bombardment they endure from the media. Even accepting his premise, this leads to the disagreeable conclusion that the more fervent you are in your religious beliefs the more dangerous you are likely to be, and indeed entitled to be. *"If you prick us, do we not bleed?"* said Shylock. He didn't say, *"If you mock us, are we not bound to kill you?"* (although that was his intention as it turned out!) Strangely enough we don't come across many examples of Muslim protest at the appalling bombings of Shi'ite mosques full of worshippers. There have been atrocities perpetrated by Shi'ites as well, but I get the impression they have been more on the receiving end. Just as I write there are ominous noises about the Shi'ites coming apparently from Osama bin Laden in his latest broadcast.

I'd better get back to Wallis. Here are the contortions of this good and decent liberal evangelical trying to be responsible, patriotic, critical, and geopolitical all at once and sounding merely incoherent:

"Those of us who opposed the military action simply said that a mostly American pre-emptive war [i.e. not a wonderful United Nations war] was the wrong answer to the threats of Saddam Hussein. Many of us also supported regime change in Iraq, citing the tremendous human cost of Saddam's brutality and the danger posed by his love for weapons of mass destruction. Admittedly, not everyone in the anti-war movement was as clear not only about the need to disarm Saddam but also to remove him from power—and they all should have been...

"Yes, I am very glad that Saddam has gone. But there were better ways to accomplish that worthy goal and set in motion precedents that would have left us in a much more healthy and hopeful place than we now find ourselves."

The subtext is that the war was not only wrong but is shown to have been wrong by the fact that it has been such a bloody failure. But of course the reason for the failure has been the accomplishment of the worthy goal. It was Saddam who held the powerful religious forces in check, maintained a functioning civil society during years of sanctions, and allowed the Christians to thrive. Wallis consigns him to outer darkness because he apparently *"loved"* weapons of mass destruction. After what Iraq had gone through since 1990 he would hardly have been human if he had not at least yearned wistfully for them.

I wanted to look at the liberal evangelical position on world poverty. I hope to be able to do this in another

Alleged sectarianism in West Cork is in the news at the moment. An impression being created is that it emerged during the War of Independence and was practised by the IRA. But the great example of the Dunmanway killings that is quoted over and over again does not hold up when it realised that those killed were documented informers and had caused an unknowable number of deaths.

Dating the sectarianism of West Cork to this period is out by at least 300 years. Official, state-sponsored, well-organised, well-armed sectarianism was the norm since the Munster Plantation of the 16th century. Lord Boyle and his creation, Bandon, was its focus. Cromwell himself visited the place in 1650 to praise the good work and said that if the rest of Ireland was treated like this there would be no more Irish rebellions.

200 years later something of the flavour of Bandon in its heyday may be gauged by reading the following report of a casual visit to the town in 1850 by an Archibald Stark, who tried to be as non-judgemental as he could about Boyle and the Bandon he saw.

At the moment, people like Robin Bury of the Reform Society are poking around for all they are worth to find examples of Catholic sectarianism and the amazing thing, in view of the history of places like Bandon, is that they have to do so much poking to find any evidence at all. Why are there not examples of what they want to find hitting them in the face? Human nature would seem to demand it, but human nature is clearly very adaptable to circumstances—for good or ill. *Jack Lane*

*Archibald G. Stark*

## A Glance At Lord Boyle And Historic Bandon

Something more than 250 years ago a young man, named Richard Boyle, an unprovided scion of a respectable but impoverished family in Kent—came over to Ireland as a penniless adventurer. The career of this youth is worthy of note, as a reference to it may neutralize the effect of the sneers which are occasionally given, in the sister country, at the characters of *"Hirish fortune-hunters"*. It was originally his intention to become a member of the English bar, and was enrolled as a student of Middle Temple; but his friends were too poor to support him at the Inns of Court, and he was fain to take employment as clerk in a barrister's office. This post, I suppose was not a more desirable one than it is at the present day, and young Boyle soon became disgusted with his functions, as well as with the wretched style in which they were paid.

Ireland was at this time given up to the spoiler—a mass of carrion for a legion of vultures; and Boyle, following the example of many of his countrymen, who were hopeless of succeeding at home, and who, no matter what they might gain, had nothing to lose, resolved to make this devoted kingdom the scene of his future operations. He arrived in Dublin with £27 in money, a few worthless trinkets—heir-looms of his beggared family—and a rapier and a dagger—instruments very much in use in those days by Saxon adventurers, for carving out fortunes and disencumbering Irish states of their rightful owners.

Our hero, however, would never have

won a coronet with his sword, and as, during the time that he marked the briefs of his late master, he had become intimately acquainted with cunning and chicane, he resolved to turn them to account; and so well did he play his part, that in the course of time he became the owner of a great number of the forfeited estates of the county Cork. The precise methods he adopted to acquire the vast sums with which he effected his purchases, have not very clearly transpired; but that they were not entirely above suspicion is proved by the fact, that he had great difficulty in acquitting himself of a charge brought against him by the law officers of the crown, of having received bribes from a foreign prince to assist in subverting the authority, style, title, dignity, and so forth, of our sovereign lady the "Good queen Bess", in Ireland.

Fortune, however, continued to smile upon Boyle, and honour after honour was conferred upon him, until finally he was created Viscount Dungarvan and Earl of Cork. He was the first earl of that name, and his influence was so potent, and his possessions so extensive, that he was called "The Great Earl".

To this ambitious, energetic, and bigoted man, the town of Bandon owes its origin. The ground on which it is built was formerly a portion of Carbery, the property of The O'Mahony, who forfeited it in consequence of having taken part in the rebellion which was headed by the Earl of Desmond. As a reward for his assistance in subjugating

Joe Keenan

The following letter was submitted to the *Irish Independent* at the end of June

## West Cork Protestants

The claim by your correspondent Mr. Myers that Cork Protestants and others fled "...the sectarian wrath of the IRA in May 1922. Many thousands of Protestants fled their homes in terror as a wave of murder, violence, intimidation and boycott convulsed the county, and many other parts of southern Ireland also" is put in question by details quoted in the Unionist Mr. Denis Kennedy's excellent book, "*The Widening Gulf*".

There Mr. Kennedy explains how, in May 1922, after 50 Southern Unionist refugees lobbied the House of Commons at Westminster, an Irish Distress Committee was set up under Sir Samuel Hoare with £10,000 to spend on relieving the distress of victims of Republican violence. Mr. Kennedy states on page 125:

"In its first interim report in November 1922, the Hoare Committee said that in the period from 12 May to 14 October it had dealt with 3,349 applicants, many of them married men with large families. Not all of these were in need of immediate assistance, but of the 1,873 cases approved for emergency relief, about 600 were Protestant, and just over 1,000 Catholic. (Fewer than 100 of these cases were from Northern Ireland.)"

So, it would appear that a majority of those fleeing to Britain from the anti-Protestant pogroms which disfigured the birth of the Irish Free State were Catholics. Further to this Mr. Kennedy points out that aid from the Northern Parliament to Protestant refugees was almost non-existent. According to Mr. Kennedy on page 126 of his book:

"A private committee was set up under the Chief Whip in Craig's Government...There is no accurate record of the numbers who actually did flee North. In September 1922 Craig wrote to Churchill mentioning 'some three hundred and sixty [refugees] now being maintained by private generosity in Ulster'. The money spent by the Dixon Committee was limited; in October 1923 Dixon sent a certificate of money expended to date, for £495.0s.6d., to the Home Office, seeking a reimbursement".

That certainly does not bear out Mr. Myers extravagant claims. And Mr. Kennedy concludes his examination of this important matter:

"What is clear is that there is no evidence of any large-scale transfer of population across the border at this period".

✱

Irish disaffection, a tract of 12,000 acres of the forfeited district was given to Mr. Fane Becher, an English soldier, and ancestor of Sir Wrixon Becher, from whom the Earl of Cork, then Mr. Boyle, purchased it. With the steadiness of purpose which formed so important an ingredient in his character, he commenced building the houses in 1608; and before the end of three years he saw the work under his plastic hands—if I may so speak—a chartered town, with corporate privileges, a provost and common council men, and in a few years afterwards surrounded with fortified walls.

So proud was he of his handiwork that, writing to Mr. Secretary Cook, he described Bandon as superior to Londonderry; in compass; in the style and number of its buildings; in the thickness, height, and strength of its walls; and above all, in the manner in which its "two fair churches" were filled every Sabbath-day.

Boyle cherished, or affected to cherish, a most intolerant spirit in religious matters; and this is little to be wondered at, as to its influence he was mainly indebted for his elevation. In one of his letters that have been preserved, he rejoices that "no Popish recusant, or unconfessing novelist, can be admitted to live in all the town". In fact, it might be said that Bandon was a gigantic temple erected to the genius of Bigotry; and never was there a more appropriate inscription—not even the words above the entrance to Dante's "Inferno"—than the insolent legend which was placed over the principal gate of this town:

Jew • Turk • Or • Atheist  
May • Enter • Here •  
But • Not • A • Papist •

It may be interesting to Baron Rothschild to perceive that, bad as the Bandonians were in the 17th, they were, in one respect, more liberal than the House of Lords in the 19th century. The spirit that dictated the above inscription in its full strength animated the people up to the year 1650, when a Popish inhabitant was not allowed to live in the town, and when even a tune on the bagpipes was pronounced seditious, that being the music used in the old times by the *Irish* in their wars! With this century commenced the display of a little relaxation in religious matters; and I need not say that now the most pious votary of the Church of Rome is as welcome, within the walls of Bandon, as any Jew that ever worshipped in a synagogue, or the most rigid Turk that ever swore by the Koran.

Still, however, Bandon is, in the main, an *English* and a *Protestant* town.

Catholics there are in all parts of the place, but, with a few exceptions, they are the hewers of wood and drawers of water. The mark of the chain may still be traced about their necks—the effects of the moral and physical slavery to which they were subjected. The very names on the signboards over the shops will instruct us on this point. Here, for example, in North Main-street, a few doors from the Provincial Bank, is a grocery and earthenware shop, kept, as we learn, by the characters above the window, by one Patrick Murphy. There is no mistake about this—the name is thoroughly, intensely Irish. We enter the shop, and after a few minutes' conversation with the vendor of bacon and delft, discover that he can neither write nor read. Of course, we might go into fifty shops, and not find a professing Catholic so illiterate as this man; but, generally speaking, the class who were, until a comparatively recent period, deprived of the social and corporate rights of the town, present a marked contrast in intelligence, business habits, wealth and influence, to those who may here appropriately be called "the children of long enjoyment".

Keep your eye upon the names above the leading places of business; how many of them—like Tresillian, Fawcett, Philpot, Popham, Brandon, Vickery, Morehead, Topham, Bright, Dawson, Norwood, Roycroft, Scollard, Stanley, Edwards, and Tooting—have a Saxon smack about them. The few Catholics, who have acquired wealth and consideration, are destitute of anything like public spirit, or they would have made an effort long before this to relieve that pious individual, commonly called Viscount Bernard, from the labours of a parliamentary representative.

When it is considered that the Duke of Devonshire is the owner of half the town, and that the Bandon family have no property in it, it will at first excite surprise that the latter should be able to regard it as a sort of pocket borough; but the fact is accounted for by the intelligence and unanimity of the Conservatives or Protestants, and the Boetian dullness and apathy of such of the Catholics as should take the initiative in a liberal movement.

It is worthy of notice that the present Earl of Cork does not claim ownership of a single inch of ground in the town that was founded by his bustling and successful progenitor. The Duke of Devonshire and the Earl of Shannon are the "lords of the soil". The latter nobleman is understood to be suffering severely under the affliction that has fallen so generally on the race of Irish landlords...



## Brendan Clifford

Ken Loach's *Wind That Shakes The Barley* has been effectively kept from a mass cinema audience in Britain by means of an Establishment media campaign. Just 30 copies of the film have been allowed to be shown, of which 20 are in London. This compares with 300 in France. Ruth Dudley Edwards was one of the media commentators who helped to kill off the film.

### The British Way Of Progress

*Why Does Ken Loach Loathe His Country So Much?* is the title of an article on *The Wind That Shakes The Barley* by Ruth Dudley Edwards that was published in the *Daily Mail* on 30th May—published in the English edition of the paper, but deleted from the Irish edition.

The film, she writes, is "*a melange of half truths*", and Loach is in the grip of "*twisted logic*". Surely, then, if her article was to be cut out of either edition of the paper, it should have been cut out of the English edition? The English in the mass remain secure in their view of themselves as the greatest people ever. They do not need to be told that anybody who depicts them otherwise is either a fool (however smart he might be), or a propagandist with a chip on his shoulder, or the agent of an evil (i.e., foreign) power. It is the Irish who need to be told this. And yet the *Daily Mail* has withheld from its Irish readers the vital truths that Ruth Dudley Edwards has to tell them about Britain and Ken Loach, and thereby it makes her a mere apologist for British chauvinist prejudice—a preacher to the converted. It is not surprising, she says, "*that Loach's films are scarcely distributed in Britain*". But it will be surprising if this film is not widely distributed in Ireland. So her message is lost to those who need it.

Is this due to an editorial view that truth is national, and what is true in England is not true in Ireland, and *vice versa*? And is that view implicit in her title: *Why Does Ken Loach Loathe His Country So Much?* Is it because it is *his* country that there is something morally reprehensible about the way he depicts its conduct in Ireland during the three years following the 1918 General Election?

She describes the film as a "*travesty of history*", but does not mention a single instance in which history is travestied in it. Is it conceivable that she found such an instance but neglected to mention it?

She writes:

"In his version of history, British soldiers don't have to get up their courage to enthusiastically shoot the

innocent unarmed or pull out the finger-nails of republicans with pliers. To Loach, all occupiers are oppressors".

There is a tone of voice here, but not a denial of fact. I assume that she knows it to be a fact that fingernails were pulled out and "*the innocent unarmed*" were shot, but thinks it was unpatriotic of Loach to depict these facts.

She suggests that he owes his country because his father was a factory electrician and yet he went on to a Grammar School and Oxford University, and that he ought therefore not to criticise its conduct—at least not in a way that goes much beyond the parameters of party-political repartee.

Now I can see much merit in Brailsford's maxim of "*My country right or wrong*". And I think that the style in which he gave up the ideal of Merrie England and became a straightforward Imperialist, and an advocate of an even bigger Navy, was admirable. Most of his generation of socialists slithered self-deceptively into that position, concealing it from themselves as best they could. But Brailsford looked the facts in the face, saw that the standard of life achieved by the English working class depended on the Empire, and he declared himself an Imperialist.

But of course he forfeited much of his influence in doing so.

If one wants to act effectively on the principle, *My country right or wrong*, the way to do is always to say that it's right, and vehemently reject as slander any suggestion that your opinion that it is right is a fixed idea which you hold regardless of what it does.

The modern state, whether liberal or totalitarian, is the comprehensive framework of the life of the individual. His existence depends on it, it gives him his values, and it serves as his conscience, and it is only if it is destroyed by another state that he is held legally or morally accountable for what he did in its service.

This is something that is rarely the

subject of public discussion. But thirty years ago it was discussed to some extent in Northern Ireland, chiefly because certain vital elements of the British state did not operate there.

Ian Paisley asserted that the loyalty of the individual to the state was conditional on the state conducting itself properly. He reasserted John Locke's contractual theory, according to which the state might forfeit its right to the allegiance of the people if it does not fulfil its side of an implicit bargain. (But by the people Locke only meant the Protestant gentry in their dispute with a Catholic King.) This view was rejected, as I recall, by Enoch Powell, an English Tory who had become a Unionist MP; and by Marianne Elliott who wrote a Field Day pamphlet against it, and has more recently published a book in which she denied that there was ever a system of Penal Laws in Ireland. Powell and Elliott declared that citizens or subjects owed absolute, unconditional allegiance to the state—and I recall that Thomas Hobbes was mentioned in support of that view.

As a matter of fact loyalty in Northern Ireland was conditional. And it was so because the British state withheld in its Northern Ireland region the vital elements which made its claim to unconditional allegiance accepted elsewhere. There is ceaseless 'radical' chatter in Britain, but the claims of the state are never really disputed in fact. In Northern Ireland there has been ceaseless chatter about Loyalty, but the claims of the state have been challenged in fact on the Loyalist side no less than on the Republican side.

I supported the great Loyalist challenge to the state in 1974—the "*Constitutional stoppage*", phrased in terms reminiscent of John Locke—and if I supported the top dog in that challenge, I could hardly argue that the bottom dog was bound to unconditional obedience.

But Northern Ireland is only the exception that proves the rule. It has been systematically misgoverned for three generations—worse than that, essential parts of the modern democratic state have been withheld in the Six Counties—and alienation between state and society has been integral to it from the start. But this is the work of the state, not of society.

In Britain the conditions of unconditional allegiance apply, and the democracy operates as an all-but universal conspiracy of state. Only a minuscule fringe tries to exist outside

that conspiracy, and it is easily rendered ineffective by the vast internal espionage system of the state.

I know little about Ken Loach. I will take it that he does try to exist in opposition to the state and to damage it. But, in the present instance, the instrument by means of which he tries to damage the state is a film which presents a truthful account of its conduct in Ireland during the three years after the 1918 General Election.

Edwards suggests that it is a false account, but makes no factual criticism.

The British establishment view ever since the mid-1920s has been that films about the conduct of the British state in Ireland, and especially about its conduct after the 1918 General Election, ought not be made. And it made that view effective by means of censorship (both pre- and post-production) for seventy years.

Factual inaccuracy in plots was never its ground or banning films, or preventing them from being produced by telling the producers that it would ban them. In fact, the applicable rule there was: 'the better, the worse'—in the spirit of the old libel rule that truth was more libellous than lies.

I take this to be the real grounds of Edwards' objection to the film:

"He [Loach] hopes he can persuade British politicians to "confront", and then apologise for, the Empire. It is too much to believe that any front-line politician will respond to such twisted logic. For the truth is that, as empires go, the British version was the most responsible and humane of all. With all its deficiencies, it brought much of value to most of the countries it occupied. Also, it all happened a long time ago and no should apologise for it."

(The last sentence put me in mind of Somerset Maugham's story about a missionary preacher in a remote part of Spain, where the people were not accustomed to extravagant preaching, who saw that his congregation was being worked up to a frenzy by his account of the last hours of Jesus. To calm them down he told them to bear in mind that it had happened a long time ago, and indeed it might be that it never happened at all.)

I have some German friends whom I have been trying to reason into taking a comparative view of German misdeeds in the world, and to wean them from their addiction to the absolute. And I recommend this paragraph, which passes without adverse notice in one of the

major English papers, to show them how easily it is done. I do this because, until the Germans begin to comparativise themselves, Europe is going to be a mess.

Britain does not apologise for what it has done to other peoples. It has been the most actively militarist state in the world for three centuries and hopes to be so for some time yet. It has been on the winning side in all its many wars, and therefore nobody can force it to apologise—certainly not a marginalised film producer like Ken Loach.

It has for three centuries been a destroyer of states and peoples in the cause of progress. As victor it tells the story of these events in its own way. It conceives morality in the world as being compliance with the accomplished fact of its military dominance. And it knows that the one really disgraceful and immoral thing a state can do in world affairs is to be defeated in war.

It requires that defeated states and peoples should 'confront the truth' about themselves and admit that they are evil. But it never confronts any truth about itself, except the higher truth of military success. It never apologises, because apology would be demoralising and debilitating, and would inhibit further progress.

It has a great capacity for remembering and perhaps an even greater capacity for forgetting. It remembers what would be to its advantage in the present and forgets what would be to its disadvantage. And so it remembers hardly anything it has done since 1945—or it has constructed a false memory of what it has done since 1945. What it remembers is the fantasy that it engaged in a purposeful and peaceful transformation of Empire into Commonwealth. And that seems to be what Ruth Dudley Edwards—a zealous Irish convert to Empire—remembers.

I spent a generation in Belfast trying to bring the region within the political life of the British state as a way of mediating relations between the Protestant and Catholic communities. In order to do this I had to form a more realistic idea of the British state than was current either in British or Republican circles. It would have been no use presenting a *Daily Mail* fantasy of memory and forgetfulness to the Nationalist community. I had to describe a state of affairs which would be a recognisable reality to both communities. This ensured that I could not forget the many things that Britain had done in the world in my lifetime, but which have never been described in histories or

represented in films, English barbarism in Malaya and Kenya being the high points.

What it did in Ireland was slight in physical terms, compared to what it did in Malaya and Kenya after the defeat of Nazism, but was more damaging to the prospect of establishing a peaceful and democratic world order because it tainted the League of Nations at the outset.

And in 1919 it involved the League of Nations in its project of a Jewish colonial development in the Middle East, and then a generation later did the same with the United Nations. And its chicanery in the Balkans in 1944 set the scene for more recent events there.

It occurred to me that the British Empire might be described in the words applied to Athens by some ancient Greek: that it had done great deeds of good and evil. And that the evil predominated towards the end. But Edwards must have it that it was just good—well, comparatively good, with the comparison being all that counts. (Has she made up a comparative balance with the other Empires, taking account of the actual amount of killing done in Malaya and Kenya?)

In figuring out what the British state was in general, in order to grasp its Northern Ireland variant, I went through its constitutional development—Locke, Burke, Lord John Russell, Bagehot. I notice that Edwards has published a book about Bagehot, and so presumably has read him, though her book on Northern Ireland (or on the Orange Order) showed little trace of it.

Bagehot's most influential work is *The English Constitution*. It analyses the workings of the English state—no nonsense about the British state. Britain is only England with attachments.

*The English Constitution* is not an academic textbook, but a polemical pamphlet—as its precursors, Locke's *Second Treatise* and Burke's *Present Discontents* also were. And, like them, its ideas became part of the workings of the state. And an application of it shows that Northern Ireland is more in the nature of a possession of the British state than a working part of it.

Bagehot's other large-scale work is a kind of Darwinist history of the world called *Physics & Politics*. In this he sets out a view of 'progress' which the 1914 British war propagandists attributed to the Germans and branded as "*Prussianism*" and "*Nietzscheanism*".

## A Plague On Non-Sectarianism

The scheme of it is that nations and states were created by war. A tribe whose military practice gave it the edge over another might defeat and subjugate another, many others, and then, if it had the administrative bent, it might regiment them into a large body, and with this larger body make even greater conquests. Great uniform social bodies produced by the regimenting process of dominant tribes or dynasties acquire stability as nations. Wars between these great nations then become the motive force of further progress.

Bagehot appears to have begun the work with the expectation that he could show this as happening in a Primitive Age, or a Preliminary Age, and that a process of an entirely different kind had then taken over. But the nearer he got to the present, the less he was able to feel that the Primitive Age had been left behind. Indeed, how could it be left behind when England, the great motive force in world affairs, had only just adopted an ideology which expressed its own mode of operation in the world: Darwinism.

Either in this book, or in an associated article, Bagehot observed that great nations—meaning great states—do not allow themselves to be confronted with the truth about themselves. He applied this observation to other states, making an exception of England. There were some grounds then for making England an exception. It comprehensively ceased to be an exception in August 1914 when making war on Germany. And Ruth Dudley Edwards is an example of how little it is willing to be confronted with the truth about itself today.

She published a *Daily Mail* denunciation of the Michael Collins film a few years ago, in chorus with Professor Bew. It was those articles that brought it home to me that the 1918 General Election had been taken out of history for purposes of current discussion, and led me to bring it up in a pamphlet replying to them, *War, Insurrection And Election In Ireland 1914-21*.

I will take up the *Daily Mail* view again in the next issue of this magazine, along with Bagehot's conception of progress, and the comprehensive political censorship of films exercised in Britain.

### War, Insurrection And Election In Ireland 1914-21.

A comment on the denunciation of the film, *Michael Collins*, by Professor Paul Bew and others, by *Brendan Clifford*. 48pp. ISBN 0 85034 079 9. Athol Books, Jan. 1997. Euro 5, £4.

The working class interest in Irish politics today is just what it has been for generations—the development of national politics. In the North the social and cultural aspect of that interest is anti-sectarianism in every form and forum, on the cusp of each moment, at the drop of a hat.

Anti-sectarianism is the attack on each bigoted dividing line and on every sectional call to greater division. At no point is it neutral as between all that tends to unity and all that tends to fracture and fragmentation. It is not non-sectarian.

Non-sectarianism is the plague on both your houses that, indiscriminately to be sure, would blight every house in the North. Non-sectarianism is the spineless absurdity that slithers on a twilight demonstration with grey placards demanding parity of esteem between oppressor and oppressed. Such parity be damned! The only demand anti-sectarianism esteems is damn all oppression!

Non-sectarianism is careful in its condemnation of each side, camp, tradition, extreme to esteem each equally. So careful in its even-handedness that it leaves everything it condemns and would have us esteem (in equal measure) in place. Its plague on both your houses slaps a preservation order on the diseased slums. Its mission is to condemn and esteem in measures equal to the weight of sectarian millstones set in concrete around the neck of the Irish working class.

Non-sectarianism is sectarian and just so. It is a pattern of social and cultural behaviour set foul to cripple the anti-sectarian purposes of constructive political engagement. It replaces a combative spirit with politeness and in so doing disables thought.

It even disables poetry.

Louis MacNeice was a great poet who with respect to most of the subjects and themes he wrote about performed with great aplomb the arts and parts of poetry. Which is to say, he compressed all his observation of all his experience into imagery and word play that being charged with great wit and delicacy and a profound joy in living carried over to readers some heightened understanding and sympathy with, or at least a curiosity about, the resonant detail of some others' worlds.

MacNeice could make poetry out of and about England, Iceland and Spain.

In each of those and other cases MacNeice's imagery imposed a cultural order upon rampaging social facts and the looming bulk of national landscapes. But in respect of Ireland where he was born and spent most of his childhood (in Belfast and Carrickfergus where his West of Ireland professional Church of Ireland father was rector at St. Clements and St. Nicholas) all his experience and observation results in images that are intellectually empty, fatally bland and always even-handedly confused.

MacNeice's *Autumn Journal* is a longish poem of 24 cantos written between August 1938 and January 1939. Like any poem of similar scope and ambition it is uneven, but here thematically, even strategically, so. It has sublime moments and moments when MacNeice counts coup on both sides of a balance sheet that is all he can draw out of Ireland.

Just by the way, this is MacNeice being sublime at the end of *Canto XIII*:

Good-bye now, Plato and Hegel,

The shop is closing down;  
They don't want any philosopher-kings  
in England,  
There ain't no universals in this man's  
town.

And this is MacNeice being non-sectarian in *Canto XVI*:

And I remember when I was little, the  
fear

Banded among the servants  
That Casement would land at the pier  
With a sword and a horde of rebels;  
And how we used to expect, at a later  
date,

When the wind blew from the west,  
the noise of shooting

Starting in the evening at eight  
In Belfast in the York Street district;  
And the voodoo of the Orange bands  
Drawing an iron net through  
darkest Ulster,

Flailing the limbo lands—  
The linen mills, the long wet grass,  
the ragged hawthorn.

And one read black where the other  
read

white, his hope

The other man's damnation:  
Up the Rebels, To Hell with the Pope,  
And God Save—as you prefer—  
the King or Ireland...

Such was my country and I thought I

was well  
 Out of it, educated and domiciled in  
 England,  
 Though yet her name keeps ringing like  
 a bell  
 In an under-water belfry.  
 Why do we like being Irish? Partly  
 because  
 It gives us a hold on the sentimental  
 English  
 As members of a world that never was,  
 Baptised with fairy water...  
 The bombs in the turnip sack, the sniper  
 from the roof,  
 Griffith, Connolly, Collins, where  
 have they brought us?  
 Ourselves alone! Let the round tower  
 stand  
 aloof  
 In a world of bursting mortar!  
 Let the school-children fumble their  
 sums  
 In a half-dead language;  
 Let the censor be busy on the books;  
 pull down the  
 Georgian slums;  
 Let the games be played in Gaelic...  
 The smoking chimneys hint  
 At prosperity round the corner  
 But they make their Ulster linen from  
 foreign lint  
 And the money that comes in goes  
 out to make more money.  
 A city built upon mud;  
 A culture built upon profit;  
 Free speech nipped in the bud,  
 The minority always guilty.  
 Why should I want to go back  
 To you, Ireland, my Ireland?  
 The blots on the page are so black  
 That they cannot be covered with  
 shamrock.  
 I hate your grandiose airs,  
 Your sob-stuff, your laugh and your  
 swagger,  
 Your assumption that everyone else  
 cares  
 Who is king of your castle.  
 Castles are out of date,  
 The tide flows round the children's  
 sandy fancy;  
 Put up what flag you like, it is too late  
 To save your soul with bunting.  
*Odi atque amo:*  
 Shall we cut this name on trees with a  
 rusty dagger?  
 And so on and so on, above and  
 below and in between. Aren't we awful.  
 Isn't it dreadful. Poor old England that  
 has to suffer us and our endless senseless  
 quarrels: Ireland's children—  
 Who slouch around the world with a  
 gesture  
 and a brogue  
 And a faggot of useless memories.

Why can't we just forget it all, all the  
 useless rotten horror of it?

Well, anyway, Louis MacNeice  
 couldn't forget it all. He couldn't resolve  
 it as image and failing replayed it again  
 and again, the strophic strike and  
 counter-stroke of his self-righteous  
 plague on both your, or rather our,  
 houses. That last couplet (which is the  
 canto's final fling) is an image of himself,  
 for all it is deflected onto the rest of us.  
 And the rest of us in those days were  
 stay-at-homes trying to live and make  
 lives for families though wilting as we  
 must have been in the glare of  
 MacNeice's detached disapproval. And  
 it was MacNeice who slouched around  
 the world. The useless memories were  
 his.

His *Odi atque amo* is instructive. He  
 was a classics scholar and such don't  
 throw Latin tags around without if not  
 malice then certainly aforethought. The  
 only other occurrence of that precise  
 phrase of which I am aware is in Robert  
 Graves' *The White Goddess* where he  
 translates it as—'to be in love with' is  
 also to hate. But Graves didn't start  
 writing *The White Goddess* until five or  
 so years after MacNeice had written  
*Autumn Journal* (and in a postscript to  
 the 1960 edition testified that the ideas  
 of the book, which accumulate around  
 his discussion of the Latin phrase, were  
 new to that period in his life and so, I  
 think, unlikely to have come up in  
 conversation with MacNeice who he will  
 certainly have known).

So I take MacNeice to have been  
 referencing the Roman poet Catullus  
 (mentioned on the same page of the  
 Faber edition of Graves' book);  
 specifically Carmen 85 of the one  
 surviving Catullan manuscript. This is a  
 very short, therefore eminently quotable,  
 piece:

*Odi et amo. Quare id faciam, fortasse  
 requiris.  
 nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.*

Roughly, not so much translated as  
 semblanced, that goes:

I hate you and I love you.  
 Why that is I don't know.  
 Just that it is so,  
 And it burns me through.

Catullus' poem is one of the "*Lesbia*"  
 series that he wrote in the throes of a  
 frenzied, anguished and ultimately  
 ridiculous passion to Clodia, daughter  
 of the Sullan consular Appius Claudius  
 Pulcher, sister of the notorious dema-  
 gogue Publius Clodius. MacNeice prob-  
 ably meant only to reference Clodia as a  
 more suitable muse for a don of refine-  
 ment than the usual old shawlie,  
 "Kathaleen ni Houlihan", who he had  
 ridiculed as such earlier in the poem.

And to point up the ambivalence of his  
 relationship with that Irish muse.

But he may have had the political  
 circumstances of Catullus's passion in  
 at least the back of his mind.

Catullus was an apolitical *boule-  
 vardier* writing, in the middle of an  
 intensely violent political revolution (in  
 the last days of the Roman Republic),  
 poems addressed to a very political lady  
 who was by way both of her immediate  
 family and personal connections up to  
 her henna and kohl in all that intensity  
 and every violent swing of its revolving.  
 In which case MacNeice may have been  
 adverting to the impotent absurdity of  
 an apolitical poet's manifesto of his  
 distaste for the down and dirty when  
 objectionable slogans have become even  
 more objectionable bricks and bullets and  
 the objectionable people who take it all  
 seriously are lying in pools of blood in  
 their ugly squalid streets.

And that may indeed have been it,  
 for the self righteousness of non-  
 sectarianism has to be wallowed in and  
 made to seem existential. It is not a quiet  
 satisfaction that can be held to a private  
 consummation. No! No! No! Non-  
 sectarianism has to be trumpeted to rub  
 its victims' noses in their supposed  
 responsibility for it all. It has to be blared  
 out to raise the better sort above the  
 squalor while ensuring nothing changes  
 in the conditions that produce the  
 circumstances it deplors. All in all a  
 typically loud and inappropriate, very  
 very bourgeois lack of decorum and  
 discretion.

And so enough of that.

That Irish poets should learn their  
 trade to sing whatever is well made is  
 not in dispute. I'm just making the point  
 that the elitist sentiments and anglicised  
 agendas of non-sectarianism are incap-  
 able of being well made in any fully  
 realised poem. The raw material is  
 inherently lumpen. So Yeats' clumsy  
 lines in *September 1913* about fumbling  
 in a greasy till, adding the halfpence to  
 the pence, are worked up by MacNeice  
 to produce an even clumsier image of  
 schoolchildren fumbling their sums in a  
 half-dead language.

And I'm not suggesting that bad  
 politics need necessarily make for bad  
 poetry. The reverse is frequently the case.  
 Yeats' caricature of the Countess' glor-  
 ious later years in *In Memory Of Eva  
 Gore-Booth And Con Markiewicz* is bad  
 politics and bad taste but wonderful,  
 beautiful poetry. A five-minute IRB man  
 he projected his puerile notion of  
 romantic Ireland onto the great John  
 O'Leary, but *September 1913* is still a  
 fine poem. And "*Did that play of mine  
 send out certain men the English shot?*"  
 I mean really Yeats, catch yourself on!  
 This list could go on and on... ✨

Just finally then; Yeats came politic-  
 ally to a bad end, writing atrocious

More Vox Pat on page 31

**Separation Case**

"A father of four who was jailed two weeks ago for contempt of orders made in family law proceedings brought by the man's wife in Circuit Court proceedings was freed on certain conditions by the High Court on May 30, 2006.

"The man was freed on entering into his own bond of €1,000 and on condition he speedily pursue, via High Court judicial review proceedings, his challenge to the jurisdiction of the Circuit Court to make orders affecting him in family law proceedings.

"The man had claimed that, because he had declined to participate in the judicial separation proceedings initiated by his wife and had not entered an appearance in those proceedings, then therefore the Circuit Court had no jurisdiction to make orders relating to custody of his children, payment of maintenance or access.

"The court was told he was jailed after refusing to obey those orders and stating he would continue to disobey them. He contends a marriage cannot be both soluble and indissoluble and the Circuit Court is not entitled to make orders in family law proceedings which he has declined to involve himself in.

"While freeing the man yesterday afternoon, Mr Justice Micheal Hanna said the man had decided to go about his case by 'the scenic route'—via a challenge to the legality of his detention brought under Article 40 of the Constitution" and had "only himself to blame for the pickle he was in".

It may be the man has a point in challenging the Circuit Court's jurisdiction to act as he had, the judge added. However, that was not for him to decide in these Article 40 proceedings.

"The case had reached a jurisdictional logjam largely through the man's fault and not that of the Circuit Court, the judge added.

"Mr Justice Hanna stressed the conditional release was not to be treated as a tactic to delay matters. He was taking the man at face value, the man believed he had a bona fide case in relation to his argument that the marriage which he had entered into was sacred." (*Irish Examiner*, 31.5.2006).

Article 41 of the Constitution of Ireland covers 'The Family'.

**Presbyterianisation**

An eminent scripture scholar has said that the Irish Catholic Church is going through a process of "Presbyterianisation".

Fr. Kieran O'Mahony, head of scripture at the Milltown Institute, Dublin, told the twentieth Pobal conference at the weekend, 18/19 February, 2006, that a main trend in Irish Catholicism today was greater participation of lay people in church administration, especially at parish level.

This "Presbyterianisation of parishes", he said, was taking place at "an extraordinary moment" in the history of the Irish Catholic Church.

It was happening at a time of steep decline in numbers of priests, and after "the self inflicted wounds of the institutional Church" as a result of clerical child sex abuse scandals. In Presbyterianism, the system of Church governance is rooted in the rights of elders—lay persons—to appoint and regulate ministers.

"An annual General Assembly is the principal authority in Presbyterianism composed of ministers, elders and its parish members. As the Presbyterian Church ordains married women as well as married men, implicit in Fr O' Mahony's observation that the Catholic Church's celibacy rule will be modified to allow for married men priests and for women priests" (*Irish Ind*, 20.2.2006).

**The Queen & Father Mathew (1846)**

The Franciscan friar, Father Theobald Mathew, has administered the temperance pledge to half the adult population of Ireland and accomplished "the most beneficent and peaceful revolution ever wrought in the social habits of a country". The British Prime Minister, wishful to reward him, after his labours have broken his health, with a small Civil List pension, finds that the Queen does not approve.

"Osborne, 10th July, 1846.

"The Queen approves of the pensions proposed by Lord J. Russell, though she cannot conceal from him that she thinks the one to Father Mathew a doubtful proceeding. It is quite true that he has done much good by preaching temperance, but by the aid of superstition, which can hardly be patronized by the Crown.

"The Queen is sure that Lord John will like her at all times to speak out her mind, and has, therefore, done so without reserve. *Victoria R.*"

—Letter to Lord John Russell.

**Cycling Ban (1935)**

The National Athletic and Cycling Association banned women from taking part in any events and competitions on 3rd March 1935.

The decision met with widespread protest but there was strong clerical support from priests and bishops.

Dr. John Charles McQuaid, then President of Blackrock College, said that no boy from his college would compete at any meeting at which women were allowed take part.

The untimely death of the great Glen Rovers and Cork camogie star Peggy Horgan (nee Dorgan) on 6th March 6, 2006, brings to mind a similar ban:

"Peggy was by now married to well-known GAA referee Willie Horgan and it was a historic day in more ways than one as Peggy became the first married player to win a senior All-Ireland medal with Cork. There had been a ban on married players lining out with inter-county teams, but in 1968, the year Peggy married, the rule was changed" (*Evening Echo*, 11.3.2003).

**David Quinn**

David Quinn, the former Editor of the *Irish Catholic* and for two years Religious and Social Affairs Correspondent with the *Irish Independent*, was appointed as Social Affairs Editor with the *Tory Irish Daily Mail*, taking up his post on 23rd January 2006. His responsibilities also included religious reporting.

However, by 1st March 2006, the *Irish Independent* announced that Mr. Quinn was rejoining the paper and would be writing a weekly column. The announcement also stated that Quinn was to "join the *Irish Independent's* recently appointed Religious Affairs Correspondent, John Cooney".

"'Recently appointed' is an accurate description of what had transpired as Cooney demanded and secured his new title within hours of finding out that Quinn was to rejoin the paper. The battle for Irish souls will now be fought out between the two theological opponents within rather than without the *Indo* with Cooney in the ascent for the moment."

The *Phoenix* magazine, 24th February 2006, claims that Progressive Democrat Leader, Mary Harney engaged in discreet talks with Mr. Quinn— "so discreet that she did not tell McDowell or Liz O'Donnell, two of the Godless Dublin set". The possibility was mooted of Quinn, from Clontarf, standing in a Dail constituency at the next election and Dublin Central offers perhaps the only opening. Fine Gael lost their seat there with the late Jim Mitchell's last run-out in 2002.

"But if the PDs position a high profile candidate like Quinn in the constituency before the FG get their act together, they could cause a shock."

## The Times, The Pope And Hitler

Here is how the London *Times* greeted the prospect of a German Pope:

"Unknown to many members of the church Ratzinger's past includes brief membership of the Hitler Youth movement and wartime service with a German army anti-aircraft unit. Although there is no suggestion that he was involved in any atrocities, his service may be contrasted by opponents with the attitude of John Paul II, who took part in anti-Nazi theatre performances in his native Poland and in 1986 became the first pope to visit Rome's synagogue."

"The son of a rural Bavarian police officer, Ratzinger was six when Hitler came to power in 1933. His father, also called Joseph, was an anti-Nazi whose attempts to rein in Hitler's Brown Shirts forced the family to move home several times. In 1937 Ratzinger's father retired and the family moved to Traunstein, a staunchly Catholic town in Bavaria close to the Führer's mountain retreat in Berchtesgaden. He joined the Hitler Youth aged 14, shortly after membership was made compulsory in 1941. Two years later Ratzinger was enrolled in an anti-aircraft unit that protected a BMW factory making aircraft engines. The workforce included slaves from Dachau concentration camp."

"Ratzinger has insisted he never took part in combat or fired a shot—adding that his gun was not even loaded—because of a badly infected finger. He was sent to Hungary, where he set up tank traps and saw Jews being herded to death camps. He deserted in April 1944 and spent a few weeks in a prisoner of war camp."

"He has since said that although he was opposed to the Nazi regime, any open resistance would have been futile. Some locals in Traunstein, like Elizabeth Lohner, 84, whose brother-in-law was sent to Dachau as a conscientious objector, dismiss such suggestions. "It was possible to resist, and those people set an example for others", she said. "The Ratzingers were young and had made a different choice" (17.4.05).

The *Times* was presumably impressed then when Pope Benedict recently did penance at Auschwitz for his Nazi past and for being a German and a Nazi—and maybe even for being a Catholic.

I must admit my first impressions on hearing of Ratzinger's past were entirely positive. What more noble an occupation could he have had than to be an anti-aircraft gunner, shooting down allied aircraft heading to wipe out German civilians.

But notice the underlying message that runs through the *Times*: the future Pope was responsible—like all Germans—for what happened to the Jews.

The *Times* does not of course mention its own responsibility for Hitler—or its facilitating the increase in Hitler's power and popularity. It does not mention how it championed British appeasement of the Nazis up until 1939 and only went over to a war policy when it believed Hitler had fulfilled his uses for the British balance of power and had got a little too big for his jackboots.

One *Fellow* of All Souls, Oxford or another edited the *Times* for nearly sixty years. During this time it had "*an extraordinary political influence*", according to A.L. Rouse, *All Souls And Appeasement*, himself a Fellow.

Geoffrey Dawson, Editor of the *Times*, and *Round Table* member, acted for the Chamberlain Government throughout the mid-1930s as signaller to Hitler that his breaches of Versailles would be tolerated by Britain. He did so by arguing for German rearmament and remilitarisation of the Rhineland in March 1936 on behalf of the British Government in editorials. The *Times* argued against the Franco-Russian pact and against French attempts to form alliances against Hitler. In mid-1938 Dawson prepared the ground amongst the important people in England for the Munich surrender, arguing for the cessation of the Sudetan areas of Czechoslovakia.

Dawson was operating the balance of power policy against France, arguing for German resurrection as a counter-weight to French influence on the Continent. Britain could not, of course, tolerate any emerging power in Europe.

Rouse, a left wing anti-appeaser said:

"whatever concessions were justifiable to Weimar Germany, no concessions should ever be given to Hitler... The generals would certainly have got rid of him if we had not presented him with success after success on a platter. There was no conception of this in the mind of Dawson and Barrington-Ward: indeed they played Hitler's game from the first right up till it ended in war, having no conception that in this country's

historic policy of grand alliance lay our own safety" (pp7-8).

The "*historic policy of grand alliance*" was of course the policy of balance of power. And that was the basic point of difference between appeaser and anti-appeaser: at what point should Germany become the object of a grand alliance against her? And should that grand alliance include the Bolsheviks? Was Germany at the point when she might become powerful and influential enough that Britain could not tolerate her and seek to crush her, even in alliance with the ideological enemy of Bolshevism? At that point, Britain should end the condemnation of French efforts to contain Germany and begin efforts herself to do so, using the French as the main cannon-fodder.

The basic difference between appeaser and anti-appeaser was one of timing. In 1938-9 anti-appeasers wanted war with Germany whilst appeasers were prepared to hold on to the old balance-of-power orientation for a time.

Having resisted all of the Weimar Republic's demands for justice, and then encouraged Hitler and given him the Midas touch in Germany's resurrection, how could Britain and the *Times* expect the German people to resist him? Did they expect them to be the simple pawns of the volatility of British foreign policy?

Rouse makes a revealing comment later about the nature of anti-appeasement, when commenting on the nature of the appeasers:

"They all shared a nonconformist origin, and its characteristic self-righteousness... These things are more important than people realise; to the historian they are significant elements. One way or another they had none of the old 18th Century Aristocracy's guts—they were middle class men with pacifist backgrounds and no knowledge of Europe... Of the most ennobled of them Churchill has a verbal comment: 'Grovel, grovel, grovel! First grovel to the Indians, then grovel to the Germans; next grovel to the Americans, then its grovel to the Russians.' The plain truth is that their deepest instinct was defeatist, their highest wisdom surrender" (pp19-20).

Churchill had begun the twentieth century as an arch-appeaser—of the Irish. He believed that it was worth appeasing the Irish because they could be made, like the Boers, into a first-class race and partners in Empire. He annoyed his former Tory colleagues when he championed Home Rule against those who believed the Catholic Irish were a crowd of mere "*Hottentots*" (in Lord Salisbury's phrase) not fit for government, and dared to suggest that the "*great governing race*" (in Joe

Chamberlain's phrase) of Ulster Protestants should be put in a democracy with them. The Indians were a different story, a different racial category, not fit to be a great governing race.

Churchill put himself in the wilderness not in opposition to Hitler or Mussolini, whom he greatly admired as leaders, but in opposition to giving Indians any small measure of self-government.

Far from being a great moral force against Nazism and Fascism, anti-appeasement was simply the old British desire of remaining racial top dogs of the world—the best of breeds, so to speak.

In the midst of all this humbug and hypocrisy we are not convinced of general German responsibility for the world war of 1939-45 or indeed for what happened to the Jews in the course of it. And we are not advocates of the racial theory that was so popular in British circles before Hitler made a disgrace of it. So we will only assign the present Pope only with the responsibility for his office and the actions of his predecessors in that office.

One thing we are certain of and that is that what happened to the Jews cannot be disconnected from the war—and particularly the Russian/German war of 1941-45. If the war had not occurred, it would be hard to see how the Jewish holocaust would or could have taken place. That is within the basic run of cause and effect that history seems to be not about anymore.

So any responsibility for the Jewish holocaust should really start with responsibility for the outbreak of war in 1939 and the prolongation of it after 1940-1—when it could well have ended on reasonable terms.

Last year I gave a speech to the Casement Society in Dublin about how Britain frustrated the efforts of Pope Benedict XV to end the Great War. Well, well, what do we find in 1939 but the same characters playing the same parts again in Round Two.

Pope Pius XII had been elected in March 1939 in a situation quite similar to Benedict XV in 1914. European war was on the cards and the Cardinals selected a Pope who was skilled in diplomacy and offered the best hope for Church to achieve the prevention of war.

Pius launched a major peace initiative in May 1939 and made an offer to the Poles to use the papal offices to achieve an understanding with Germany. In August he appealed to the world not to go to war over Danzig.

Pope Pius tried to save the Poles from the idiocy of their leaders. The signing of the German-Russian pact should have

clarified the situation in Eastern Europe for the Polish leaders. It was a choice of negotiating with Germany on the basis of Hitler's *Marienwerder* proposals or relying on Anglo-French military help to cut Germany down to size.

The *Marienwerder* proposals were more important for what they meant than for what they actually proposed. They effectively envisaged a long negotiating process of probably a year to sort out the Danzig situation. But neither Poland nor Britain chose to start such a process. Britain trusted on Poland rejecting the offer and Poland trusted on British military support when she did.

Pius sent Papal Nuncio Cortesi to Warsaw to see the Polish Foreign Minister Beck urging him to accept negotiations with Germans on the basis of the *Marienwerder* proposals. Beck, however, furiously rejected the Nuncio and trusted in Britain to support her in a war with Germany.

Germany and Poland had more in common in 1939 than they disagreed about. Germany and Poland had common interests—mainly in relation to keeping Bolshevik Russia out of Europe. And it is often underestimated how important this consideration was, and how influential it was in producing the fascist response, amongst the weakened offspring of Versailles.

Relations between Nazi Germany under Hitler and Poland were much better than between the Poles and Weimar Germany. Nevertheless, Germany had a number of legitimate grievances in relation to Poland. There was the problem of the substantial German minority in Poland as a result of Versailles, a minority that suffered more persecution as tensions grew between the two nations. And there was the problem of Danzig.

The background to the problem of Danzig was explained very well in the *Catholic Bulletin* of June 1938, well before the War:

"Where is that city of Danzig? A glance at the map shows that East Prussia is separated from the rest of Germany by a strip of land less than fifty miles wide. This is the famous Polish Corridor, a strip of land joining the inland state of Poland to the Baltic Sea. Between East Prussia and the Corridor the river Vistula flows with the city of Danzig lying across the river at its mouth. The city is the river port.

Now Danzig, as nobody denies, is overwhelmingly a German city. Its population, history, culture and language are German. However, the river Vistula in all except the few miles which run through Danzig is Polish, and the natural part of Danzig as a

trading city is to serve the basin of the Vistula; that is, to serve as the trading centre for Poland. We have therefore a German city with a Polish trade."

"What we are not told by the English newspapers is the treatment that Danzig received from the State of Poland after the Great War. Danzig was too German and too large to be incorporated in the Polish State, so the Peace Conference made a Free City of it under a commissioner appointed by the League of Nations—an office which our fellow-countryman, Mr. Sean Lester, occupied not without credit. The Poles were jealous of this German Free City, and they speedily set to work to build another seaport on the Baltic where their Corridor strikes the sea a little to the North of Danzig. This new port bears the Polish name of Gdynia. It cost millions of money to build, for a piece of land ill-suited for development as a seaport was used for this purpose. An enormous new city, with splendid docks and quays, was constructed, and almost the whole external trade of Poland was diverted thereto. Danzig was left to languish without trade, and it is more easy to imagine than to describe the sentiments of the German population of this boycotted Free City. Imagine the mind of a population which was refused liberty to be attached to its own nationality, and was starved by the other nationality in whose interest it was separated."

"Elementary justice manifests the demands that the people of Danzig should be free to hoist their nation's flag in their own city. Danzig ought to be incorporated in East Prussia and thus to form a city of the Reich. Anyone who denies this denies the principles of nationality and of justice. The British refusal to assent to the incorporation of Danzig with Germany is all of a piece with the same nation's refusal to allow the ardently Irish town of Newry to come under the Irish flag. It is an act of infamous aggression against the Reich.

"The Germans are not content, however, to ask that Danzig be restored to German sovereignty. Herr Hitler has asked Poland to assent to the construction of a German highway across the Polish Corridor, linking Danzig and East Prussia to the German mainland. If the Poles are entitled to possess a corridor to the sea, the Germans are entitled to possess a corridor to East Prussia—that is the German argument. That German highway would not entail the loss of territory to Poland; it would simply mean a road and a railway which would be accessible to German use and

policed at German expense."

"Whether the demand is just, we leave to the reader's judgment but at least it may be affirmed that it is not unreasonable. If the Poles were to assent to it, nobody would be a penny the worse save those who desire the permanent weakening of the German nation. Yet it is astonishing to find with what unanimity the English Press has opposed a German-Polish settlement on these lines... Germany must be kept out of Danzig and denied a corridor to East Prussia even at the cost of another world war."

"In the first place, if we contemplate the outbreak of war, with Poland ranged as an enemy against Germany, it is perfectly evident that Danzig would immediately fall. Time Poles could not hold a German city against its will, when that city was adjacent as Danzig is to German territory on the one side and separated from the German mainland on the other by a strip of only a few miles. Within an hour of the outbreak of war, German forces would be in the city and the tiny strip of land called the Corridor would be completely dominated by German aeroplanes and German guns. Wherever Poland was able to make its stand in war against Germany it would not be in this zone... Whether Germany is in Danzig in time of peace or not, she certainly would be there in time of war. Therefore, to keep her out in time of peace can have no effect on a war situation save to intensify the German resolve to obtain that city and the German indignation against the nation which tried to withhold it from her."

"Germany is not guilty on the Continent of any act of aggression comparable to the British occupation of Northern Ireland or the Partition of Palestine, the seizure of the Sudan or the subjection of India. Yet the spokesman of a nation which has these things to its record assumes that Germany cannot obtain possession of a German port or access to German territory without using these proper privileges to the detriment of its neighbours. The Polish nation would do well to consider carefully what purpose lies behind such propaganda... Poles ought to ask themselves whether they would be wiser to treat the great German nation with respect and to grant it those facilities which Poland itself demands; that is to say, to assent to a reciprocal arrangement in the difficult Corridor area. If Poland refuses such a settlement and prefers to serve British interests by perpetuating the Partition of Germany in the East, she must bear the brunt of the conflict whenever it comes to pass.

Let Poles ask themselves whether they should risk their country's freedom and peace in order to become a cats paw of those powers who have seized the German colonies and are determined to prevent the revival of German power"

Chamberlain gave Poland a guarantee that England would come to its aid if Poland should be attacked by Germany on 31st March 1939. This is well described as a blank check. This was extraordinary. Britain had never put its destiny in the hands of another country. When one thinks of the lengths Britain went to in 1914 to avoid committing themselves to their French allies (of the secret understandings) what happened in 1939 is incomprehensible.

But it was never the intention of Britain to come to the aid of Poland. The purpose of the 'guarantee' was to incite Poland to provoke Germany into war. Poland was to act as a detonator for European conflict—as Serbia had in 1914. And like Serbia Poland was to be destroyed—having fulfilled its purpose.

Britain cared little about Danzig. It knew Danzig to be an artificial construction and by all standards of self-determination it was German and should have been part of the Reich. Britain had been quite interested in redressing the injustices of Versailles when this had been to the detriment of France and the advantage of the balance of power. It had continuously conceded to Hitler's revisions of Versailles. But now, after Munich, Germany had altered the balance-of-power in Europe by too much and British policy changed to stopping German power and influence through alliance and war.

Britain knew Danzig was a bad excuse for war. It was understood that Danzig was one of the grosser injustices of Versailles. But Britain regarded Danzig as important because a Polish capitulation to German offers would defeat the policy of forming a bloc against Germany. It was therefore in the interest of Britain to suggest that the Poles did not abandon their position in Danzig on the grounds that they were not defensible. The Danzig issue was not allowed to be solved by negotiation with the resultant preservation of peace. The British guarantee to Poland was designed to reinforce Polish resistance and made the country completely intransigent to any German proposals to solve the Danzig question.

In the time of Pilsudski many Poles fancied their chances against Germany and the fear in British circles was that Poland could weaken Germany further (after all Pilsudski had seen off the Red Army in 1920 and Germany's army had been untested in war). But British concessions to Hitler had considerably reduced the prospects of a Polish walkover by 1938-9.

Poland had no reason to provoke Germany into attacking it before the British

guarantee. By 1939 the Poles could not expect to achieve any of their objectives in war through their own efforts. Their hope of victory rested with foreign powers. The Polish leaders were probably more enthusiastic about a German-Polish War than Hitler was, but it would have been very impolitic to say so.

Poland counted on the support of Britain for any territorial aggrandisement at the expense of Germany. But the Polish leaders knew that France and the United States were also of great importance to British policy. The Poles knew that Britain would not support Poland unless it could get France into a war—since Britain could not expect to win a war against Germany without the participation of France. The Poles also knew that it would be difficult for Roosevelt to mobilise the American democracy against Germany unless it was possible to maintain that Poland was the innocent victim of German aggression.

Polish provocation of Germany in the form of ethnic cleansing increased after the British backing of March 1939, and Hitler soon had more than sufficient justification to go to war with Poland on the basis of the traditional practices of European nations. But Hitler, who maintained it to have been the Kaiser's great mistake to antagonise England in 1914, hoped to avoid war with Britain, whom he greatly admired. And he knew that he would run a big risk of war if he invaded Poland, given the British guarantee.

German-Polish relations became progressively worse from the time of the British guarantee because it was in the Polish interest to make them so. Hitler, who was usually decisive in conducting his policy, showed considerable indecision and dithering before he finally decided to act in September 1939. He calculated that, if he gave the British, French and Poles (and perhaps the Bolsheviks) the Winter to organise, Germany would be encircled by a powerful alliance and destroyed, as in 1914-19.

The Pope and the *Catholic Bulletin* knew the ultimate outcome of a European war—Poland destroyed, ultimately Germany defeated, and Bolshevik Russia in central Europe. All this was predicted by the *Bulletin* in the latter part of 1939.

If Britain had fought for Poland in September 1939 there may have been no World War. But Britain wanted a World War instead of a war over Poland. In the course of that World War maybe 50 million died, amongst them the Jews.

Should a German boy who became Pope half a century later be held responsible for the volatile blunderings of a power that had overstretched itself, which was a model for Hitler, and whose activities in the world from 1905 onwards was largely responsible for what happened to Europe and its Jews from 1939-45? \*



On 20th April 2006 the Vincent Browne Radio Show went out live from the Imperial War Museum. Here is an extract in which Browne quizzes the Northern Ireland-based academic, Keith Jeffrey, about the Great War. Jeffrey edited the *Military Correspondence Of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson* for the (British) Army Records Society. Wilson, during the years before 1914, organised the detailed military preparations with France for war with Germany. Jeffrey initially adopts a didactic manner more appropriate to the *kindergarten*, possibly not realising that Browne's audience is quite sophisticated. But Browne's persistent, deceptively simple, questions reveal the shallowness of patriotism passing for history. The conversation is particularly apposite in view of the decision of the Irish State to join the July Commemorations of the Somme slaughter

### A Great War History Lesson From Keith Jeffreys

*Browne:* Let's talk a bit about the 1st World and how it came about. Tell us how it came about.

*Keith Jeffrey:* Well, I don't know if you've got three hours for my course on the 1st WW. But basically it's a fight for dominance in Europe between the Great Powers of Europe: France, Britain, Germany, Russia, are all grown-up Powers. For most of the 19th century, until the late 19th century, there's a sort of balance-of-power between them. But Germany upsets this balance-of-power, by industrialising, by growing, by flexing its muscles increasingly, through the late 19th century, and begins to threaten what the British perceive as their key place in the world hierarchy. And also seems to threaten both the French and the Russians. And the French and the Russians then ally together against this perceived threat. They draw in the British. From Berlin it is as if they're being surrounded. So the Germans then—there's a sort of auction of threats. There's an arms race, building bigger and better battleships, arming more and more soldiers. So that, by the time you get to 1914, everyone is prepared to go to war. No one wants war necessarily. Or no one particularly wants war. But it's regarded, as it were, as a legitimate option. And the Continent steps into it, due to a Baltic—not a Baltic, a Balkan—crisis, which gradually sucks this network of alliances into the War.

*V.B.* Archduke Ferdinand murdered, or assassinated, in Sarajevo... That occasioned Austria to attempt to curb Serbia. Serbia's ally, Russia, thereby became involved. Russia's ally, France, then becomes involved. And then Germany feels that it can't remain aside because its ally is Austria. You can see how that might have happened alright. But how did Britain get involved? What was Britain doing?

*K.J.* Well Britain can't afford one country, or particularly Germany, to dominate the Continent. If the Germans

win then they're going to present a major threat to Britain.

*V.B.* Why?

*K.J.* Because the Germans are beginning to move into the world stage. One of the real threats that the British feel is the construction of the German Navy. Now Germany doesn't have many colonies. They don't matter very much. It doesn't have world-wide assets. But suddenly they're beginning a grown-up navy to match the British Navy. And the British are saying: "*what's this for? The only people it can threaten is us. Therefore, we're going to take them on.*"

*V.B.* It seems a fairly slim basis on which to go to war: fear of a revamped German Navy.

*K.J.* Well, no. There's an ideological underpinning to this as well. Britain and France are more liberal democracies—neither are pure democracies—but they're more liberal democracies than the Imperial military autocracies of Germany and Austria. Now, Russia's the odd one out in this sense, because in no way it's a democracy in 1914. It's a marriage of convenience with the French. But the British are also worried about what they characterise as Prussian militarism, as a Prussian and a German acceptance that *Might is Right*. And, because they're the strongest nation in Europe, because they've got the biggest Navy, or they're ambitious for the biggest Army, they can do whatever they like. And the precise moment, or excuse, or reason, for the British to go to war was when the Germans invade Belgium. And the British say, "*You simply can't do that*".

*V.B.* There was a very strong anti-war sentiment in Britain at the time. The left-wing Liberal opinion didn't want war. And I assume the majority of the population didn't want war either. Would that be true?

*K.J.* Yes. It's difficult. There are no public opinion surveys precisely to measure this. There is one thesis that talks about the spirit of 1914, about the crowds rushing to the recruiting offices and cheering war. And there is—quite a lot of people accept war. They don't realise what the cost is going to be. You see, we look back and we know what happened, we know how terrible it was. In 1914 everyone thinks it's going to be over by Christmas, or most people do. So, in that sense, your opposition to the War is qualified. There are people who reluctantly say: "*We're not interested, or we don't want war, but we feel it's our moral duty to go to war*".

[There was a discussion about the course of the War, then:]

*V.B.* There had been conscription in Germany, I assume in Austria and in France. No conscription in Britain or Ireland. But huge numbers of people joined up.

*K.J.* Yes, yes, yes. I mean, conscription comes in Britain, though never in Ireland, it comes in Britain in 1916. Every other Army has a conscript Army. They've already organised this, and mobilised the whole workforce. What is remarkable about what happens in Britain, and indeed in Ireland, is the level of civilian volunteers.

*V.B.* How many?

*K.J.* Well, Kitchener—that great poster, you recall: *Your Country Needs You!*—Kitchener called for 100,000 volunteers. And they get this in a fortnight. And they have a second hundred thousand. They have a third hundred thousand. No fewer than three or four hundred thousand have joined up before the end of 1914. It's extraordinary...

*V.B.* How many people died in the War?

*K.J.* Twenty million?

*V.B.* Twenty million!

*K.J.* Well, it depends where you look at the casualties. Whether you look at military casualties, whether you look at civilian casualties, which aren't counted the same way. How do you measure who's a war casualty? The people who die of hunger in Germany, or in Russia, or in the Eastern Front. The Eastern Front is hardly touched at all. So you're talking in tens of millions.

*V.B.* And how many on the British side died, the British and Irish side, died?

*K.J.* Well, about a million.

[They go into the Exhibition. Later Browne asks what that waste of human life was for.]

K.J. Well, it's very difficult. I mean we can look back and judge and think: Would things have been any different if at all? And I think it's important to detach the process of the War from the point of the War. There is an argument to say—I mean the countries that end up on the winning side are the more democratic countries, and the countries that end up on the losing side are the less democratic countries. That seems a good thing. But whether it was necessary to pay the particular price that was paid by the individuals is less certain.

V.B. But the countries that ended up on the winning side were countries more democratic than the other countries to begin with.

K.J. Indeed. But they were able to mobilise a war which mobilises whole nations more [unintelligible] and more adequately than the autocracies.

V.B. Yes, but you were saying earlier on, from 20 million died in this War. And you look at the causes, or the reasons, for the War, and it doesn't amount to a hill of beans.

K.J.. No, what, well, I think, I'm not sure that that's the case. I think that there were serious— We patronise the past if we think that our predecessors were too stupid to know what they were doing, and that those men who joined up this War felt that, many of them felt, it was the right thing to do. And I think we have to be a bit careful about dismissing their sacrifice and their engagement as if it didn't matter.

V.B. But what was it about? What was it for? What did all those Irish people who gave their lives in the War, what were they fighting for?

K.J. Well, one of the reasons the War survived that long is that there are a whole complex of reasons, that you can't just reduce it to one issue. And that people are fighting for the freedom of small nations. They are fighting for—

V.B. —Belgium?

K.J. Well, they are fighting for national freedom. Now there are Irishmen across—

V.B. —You're talking about Belgium, are you?

K.J. Yes. And Serbia. And France, yes.

V.B. The most horrific coloniser there has been, who perpetrated war crimes in Africa, war crimes that were exposed by Roger Casement.

K.J. Absolutely. But Casement was no pacifist. I mean Casement would engage with the War, not against—I mean not necessarily because it was against Belgium, but certainly in favour of Germany. And, I think that you can't

just reduce the War to a series of slogans, one way or the other. The one slogan that you can perhaps reduce it to is that costs were so high that you hesitate, that you think, and that you pause before you commit yourself to a war.

V.B. But, with respect, Keith, you haven't given me one good reason on why those people lost their lives, why twenty million people were killed—especially for Britain.

K.J. Hmm.

V.B. It had no engagement in the issues that arose, apart from apprehension about a Germany Navy being built up.

K.J. Well I, I still think there's an argument there's an argument for fighting in favour of democracy against autocracy.

V.B. All right. We've got to leave it there.

Seán McGouran

## The Third Force *or*

### The Knights Of Columbanus In The GPO

This year, the ninetieth anniversary of the Easter Rising, SIPTU, the successor body to Connolly and Larkin's IT&GWU (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) commemorated its contribution to the Rising—the Irish Citizen Army. The Citizen Army is mentioned in the Proclamation of the Republic. Given that its founder and commander, James Connolly, was co-opted onto the Military Council of the IRB (Irish Republican Brotherhood) in January of 1916, and helped plan the Rising, that is no surprise.

A number of people involved themselves in the Rising who were entirely, or semi-, detached from the Volunteers or the Irish Citizen Army—John MacBride, and The O'Rahilly, for example. But there was an organised group of well-armed men who are rarely mentioned in connection with the Rising, the *Hibernian Rifles*. (The name was probably taken from a number of military formations in the Union and Confederate Armies in America—some State Troopers in various US States also bore this designation.) As the name implies, this was a wing of the Ancient Order of Hibernians—but not the Redmondite 'constitutionalist' Board of Erin, the National President of which was Joe Devlin, the West Belfast MP.

By 1916 there were two wings of the AOH. The AOH to which the Hibernian Rifles belonged was sub-titled *the Irish American Alliance*. It was essentially the section in Ireland of the American AOH, which at that point was a 'mass front organisation' for the Fenian IRB / Clan(n) na (n)Gael. The mainstream group in Ireland was known as the *AOH, Board of Erin*.

There was also a Scottish AOH.

#### Some Background

The first AOH was founded in Ireland. It originated in the Ribbon

Societies of the 18th to 19th centuries. And, to an extent, it never overcame its decentralised Ribbon ancestry.

In the 1830s an AOH was founded in America, but on centralised lines. The Scottish AOH followed a couple of decades later on the centralised American model as well.

In the mid-1880s *Clann na Gael/Fenians* made an attempt to take over the American Order, which was the biggest Irish group in the world, and probably the biggest 'ethnic' group in the USA. Their *coup* failed, and the AOH split into two factions, both claiming to be the 'true' AOH. 'Warring' is the only word for their relationship. They fought over who had the ear of the boss of the Hibernians in Ireland and about the sort of thing that makes non-'Hibs' smile—passwords and 'merchandise'. And access to money. The 'respectable' Hibernians gave the distinct impression that they thought little of the AOH in Ireland, which was virtually non-existent at the time. This was before Joe Devlin and his circle took over. The Scottish organisation was much bigger and more vigorous.

Both factions were agreed on matters like sending subsidies to Ireland for various projects, such as the major, Dublin, Manchester Martyrs commemorations—but the IRB dominated the group by the 1910s. (Information on the reunion from T.J. McGrath's *History Of The AOH—Cleveland, 1898*.) A further result of the reunion was that the American Order dominated the fragmented Irish one by way of such subsidies.

The major American AOH organisation made earnest attempts to reunite the organisation in the States in the run-up to the centenary celebrations of the United Irish rising in 1898. And they succeeded. But the movement in Ireland continued to be fragmented, which meant that American influence carried a lot of weight..

In the years after the American AOH became united, the Irish Republican Brotherhood gradually increased its influence in the organisation.

### Irish AOH

In the late 19th century the Irish AOH had no corporate existence. The 'Board of Erin', as the AOH was known, was pulled together in 1902, essentially by Joe Devlin and his Belfast-based faction. (By that time the Scottish organisation effectively recognised the American AOH as the leading organisation., asking it for pass-word and so on—and to an accept taking political direction from it)

A dispute arose about registering the AOH as a Benevolent Society under the terms of the Friendly Societies Act of 1896 (under which the State subsidised self-help social insurance). The Order in Ireland, despite the fact that it was about to fall under the influence of the Redmondite Joe Devlin, did not want to register. That meant opening its books, and its business, to inspection by the (UK) authorities. (Its business, despite wild-eyed denunciations by Ascendancy and Conservative conspiracy theorists, was pretty innocuous. It was largely getting out the living—and probably the dead—to vote for the Redmondite United Irish League / UIL.)

A second, characteristic, criticism was that the bishops and priests disapproved of the BOE—thereby making it a 'dissident' body. In fact, the critics were more republican-minded than the majority.

There was a split in the AOH in Ireland. The people who left were under American influence and became the *AOH, Irish American Alliance*. They had previously registered the name Ancient Order of Hibernians in 1897, which made life complicated for the Board of Erin. The IAA went on to establish the *AOH Benefit Society* under the Insurance Act, under direct influence of the Scottish AOH.

It held a convention in Glasgow in 1905 and attacked the larger wing, the *AOH, Board of Erin* (BOE), for not being prepared to become a Benevolent Society (under UK law).

The IAA was pro-Sinn Féin and anti-Redmond.

After the Board of Erin was taken in hand by Joe Devlin, it expanded very fast, both recruiting individual members and starting new "divisions" or branches. But the main areas of growth were in Ulster and Connacht. Devlin brought the BOE under the Friendly Societies Act, which stimulated growth.

The IAA was by far the minority group, to the tune of roughly nine to one and it lost members and whole 'divisions' over the following decade.

The reasons are clear: The Parliamentary Party was about to achieve Home Rule, and the Board of Erin itself had become a Benevolent Society.

But the minority Order created a situation where the vast wealth and influence of the American AOH was not harnessed to the 'constitutional' effort of Redmond's United Irish League. In November 1906 the American body attempted to find out what exactly was the situation in Ireland, and John Dillon set out the Board of Erin's argument for recognition. The Donegal writer Séumas MacManus, the National President of the IAA's Benevolent Society set out his argument, but also pointed out that the BOE was simply an arm of the United Irish League, a wing of Redmond's Irish Parliamentary Party—and given that John Dillon was the deputy leader of that party, he was rather effective. The American body decided to leave well alone. (At that point Clan na Gael / Fenians had not completely taken over the Order in the USA.)

In 1908, at its convention in Indianapolis, the American Order resolved that it should make an attempt to unite "*all Hibernians in Ireland, England and Scotland*" to prepare for a federation of the bodies in "*Ireland and Great Britain and the Order in America*". (It is odd that the resolution speaks of 'Great Britain': the AOH remained an essentially Scottish phenomenon.)

The BOE did not like this idea for two main reasons. It regarded itself as the parent body and resented the American Order taking on such a task. The BOE must have realised that the US group was by far the biggest, wealthiest, and most influential branch of the Order—if not the whole 'National movement'. The second reason was that the National President of the American Order, Matthew Cummings, was a member of Clan na Gael. He was asked to travel to Ireland to investigate matters. His travelling companions were Philip O'Donnell, Massachusetts State Chaplain—and Séumas MacManus.

Despite that, the BOE had to meet with Cummings as he was getting a lot of press coverage. The eventual meeting was (to put it mildly) stormy, abusive and unproductive, Cummings shouted that Joe Devlin was a "*bottle-washer*" (an allusion to his trade as barman) and Joe replied in kind by calling him—allegedly—a "*bum politician*". (It was something of a double-whammy, "*bum*" in the US means 'down and out' or generally useless. In Belfast parlance of that time (and until the 1970s, or 80s) it meant boastful or swollen headed. Not the most diplomatic way to conduct

sensitive negotiations.)

Cummings, unsurprisingly, 'recognised' MacManus's Benevolent Society group, which then became the *Irish American Alliance*.

### The Hibernian Rifles

Michael Foy, in his 1976 MA thesis (QUB) states that this was the group's "*high water mark*" and that it essentially fizzled out. Mr. Foy's thesis is frighteningly well-researched, but nevertheless the AOH IAA was not "*finished*".

A monthly publication commenced production in 1915, *The Hibernian* (including the *National Hibernian*), with an emphatic and lengthy sub-heading, *Official Journal of the Parent Body of Ancient Order of Hibernians in Ireland in Alliance with the AOH in America*.

The American Alliance had pretty plush (sounding) headquarters 28 North Frederick Street, "*a fine old Georgian mansion*": it and the journal were presumably the result of 'money from America'.

It also was training its own body of armed men, on the assumption that there was to be some sort of strike against the British authorities. The volunteers of the Hibernian Rifles (meeting, for example, on Sunday, February 28, 1915) were "*fully equipped land carrying their magazine rifles*". Pearse's Irish Volunteers were equipped with near-antique Mauser rifles which were ex-Austrian army stock. They had to be loaded after a shot had been fired—it is questionable if they were any more useful than the fowling pieces (prototype shotguns) used by many insurgents in Wexford in 1798.

The IAA Hibernians may have got their weapons from America—but they may have purchased them out of their own funds. They were clearly not at the plebeian end of the Irish-Ireland movement.

The only on-line mention of the Hibernian Rifles I can find is by the AOH Division in Newry (aoh\_board\_of\_erin@lineone.net). It claims that the Irish Citizen Army and Connolly's *Irish Worker* spoke well of them. In fact the *Irish Worker* was suppressed in 1914 and was replaced by the *Workers' Republic*. Unfortunately I have so far not been able to locate the reference in either.

The IAA journal does carry the legend "*Trade Union*" [printed], though that may be Gilbert Galbraith's Gaelic Press's imprint—the Gaelic Press printed most of the separatist 'mosquito press' in the run-up to the Rising.

On Easter Monday, the Hibernian Rifles, who would not have been affected

by MacNéill's 'countermand', joined in the Rising spontaneously. Fifty men joined the garrison in the GPO. The Hibernian Rifles did not have a Women's—or even Ladies'—auxiliary, in the manner of Cumann na mBan. However, women joined the Citizen Army on the same basis as men, a reason why so many upper- or upper middle-class women were involved with it.

The Rifles, according to the Witness Statement in the Bureau of Military History by Edward Kelly, had the same uniform as the Irish Volunteers, but with "blue facings"—presumably meaning where indications of rank were displayed.

At this point the Hibernian Rifles seem to disappear from history. However, the formation is mentioned in the Free State's Military Pensions Act of 1924: presumably they dissolved into *Oglaigh na hÉireann* / the IRA.

The IAA had (and has) a prolonged afterlife, in the Knights of Columbanus (a Latinisation of Colm Cille). The *Hibernian* Vol 1., No. 7, discussed the notion of a Catholic (no 'Roman' in the American Alliance's organ) version of the Masons.

The Massachusetts Knights of Columbus was mentioned in passing: this group had already spread well out of this area—in fact was founded in Indiana in the 1880s. (There was a very lively publication from Boston called the *National Hibernian*, which carried very detailed news about the debates in Irish Nationalism / Republicanism—and about the Rising. It may have had a particular relationship with the IAA. It—in copies I have seen—took essentially the same line as the IAA.)

There had been an attempt to found a 'Columban Knights' in Dublin in 1913, inspired by the same notions, but it did not get off the ground.

According to the Knights' own website ([www.knightsofstcolumbanus.ie](http://www.knightsofstcolumbanus.ie)), the Order was founded in Belfast in 1915, by James K. Cannon (sic) O'Neill. There is no mention of the Hibernian Rifles, the AOH IAA (nor of the fact that Canon O'Neill was the author of a ballad celebrating the Rising, *The Foggy Dew*. There may have been two Canons O'Neill in Belfast in 1916—but it is unlikely. Some of the 'brave men' from 'Royal Meath' in the ballad may have been volunteers in the Hibernian Rifles. The web-site appears to be suggesting that Downpatrick is in County Antrim. It may have its counties and its dioceses in a knot.)

The Knights became a substantial organisation in the Free State / Éire / the

Republic, though not in Northern Ireland. (It did organise elsewhere, I first encountered the Knights in Barrow-in-Furness in the north of England—hardly an obviously 'Irish' town.)

They founded a publication in 1935 called *Hibernia*, which I have not seen.

The point of writing about this matter is that the historical 'revisionists' have had a fine old time caricaturing the Easter Rising. It was conducted, they imply (or in Kevin Myers's case, bellow out loud) by a collection of social (and sexual) oddities, religious maniacs and bigots, and Anglophobe racists on the

one hand, and proto-Bolsheviks on the other. Myers is a lapsed Leftie hanger-on of the Official Republicans himself, as are a fair few others in the revisionists' slip-stream. Some revisionists will greet the above information as so much more grist to their mill. The Knights of St. Columbanus being good Catholics (but the Hierarchy was suspicious of them till well into the 1930s) of the pre-Vatican II variety could be characterised as bigots. But for these revisionists there remains the problem that they were (and are) also solid bourgeois citizens of the sort a person a journalist like Myers, or even a Professor, might meet socially.

Pat Muldowney

Review of Tom Dunne's *Rebellions* (Lilliput Press, 2004)

## Was The 1798 Scullabogue Massacre A Good Thing?

Tom Dunne is a Cork University Emeritus (i.e. retired) Professor of History; a former Christian Brother from Wexford who, according to himself, came under the influence of the revisionist school of history as a student at Uuniversity College, Dublin in the 1960s and later did research in Cambridge as prelude to a career as an academic historian in UCC.

His book *Rebellions* consists of two parts: first an autobiography; and second, a study of the Battle of New Ross and the massacre of Protestants at Scullabogue outside New Ross on the same day (June 5 1798), both events happening in the area where Dunne grew up and involving his ancestors, both *Dunne* and (on his mother's side) *Rice*. He connects the Wexford Rebellion to the autobiographical part of the book by characterising his own life as a series of rebellions: leaving the Order of the Christian Brothers in 1964 at age 21; rejecting the Nationalist view of Irish history while studying history at UCD in the 60s; resisting Provisional Republicanism by speaking against a *Cumann Cabhrach* (Northern Aid group) motion at a teachers' union meeting in the early 70s; and challenging both the popular consensus and establishment political consensus—not the same thing—which prevailed during the Bicentennial Commemoration (*Comóradh 98*) of the 1798 Rising. (The reader may experience a momentary puzzlement here about Dunne putting his various revolutionary stands in the same league as the Wexford Rising.)

He also has some gripes about the

history establishment under John A. Murphy in UCC. Is it a coincidence that, in 2004 when he had just turned 60 years of age, Dunne is described on the title page of his book as *Emeritus*, or Retired? Why would anyone in reasonable health retire early (from teaching history!), withdrawing at the height of his powers from the various academic forums where prestige and reputation are made and defended, unless some conflict or disappointment had occurred? Was this another of Dunne's rebellions?

Also there is more than a whiff of sour grapes in Dunne's account of *Comóradh 98*. Most of the academic historians who bagged the committee positions and similar prizes were from American universities. Why did the politicians and the local worthies pass over the brilliant local boy who studied under T. Desmond Williams in UCD and Butterfield in Cambridge, and whose ancestors were connected to the Rising in various ways? Unless, perhaps, being an academic historian in University College, Cork, was no recommendation? And perhaps the political movers and shakers were unconvinced that Dunne's iconoclastic conception of the Rising as an atavistic sectarian pogrom would go down a treat with the voters in, for instance, the Wexford GAA?

It is possible to speculate about another possible reason for joining autobiography to the debunking of the Wexford Rising. It was one thing for various loyalist historians to portray the rebels in a bad light. But what if they are joined by somebody with impeccable Catholic nationalist background, a

former Christian Brother related to Edmund Rice himself, the founder of the Christian Brothers? It is not so easy to dismiss the testimony of such a person as mere prejudice and bigotry.

What emerges from Dunne's book is that, with the Northern Ireland Peace Process being delicately nurtured in the run-up to the 1798 Bicentenary, a political decision was made to play down the violent, militaristic and sectarian aspects of the Rising and to emphasise its United Irish aspects—secular, progressive, enlightened, anti-sectarian. So Dunne and his views were silenced.

Dunne's review of the history-writing runs as follows. The loyalist version of the Rising was, and is, that it was a fanatically Catholic anti-Protestant outburst aggravated by seditious French-influenced United Irish radicalism. The earliest sympathetic accounts of the Wexford Rising (Edward Hay, Thomas Cloney) argued that Government and Orange terror provoked the Rebellion, which had little to do with the United Irish movement. During the 1898 Centenary and 150th Anniversary in 1948, the predominant view was that expressed in Fr. Kavanagh's history: under the leadership of their devoted priests a persecuted people revolted against their persecutors to strike a blow for the freedom of their country. „Though some variant of this 'Faith and Fatherland' version is still the predominant popular view, by 1998 the official line was that forward-looking, progressive, secular-minded Protestants and Catholics in Ulster and the rest of Ireland set aside sectarian differences in pursuit of national liberation.

Dunne challenges the latter view, is contemptuous of the popular Faith and Fatherland view, and inclines towards the loyalist view. An impressive amount of historical investigation of the subject has been conducted over the past thirty years or so. Edward Gahan's *The People's Rising* is representative of the detailed charting of events that is now available. Dunne is scathingly critical of Gahan's theory of extensive United Irish involvement. After reading the 1832 account by the rebel leader, Thomas Cloney, I found myself unconvinced by this aspect of Gahan's book, and am inclined to agree with Dunne on this point.

Dunne places a spotlight on the events of 5th June 1798. In the heaviest fighting of the Wexford war, New Ross was taken and lost by the rebels, while a few miles away, in the rebel-held hinterland, a hundred or so loyalist prisoners of the rebels at Scullabogue were shot, piked, and burnt to death by

their captors. Cloney and others on the rebel side argued that this massacre was provoked by the conduct of the Government forces, the most immediate instances being the shooting dead of the envoy, Nicholas Furlong, carrying a flag of truce, and Government massacres in New Ross—including the incineration of about seventy wounded rebels in a makeshift hospital. Dunne makes a great fuss of debunking this excuse, and fails to convince. All accounts of the fighting in New Ross describe the Government side as out of control, slaughtering everyone in sight including many hundreds of helpless, non-combatant civilians. The most ferocious and blood-thirsty were local Protestant volunteer groups who did not distinguish themselves in battle, but took it out on defenceless civilians including liberal Protestants who protested at their behaviour. These groups also had a tense relationship with soldiers on the Government side, many of whom were Catholics from other parts of Ireland. Dunne himself relates a story of a civilian ancestor of his own who attempted to shelter a large number of women and children. They were all killed by Government forces. He gives a convoluted psychological reason for doubting such accounts.

What is Dunne's take on the Wexford rebellion? The revisionists fret about the prestige attached to the 1916 Rising, because they allege that it provided political cover for sectarian aggression by Provisional Republicanism in the 1969-94 war in Northern Ireland—an argument that does not withstand close scrutiny, as the Provisionals did not start that war; and, unlike the Official Republicans, they conducted themselves very carefully and prudently as the situation deteriorated into war in the late 60s; and their participation in the war had a contemporary rather than a historical logic. Dunne refers only marginally to these matters. But in relation to Wexford he develops the revisionist line of argument to new levels.

His thesis is that the essence of the Wexford Rising was sectarian, anti-Protestant bigotry, of a kind with the anti-foreigner, genocidal Jacobite propaganda found in Gaelic poetry from the 17th century onwards. He finds the same sentiments mixed in with the Gaelic poetry of the United Irish poet Mícheál Ó Longáin in Cork, and in popular Wexford ballads in Irish and English up to the early 19th century. This is Dunne's great historical discovery which, in combination with the involvement of what he describes as bourgeois United Irish revolutionary propagandists, unlocks the mysteries of

the Wexford Rebellion. He implies that this sectarian tendency is also the key to understanding nationalism of the 19th and 20th centuries right through to the recent Northern Irish troubles.

Here are some examples quoted from Ó Longáin by Dunne in proof of this thesis. (Incidentally, Ó Longáin also wrote poetry in the Liberty, Equality, Fraternity vein.)

*"Beidh báire is céad ar Sasanaigh is fanatics dhá gcrádh gan cabhair / Is gearr go mbeidh Rex in Albain is Aifreann dá rá gach am."* [Translated by Ó Longáin as follows: "'Tis then we'll banish Protestants, in Scotland I'll have me seat/ Long live the Roman Catholics to flourish well, bright and fair." More literally: The English and the fanatics [Puritans] will be beaten a hundred-fold, and will be tormented without respite/ Soon there will be a [Stuart] King in Scotland, and Masses said continuously.]

Also:

*"Go bhfeiceam Éire saor gan daoirse / Is an bhraínn uathne in uachtar scaoilte / Gach tíoránach claoíncheardach coimhtheach / In ainm an diabhair is gan Dia dá gcoimhdeacht."* [May we see Ireland free, without persecution, and the green flag flying high, and every foreign tyrant of evil ways pitched to the Devil without God's protection.]

Add in a *spéirbhean* (spirit-woman) and *aisling* (vision) and you get the gist of much of the political poetry in Irish throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. Is this enough to sustain Dunne's thesis?

The essence of Jacobitism was an accommodation of mutual tolerance between Catholics and Protestants in the Three Kingdoms—England, Ireland and Scotland—under a Stuart monarchy which was usually Protestant in religion. This was the height of Irish Catholic ambition throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. After the Stuart James II pushed through a measure of general religious toleration for all the Christian creeds and sects, he was deposed in the 1688 coup. This was the Glorious Revolution which began a new era of religious intolerance.

Even in the 1798 period Mícheál Ó Longáin's Jacobite verses were still expressed in the Three Kingdom vein. The revolutionary Republican separatism of the United Irish movement was predominantly a Protestant phenomenon which obtained a degree of Catholic support, and which found relatively modest expression in Ó Longáin's United Irish verses. So Ó Longáin was

essentially a Jacobite who gave a nod of approval towards the United Irish movement.

The British Protestant extremists who could not stomach living in peace alongside the Pure Evil of Popery, saw the Jacobite religious accommodation as Armageddon. They won the day and imposed a genocidal order in Ireland under Cromwell, interrupted when the Cromwellian regime collapsed, and attempted again after the Glorious Revolution.

The Jacobites came close to success in 1745, when they marched through Scotland and England practically unopposed and without resorting to sectarian persecution of Protestants or Catholics.

Jacobitism was taken seriously by serious people of every religious persuasion throughout the Three Kingdoms, not just kilted sentimental diehards with drink problems and secret handshakes. There was a malaise or hollowness at the heart of the Glorious Revolution regime—just as there was in the Cromwellian regime—which was expressed in, and could only be relieved by, a fanatical, paranoid, apocalyptic view of the world which ultimately led Britain into almost continuous warfare against the Forces of Evil in other peoples' countries. This malaise was temporarily eased by the post-World War 2 Welfare State but re-asserted itself in spades by the end of the twentieth century.

The last serious Jacobite effort was in 1759. Charles Edward Stuart had adopted the Protestant religion at that time, and advocated a social welfare policy which was not equalled until 1945. Condemning the soulless, heartless, slavery-based Glorious Revolution system of financial capitalism which led to the South Sea Bubble of 1720 and to other abuses, Charles advocated manufacturing industry and trade as the basis of foreign policy. His views on social policy were ahead of their time:

"Is not the poor in a starving condition? But what makes poor but a neglected education of youth, or heavy taxes? Are these poor cared for, notwithstanding the large fund raised upon the nation for that purpose? ... We shall take under the protection of the state the children of poor parents, whereby the latter may be encouraged to propagate and the former be properly cared for and become as by nature they are intended, the fountain of wealth in an industrious nature."

So what is Dunne on about? Which aspect of Ó Longáin merits his

disapproval, the Jacobite espousal of the Stuart Three Kingdoms, or the revolutionary separatist egalitarianism of the United Irish doctrine? Anyway, just how much distance is there between these two positions? Once we understand this, it becomes a little easier to understand 1798.

It is true that Gaelic Jacobite poetry uses vivid and forceful language in describing as "fanatics" the totalitarian zealots who conquered, expropriated, enslaved, and slaughtered all before them, whose only pleasure was money-making and wiping out the more tolerant and easy-going peoples they encountered as they rampaged around the globe.

The Gaelic poetry of the time illustrates aspects of the world destroyed by the fanatics. Here is an extract from a love poem by the Catholic cavalier Pierce Ferriter, addressed to a rather solemn and severe English Protestant lady in Ireland called Meg Russell:

*"Tugas annsacht d'óigh Ghallda,  
Inghean chruth-ghlan chéimbanda,  
Stuadh ollghaoth gan fhuath gan oil,  
D'uath na lonnlaoch ó Londain.*

...

*Atá ní fá n-a fearta/ Fuil Ghallda  
gníomh Gaedhealda,/ Is Gall-ghníomh  
an méid is math,/ I ngéig shalm-shaoir  
na saltrach.*

*Siúr Iarla Essex fuair uilc,/ Is diuic  
dícheannta an ór-fhuilc,/ Lucht sugh-  
chorp is ngairt-phort ngnaoi/ Hairfort  
Sofolc is Suraoi."*

[I gave my heart to a Protestant maiden / A girl of neat form and feminine gait / A most decorous lady, loved by all, without reproach / Of the breed of the cavaliers from London.

...

The secret of her virtue is/ Her foreign blood joined with Irish conduct/ And with those aspects of Protestant conduct which are virtuous / In this psalm-singing scion of the psalter.

Kin to the Earl of Essex to whom harm befell/ And of the golden-haired duke who was beheaded/ (Kin to) the people of strong bodies and pleasant strongholds/ Of Hartford, Suffolk and Surrey.]

Another of Ferriter's poems indicates that, unfortunately, the object of his attentions preferred the grave pleasures of Bible and Psalter to the more earthly delights he offered her.

And here is a poem by a Protestant Irish Jacobite:

*"Truagh mo thurus ó mo thír / Go  
Crích Mhanannáin mhín mhic Lir, /  
Idir triúr piúratán meabhail géar—/  
Gearr mo shaoghal má's buan na fir.*

*Aireamh na hAoine ar an dtriúr—/  
Hamilton, ó Dhún na gCliar, / Tháinig  
chugainn sonn tar lear / Ó chrích  
Alban fear de'n triar.*

*Máighistir Ló, is Máighistir Brún—  
/ Rí na ndúl go holc do'n dís: / Annsa  
leo Parlameint ná Rí, / Olc an chríoch  
orra bhéas.*

*Claon a gcoguas, saobh a gciall, /  
Easbog ná cliar ní mian leo: / Ní  
abraid paidir ná cré, / Freitim féin  
bheith dá sórt.*

*Trosghadh nó féilte na naomh—/ Olc  
an taom, ní chongbhaid siad; / Ní mó  
leo Muire ná brobh—/ Pór gan mhóid  
nár bheannuigh Dia.*

*Fuath leo baisteadh, cros is ceall, /  
Bunadh na bhfeall; truagh a Dhia, /  
Creideamh Phádraig do dhul ar gcúl,  
/ Is creideamh gan stiúr do bheith dá  
thriall.*

*Deir gach bodach ceann-chruin  
cruaidh: / "Díbert bhuan ar  
Chlannaibh Néill, / 'S ar shíol ríogh,  
úghdair gach uilc"—/ Is leo do thuit  
mo mhuinntir féin.*

*Briste mo chroidhe in mo chliabh, /  
Ó bheillean an trír is olc méin, / I n-  
aghaidh mo tíre 's mo thriaith; /  
Furtaigh a Dhia orm ó'n phéin.*

*Dá mairfeadh Fearghas mac Róigh,  
/ Nó Cúchulainn dar chóir grádh, / Nó  
Murchadh mac Bhriain, ceann na  
sluagh, / Do choisceóchaidís go luath  
mo chrádh.*

*Nó Seán mac Chuinn na mbreath  
saor, / Nó Mac Aodha mhic  
Dhomhnaill óig, / Nó sliocht an  
Bharúin Uí Néill, / Ní fada bhéinn féin  
gan chóir.*

*A theachtairé théid ar tuinn, / Innis  
do shliocht gCuinn na ruag, / 'S do  
shíol ríogh do lean an séan, / Mo  
mhaírg, mo léan, 's mo ghruaim.*

*Dá gcluinfadh Eoghan mac Airt, /  
Nó Ó Éinridhe, searc na sluagh, / Nó  
sliocht Aodha Buidhe Uí Néill, / Nó rí  
Banna na gcéim gcruadh,*

*Nó Sabhaoise ó Loch Cuan, / Nó  
sliocht Fhéidhlim na ruag ngarg, / Nó  
Ruiséalaigh, m'olc is mo bhruid, /  
D'éireóchadh a bhfuil is a bhfearg.*

*Iarla Dáirbí, leoghan fial, / Árd-rí  
Mhanannáin, triath na mbuaidh, / Mur  
mbeith onór 's uaisle, a ghrádh, / Is  
fada ó thiocthadh mo lá truaigh."*

[Sorrowful my journey from my land/ To the sweet land of Manannán, son of Lear (*Isle of Man*)/ Because of three mad, fanatical puritans—/ My life will be short if these men persist.

The Judgement of Friday on the three (*the Last Judgement, traditionally supposed to take place on Friday*)/ Hamilton from Dún (*Dún Phádraig, Downpatrick?*) of the Clergy./ Came to us here from over the sea/ From the land of Scotland, one of the three.

Master Lowe, and Master Browne—/ The King of the Elements

(grant) harm to the pair:/ They prefer Parliament to King/ They shall have an evil destiny.

Perverse their conscience, wrong-headed their mind./ Bishop or clergy they do not like:/ They say not prayer or creed,/ I refuse to be of their kind.

Fasting or feast days of the saints/—Dreadful the state!—they do not observe;/ (*The Virgin*) Mary is no more to them than a blade of grass—/ A race without (*faithfulness to*) oaths, that do not honour God.

They hate baptism, cross and church./ The gang of treachery;—the pity, O God./ The faith of Patrick to be in decline/ And a religion without direction to be in vogue.

Every steel-bound round-headed churl says:/ "Everlasting expulsion on the clans of the O'Neills,/ And on the seed of kings, the cause of all evil"—/ At the hands of such as these my own people fell.

My heart is broken in my breast,/ From the reproach (*insult, offence*) of the three of evil disposition/ Against my country and my lord;/ Relieve me, O God, from this pain!

If Fergus mac Róigh (*a knight of the Craobh Rua (Red Branch of Ulster) who went into the service of Queen Maeve of Connacht*) were alive,/ Or Cuchulainn—worthy of love— (*Cuchulainn fought Fergus in single-handed defence of Ulster in the epic Táin Bó Cuailgne*)/ Or Murchadh, son of Brian (*Brian Boru*), leader of the battle-hosts,/ They would soon prevent my torment.

Or Seán (*Shane the Proud*), son of Conn (*Conn Bacach Ó Néill*) of the noble judgements,/ Or the son of Hugh son of Donal Óg (*Ó Néill, early 1500s*),/ Or the descendants of (*Hugh*) Baron (*of Dungannon*) Ó Néill,/ I would not be long without justice.

O messenger going over the sea,/ Tell the descendants of Conn (*Céadchathach, of the hundred battles, 2nd century A.D. king of Connacht, from whom Conn-acht is named*) of the routs,/ And to the seed of the kings who pursued well-being,/ (*Tell them of*) my grief, my sorrow, my sadness.

If Eoghan son of Art (*Eoghan Rua Ó Néill, commander of the confederate army 1642-49*) should hear,/ Or the descendant of Henry (?), beloved of the battle-hosts,/ Or the descendants of Hugh Buí Ó Néill (*Clandeboy*),/ Or the king of the Bannside (*another O'Neill clan*) of warlike measures,

Or Savage of Strangford (*of Norman descent, settled in the de Courcy era*)/ Or the descendants of Phelim (*Ó Néill ?*) of the fierce routs,/ Or the Russells (*of Norman descent, settled in the de Courcy era*) (*should hear of—from previous verse*) my evil (*fate*) and my

bondage,/ Their blood and their rage would rise.

O Earl of Derby, generous warrior,/ High King of (*the Isle of*) Man, gifted chief,/ Were it not for your honour and nobility, my love,/ The day of my relief would be long in coming.]

This poem was composed by Patrick Dunkin (Pádraig Ó Dungain) between 1649 and 1651. A lane off Meath Street in Dublin was named after him. Dunkin was educated in Trinity College Dublin and served as Minister in the parish of Creggan in Co. Armagh in 1615. He was a friend of Archbishop Ussher, and was appointed Prebendary of Dunsfort, Co. Down, in 1640. Expelled from here (presumably by "*Hamilton, Lowe and Browne*") he found refuge with James Stanley, 7th Earl of Derby, who sheltered royalists in the Isle of Man before being himself beheaded by the Cromwellians in 1651, shortly before Pierce Ferriter was treacherously hanged. Dunkin fared better—after the Restoration, he was appointed Precentor of Armagh and Rector of Killeavy. The poem illustrates the awesome prestige of the O'Neills; the Duke of Ormonde is not mentioned, though he was the leader of the Stuart-oriented Protestants in Ireland. The narrow-minded genocidal fanaticism and exclusivism of their opponents was not a characteristic of the Stuart side. When the uncharacteristic Bishop Bedell died (of old age) while under house arrest, he was given a graveside military salute by his captors in Owen Roe O'Neill's army, who declared—unfortunately prematurely—that "*Bedell was the last and best of the Gaill (English Protestants) in Ireland*".

The Jacobite movement united Catholics and Protestants in Ireland in a way that no other political formation has ever done before or since, not even the United Irishmen. But the rather doctrinaire religious inclusivism of the United Irish is not inconsistent with the sophisticated religious accommodations of the Jacobites.

After several centuries of poetic defiance towards the Gaill—Cromwellians and Glorious Revolutionaries—the last poem that I know of to be written in the Jacobite style made a gesture of reconciliation to their descendants. This was *Amhrán na bhFiann*, the Irish National Anthem written by Liam Ó Rinn in the 1920s and based on a Young Ireland-style ballad in English called the *Soldier's Song* which was written by Peadar Kearney, a schoolmate of Ó Rinn's, about twenty years earlier. Kearney's English verses are somewhat pedestrian in my opinion. But Ó Rinn's poem would not be completely unworthy of the Jacobite masters of the 17th and

18th centuries. The lines in question are in the final verse:

*A bhuidhin nach fann d'fhuil  
Ghaoidheal is Gall  
Sons of the Gael! Men of the Pale!  
Sin breacadh lae na saoirse,  
The long watched day is breaking;  
Tá sgéimhle 's sganradh i  
gcroidhthibh namhad,  
The serried ranks of Innisfail  
Roimh ranngaibh laochra ár dtíre;  
Shall set the tyrant quaking.  
Ár dteinte is tréith gan spréach anois,  
Our camp fires now are burning low;  
Sin luinne ghlé san spéir anoir,  
See in the east a silvery glow,  
'S an biodhbha i raon na bpiléar agaibh:  
Out yonder waits the saxon foe,  
Seo libh, canaidh amhrán na bhFiann."  
So sing a soldier's song.*

Here the contribution of the Gall to the independence struggle from 1798 onwards is acknowledged by Ó Rinn in a less ambiguous way than Kearney does. The second from last line in English refers, in Young Ireland style, to the Saxon foe. But the Jacobite version renders this less pointedly as *biodhbha* (robber, enemy), and this is the official form of the anthem. It is somehow fitting that after three centuries of rhetoric against the narrow-minded money-grubbing aliens, the last of the Gaelic Jacobite bards should offer the hand of friendship to their descendants.

Compare this with the paranoid, bloodthirsty final verses of God Save the Queen:

"From every latent foe,  
Lord, grant that Marshal Wade  
From the assassin's blow,  
May by Thy mighty aid  
God save the King!  
Victory bring.  
O'er him Thine arm extend,  
May he sedition hush,  
For Britain's sake defend,  
And like a torrent rush,  
Our father, prince, and friend,  
Rebellious Scots to crush.  
God save the King!  
God save the King!"

No foreign occupier to resist here, and no pulling of punches; just avid smiting of Jacobite compatriots.

Is it possible to understand what happened in 1798 in Co. Wexford? The basic facts are clear enough. By 1764 the nervous and insecure Hanoverian regime in England had weathered the Stuart Jacobite threat and consolidated itself to some extent. But new fissures were appearing in British society worldwide—that is, in Britain, Ireland and the American colonies. The 18th century Glorious Revolution oligarchy in Britain were unrestrained by their weak and socially unconnected German

Hanoverian monarchy, and pursued financial gain in barbarous disregard of any and all social concern or traditional obligation. This meant, primarily, investing in the white gold flowing out of the West Indian death camps, which was really a matter of harvesting, not so much sugar cane in the Caribbean, as the bodies and lives of human beings in Africa (as they were harvested in Ireland in the Cromwellian era).

The British colonies in North America on the other hand were little more than a useful mass dumping ground for criminals, a dark wasteland for venting the stresses arising in the anti-social hell of the Glorious Revolution regime when casual and indiscriminate use of capital punishment proved insufficient to maintain order. But, for the British oligarchy, the frontier colonies—which were obliged to function as socially connected communities in order to keep body and soul together in the wilderness—were an expensive distraction from the serious business of money-making. And, after the colonists had helped the Hanoverians to see off the French threat to their immensely lucrative Caribbean operations in the First World War of 1756-63, the British-British had no interest in wasting even more money to help the American-British to get rid of the inconvenient human vermin that cluttered up the vast continental territories on which they had grand designs. The British do not indulge in genocide out of passionate hatred. It is a cold, clinical matter of balance sheets for them.

The British in Ireland experienced different social tensions because of the intolerance of the predominant Protestant sect which had been empowered by the Glorious Revolution—and additionally reflected the splits which had opened up among their kith and kin across the Atlantic. Furthermore, war with revolutionary France brought the survival of the Glorious Revolution regime into question yet again, but not in the way it had been threatened by Stuart Jacobitism. New fissures and new paranoias appeared.

Britain was involved in yet another international conflagration, and had staked its world power on its war against Napoleon. The various elements of dissidence, in Ireland especially, had narrowed the odds against victory. To counter this the British Government had made gestures towards admitting Catholics to citizenship, and the Catholic hierarchy and the emerging Catholic middle class were disposed to follow this route of advancement. Blocking the way was the Irish Government, which behaved like the Stormont

Government in the Civil Rights struggle 250 years later.

The latter-day Irish Republican dogma that the British Government prevented Protestants from realising that they were really Irish and not British is almost as crippling to an understanding of the situation as the notion, on the opposite side, that the Glorious Revolution stood for tolerance and enlightenment.

The country was heavily militarised because of the war with France, and law and order in Wexford were in the hands of ultra-Protestant fanatics. The yeomanry were similar to Protestant paramilitaries and B-Specials. The militia were mostly Catholic, like the 19th century RIC, and during the 1798 Rebellion were occasionally in conflict with the yeomanry. On the other side, Catholic self-defence groups such as Whiteboys, Rightboys, Defenders and others featured through the 18th century in conflicts over land tenancy, rents, tithes to the Protestant clergy, and, towards the end of the century, in conflicts with the anglicising Catholic clergy (see Canon Sheehan's book *The Blindness Of Dr. Gray* to get the idea) over the exorbitant fees they charged.

Dunne's book identifies these Catholic groups as the source of sectarian terror in 1798, and bases his argument for this on the Jacobite-type poetry, folk-songs and popular ballads which were sung about their exploits. This argument seems far-fetched to me. Other revisionists see the present-day Provisional bogeymen as originating in 1916-23. But Dunne sees their origin and continuous existence from the 17th and 18th century Jacobite royalists. The next logical step is to cast Brian Boru as the original Martin McGuinness. So much for Cambridge and UCC history.

The transformation of the United Irish movement into a military conspiracy allied with France complicated matters still further. Martial law was declared early in 1798 and was used to provoke rebellion and break it before military assistance could arrive from France. In effect, UDA-UVF-style operations involving house-burning, torture, imprisonment, deportation and hanging started up on a large scale. In Wexford especially, this was the start of war, though effective popular retaliation did not start until June 1798.

Here is an account of West Cork operations by Sir John Moore, about whom Rev. Charles Wolfe, relative of Wolfe Tone, wrote the poem which starts: "*We buried him darkly at dead of night ...*". Compared with the troops of

yeomen, Moore would have been like a United Nations peacekeeper, out of sympathy with the Government plan to torment people until they were left with no option but to stand and fight. Remember, this was in Cork, not Wexford:

"Bandon, 27 May: I received orders in April to disarm the two Carberys, which embraces all the country which lies from Crookhaven along the coast to Bandon. Sir Ralph issued a notice commanding the people to deliver their arms to the different magistrates or officers commanding the troops, informing them that if they did so they should not only be unmolested, but unprotected; that if they did not, or persevered in committing outrages, the troops would be sent to live upon them at free quarters and other severe measures taken to reduce them to obedience. (Sir Ralph refused to agree with the Government policy to incite the people to rebellion and resigned his post in March 1798.) I afterwards issued a similar notice to this in my own district, fixing 2nd May as the date on or before which if the arms were not delivered in, the troops should act, and to convince them that I was serious, I marched five companies of light infantry and a detachment of dragoons throughout the country to Skull to be ready to act.

"I expected that upon the appearance of the troops the people would have given in their arms, but it had no effect. I spoke to the priests and took every pains to represent the folly of holding out and of forcing me to resort to violent measures. I directed Major Nugent, with troops quartered in Skibbereen, to march on the 2nd May into free quarters in the parish of Coharagh, which had been much disturbed, and I placed five light companies in different divisions from Ballydehob to Ballydevlin, with orders to forage the whole of the country from Crookhaven to within seven miles of Skibbereen.

"My orders were to treat the people with as much harshness as possible, as far as words and manner went, and [for my troops] to supply themselves with whatever provisions were necessary to enable them to live well. My wish was to excite terror, and by that means obtain our end speedily... The second day the people, after denying they had any arms, began to deliver them in. After four days we extracted sixty-five muskets. Major Nugent in Coharagh was obliged to burn some houses before he could get a single arm. Then they delivered in a number of pikes. I then removed the troops to another part of the country, always entreating that the arms might



be delivered without forcing me to ruin them. Few parishes had the good sense to do so; such as did escaped. The terror was great. The moment a redcoat appeared, everybody fled.

"...The better sort of people seemed all delighted with the operation, except when it touched their own tenants by whose ruin they themselves must suffer, but they were pleased the people were humbled and would be civil."

The views of "*the better sort of people*" in Cork were expressed by Thomas Crofton Croker in 1824:

"The alarming character of the events of the years 1797 and 98 abruptly terminated the public and private amusements of Cork, and imperatively called on all classes to take up arms in defence of their lives and property. The arrival of the French Fleet in Bantry Bay naturally produced a panic in the city not forty miles distant from the scene of invasion, and during the emergencies of that period, the loyalty and zeal of the inhabitants of Cork were particularly noticed and approved by the English Government. The merchants of the city, at their private expense, kept twenty horses ready for the conveyance of information to the proper authorities; refreshed such troops as passed through the city; and humanely made an allowance to the wife and children of every soldier who had marched against the invading enemy. In 1798, religious and party feeling was excited to the extreme, and ran so high as to create distinctions, the existence of which are not forgotten to the present hour, that they have checked friendly intercourse and cordiality of sentiment, and destroyed the source of much innocent enjoyment."

In County Wexford, Dunne argues quite persuasively that the bulk of the Catholic rebels in Wexford were Defender-oriented, not United Irish. Then, in a convoluted way, he manages to attach to the United Irish participants, including Protestants, some of the anti-Protestant bigotry, aggression and pogroms that he attributes to the Defenders. This is like the DUP denouncing the SDLP as Provos. The former Christian Brother has practically become an apologist for Glorious Revolution paranoia. The forced conversions that he describes seem to have consisted mostly of learning off the Hail Mary as an insurance policy. During the recent N. Ireland troubles, many a Liam from Derry turned into a William from Londonderry on the approach to a UDR or British Army checkpoint.

Though acknowledging a degree of Government and Protestant-ultra provocation, Dunne separates the Scullabogue massacre from the context in which it happened, as if extensive chapel burning, flogging, hanging, and massacre of prisoners by the Government side had not preceded and followed Scullabogue. The bulk of the casualties in the Wexford war (about 30,000 according to traditional estimates, or 6,000 according to estimates quoted by Dunne) were non-combatant Catholics killed out of hand by Government troops and Protestant volunteer groups. About 30 Catholic chapels were burned in Co. Wexford—probably about all there were at that time, and nobody was punished for this. One Protestant church was burned, for which Thomas Cloney was falsely accused. The transcripts of post-rebellion trials, including those accused of the Scullabogue massacre, are a major source of information about the period. But nobody was tried for the overwhelming majority of the killings which were perpetrated by the Government side.

The war itself was deliberately provoked by the Government side. It follows from this that all the deaths, including those at Scullabogue, were the fault of the Government, since they would not have happened if the Government had not provoked the war. The policy of provocation succeeded perfectly, in the sense that a shorter period of intensified brutality and terror by the Government resulted in a limited or localised war which may have prevented a wider conflagration in which a great many more people might have had to be killed by the Government, at even greater expense. So there is an argument that the Government and Orange terror was in the best interests of everyone, even the victims.

But by the same token, did the massacre of a hundred or so Protestant and Catholic loyalists at Scullabogue have any mitigating consequences itself? Was it in any sense a good thing? During the 1969-94 troubles in N. Ireland it was seriously argued that periodic pogroms against the Catholic community were necessary in order to preserve the union with Britain, which was self-evidently a good thing. The execution of the 1916 leaders had positive consequences for the Irish independence movement, so in a certain sense their deaths were a good thing. But, unlike the victims of Scullabogue, the 1916 leaders had signed up for their fate. Can anything be said in favour of the massacre? Was it a necessary evil?

1798 was the last occasion when the Protestant community outside of Ulster mustered itself militarily to put down the natives. This became the responsibility of the British army and the mainly Catholic Royal Irish Constabulary. In other words, after Scullabogue the Protestants on the whole kept out of it, though individual Protestants were involved militarily on both sides. So perhaps many more lives were saved in the longer run by Scullabogue.

There were dozens of Scullabogues before, during and after the rebellion in Wexford. Almost all were perpetrated by the Government forces. After the war, nobody was tried and punished except the rebels who were forced into armed resistance by Government atrocities. So for Dunne the other Scullabogues never happened. He refuses to see the elephant in the parlour. As far as he is concerned, eighteenth century Provos are the guilty party in the Wexford Rising.

### **Ahmadinejad On Israel: Regime Change, Not Destruction**

The Iranian President has been quoted as saying that "*Israel must be destroyed*", but the Washington-based Middle East Research Institute gives the following correct translation of the President's remark:

"Imam [Khomeini] said: '*This regime that is occupying Qods [Jerusalem] must be eliminated from the pages of history.*' This sentence is very wise. The issue of Palestine is not an issue on which we can compromise." (Letter, David Manning, IT 12.5.06.)

### **Irish War-mongering**

Sir Anthony O'Reilly's *Independent* group does its bit to stoke up war. The *Irish Independent* reported the dispute over civilian uranium-enrichment under the title, *Iran Showdown Over Nuclear Bomb* (3.2.2006).

His Sunday rag went one better; *For Cheap Oil, We Must 'Take Down' Iran* (23.4.06). The story was by Mark Dooley

## The Failure And Co-option of Feminism

At first sight, it seems that the diminution of women's freedom to move safely alone has been balanced by their greatly increased freedom to engage in shameless public display. But this latter liberation has, in turn, an inhibiting effect on young women in their everyday interaction with men. Their awareness that other young women are presenting themselves, publicly, ubiquitously and willingly, as consumables, tends to diminish, at least subconsciously, their sense of themselves and their spontaneity of speech and action. Then again, men still unmistakably run the world's political and business affairs: at the highest and therefore decisive level of command, there has been only an insignificant increase in female presence. Women have generally preferred to do other things than occupy commanding heights. And with regard to control over their bodies, in the fundamental matters of sexual intercourse and conception females are farther than before from this feminist goal. The increasing large numbers of single mothers and abortions, which have been a notable feature of western life since the 1970s, attest this.

On the other hand, western women have obtained the legal right to contraception and, almost everywhere, the legal right to abort unwanted offspring.\* Most women of all classes now work in occupations which earn them money, and thus enjoy a greater or lesser degree of economic independence from male partners. And not only does their work receive remuneration equal to that of men; in all matters of personal legal rights and duties, women now have

equality with men, and men's old authority over them is abolished. It is a detail, finally, but a significant one: on the streets of any western city, more women can be seen dressed in trousers, the characteristic western male garment, than in skirts.

These changes, which look like implementation of some feminist demands, are easily explained. Consumerism brought its power, selectively, to the rescue. There were good consumerist motives for promoting and formally implementing the demands in question; so the men who managed the states and business and the mass media supplied the overwhelming force that made feminism's failure to convince men irrelevant.

The removal of legal bans on female contraception and on abortion relaxed psychological brakes on sexual consumption, thus enhancing the general disposition of both sexes to consume desired things whenever possible. With the passage of the years, it has become clear that, in the view of the consumerists who have been directing the West's economies—as previously in the view of the Soviet planners—it was desirable to have the greatest possible number of women engaged in paid work. Indeed, as the managers of the western economies sought and achieved growth and pursued still greater growth, while births decreased, the female contribution to what was now called 'the workforce' came to seem an economic necessity. Middle-class women—and that was coming to mean most women—were the first to fill the role that is now filled by immigrant labour. It follows that, in the heyday of feminist agitation, there were good economic reasons why the consumerist teaching power in the media and the advertising industry—call that power the *Correctorate*, since it tells consumers what behaviour, speech and opinions are correct, while rebuking deviations—promoted feminism, selectively. It joined with feminists in selling the 'working woman' as a liberation of women and an enhancement of a woman's dignity, as compared with the woman who 'stays at home'. Pressing home that humanistic argument served, for a time, to motivate a large number of women to take up jobs. But to keep them there, and to ensure a continuing supply of new female labour, consumerism also increasingly provided

other, non-humanistic and materially more compelling motives, which in the end predominated and which we shall note in due course.

Then again, the *Correctorate*, working on behalf of states and business, saw advantage in promoting that other feminist demand: equality of legal rights and duties as between the sexes. Such equalisation would advance the homogeneity of consumers. The conversion of society into, as far as possible, a mass of homogeneous consumers was a central part of the consumerist agenda. By facilitating the production, marketing and advertising of many goods and services, it would increase their consumption. It would also facilitate administrative efficiency, which was a good thing for two reasons. Valuable in itself as manipulative power, it was also useful in executing measures to ensure that poor consumers always had some money to spend, and that all consumers lived healthy, active, consuming lives; and lived longer.

Hence a series of homogenising persuasions which, after taking effect in the USA, did so in Europe also. Jeans were promoted as suitable dress for everyone and priests and nuns felt called on to dress like everyone else. (The only persons left distinguished by dress in public were police and soldiers, who, the states decided, should remain perceptibly apart.) As men were encouraged to be more feminine and women more masculine, something approaching unisex humans became a visionary goal. In social introductions and subsequent conversation, and increasingly in dealing with officialdom, a person's first name replaced the surname and distinguishing titles. In circumstances where titles remained in use, a blurring, urged by feminists, occurred for the female sex: Ms replaced the distinction between Miss and Mrs. Blacks were made equal to whites, illegitimate children to legitimate offspring, and homosexuals ceased to be distinguished as unnatural and therefore apart; the *Correctorate* redefined them as individuals who were as natural as anyone else. Within this general drive for the removal of diversity in the populace, the abolition of the surviving legal distinctions between men and women was one item on a long list.

Further advantage was seen in the abolition of male authority over women, whether customary or legal. For the consumerist ethical teaching to have the maximum effectiveness—for it to become if not the only public ethical teaching, then the absolutely predominant one—it was necessary to discredit and neutralise the ethical teaching authority of those categories of

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\* The justification by the West of the nuclear massacres of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the subsequent manufacture of thousands of weapons made to massacre, had signified the rejection of a key principle of western civilisation: the ban on the massacre of human beings. It was a rejection carried out by men. The subsequent decision by the West's male rulers to declare abortion a legitimate act was, formally, part of the general consumerist policy of removing obstacles to sexual consumption, however random. But, as a decision made essentially by men, it may also have had the guilty purpose, at least subconsciously, of involving women, too, in the rejection of the value set by western ethics on human life. Certainly, as the years passed, and the aborted offspring came to number millions, the effect was to involve women also, collectively, in massacre judged legitimate.

persons who had been traditionally invested with it and who tended to teach unhelpful morals. Most notable among these were clergy, men, parents and schoolteachers. So the Correctorate's promotion of the feminist rejection of male authority fitted into its campaign of discrediting all such authorities, while promoting, as against them, the rights of youth, students, women, and—as opposed to churches—democratic, rights-conferring states. The only individuals to be entitled henceforth to public teaching authority, whether ethical or otherwise, were those whom the mass media selected and presented as opinion-makers or 'experts'.

This explains, incidentally, why the male-managed mass media, in dealing with interactions of males and females, have made anti-male bias a commonplace, to the extent of influencing male-dominated parliaments and even the male-dominated courts. Power corrupts, but even more surely does the service of power, and in that service, history tells us, many men—their name was eunuchs—have submitted to the surgical removal of their genitals. The disproportionate increase since the 1960s in the remuneration of media managers and journalists not only illustrates the key role allotted to the mass media in the building of consumerism; it has also ensured that the various sacrifices of self which were involved in delivering the consumerist message have been adequately compensated in material terms.

This was the overall context in which states, professing enthusiasm for the complete legal equality of women with men, and the removal of any hint of male authority, made corresponding adjustments to the legal codes. Militant feminists, serving as advisors to the legislators, functioned as apparatchiks of broader consumerist policies that were directed towards increasing the hybrid Power.

The use made of feminism by the ruling hybrid of states and business is but a contemporary example of an age-old practice: a ruling power harnessing for its own increase an emergent liberationist movement. Thus did some European states in the sixteenth century promote Protestantism and grow strong by it, and the same or other states in the eighteenth century adopt rationalism and become stronger still; and states, again, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, justify their widening and tightening of citizen regulation with language borrowed from liberalism and socialism. The consumerist work of persuasion that has enabled the hybrid Power to grow enormously since the 1960s has drawn on arguments from

three ideological sources: along with feminism, the fundamentalist wings (emergent from the 1930s into the 1950s) of liberal individualism and egalitarianism.

Inevitably in such captures and employments by the ruling power, the idealistic aims of the liberationists get realised in a manner that serves the purposes of that power, so that what results is different in substance from what the idealists hoped for. The formal realisation of some feminist goals has not in fact resulted in greater freedom and power for women. The reason why most middle-class women today work to make money is far from being the free choice, and the desire for personal fulfilment, which motivated many such women in the feminist dawn. It is, rather, as was the case with women in the Soviet Union, because they believe that having a job is an absolute necessity.

Only in part is this due to the enormous increase in the real cost of middle-class housing and consequently of mortgages. On a broader view which includes that objective element, it is due to two factors which feminism did not foresee. In pursuance of its overriding aim of maximising consumption, consumerism promulgated a vision of the Good Life as a costly life made up of many commodities, which was achievable by everyone and which everyone owes it to his or her self to achieve. And this teaching, bearing down on women, from television, radio, billboards and glossy magazines, and re-transmitted to them by their female peers, has convinced most of them (as it has convinced most men) of its imperative veracity. As a consequence, most women, instead of being financially dependent on a man, as were their mothers or grandmothers, feel financially obligated to the Good Life and work to keep making the necessary payments.

Given that most women either are mothers or want to be, consider the days of mothers, working to make such payments, who live with young children where most of them do, in the suburbs of large cities. Up before dawn, and the children deposited, they travel an hour or two in crowded buses or trains or, perhaps beside their working partner, in creeping lines of cars, and then later, the job performed and evening come, make the same journey home to collect, feed and bed their children, and to sleep for some hours until that routine begins again. In substance, their working day is not unlike that of poor mill-hand mothers in the Industrial Revolution. To no significant degree is their condition freer or more empowered than that of their mothers or grandmothers who, supported by a husband's earnings and often domestically powerful, spent their

days minding their children, keeping house, and using their free time in whatever ways their education and their inclinations suggested. (Only when there was marital separation or divorce, and courts failed to implement maintenance orders, did such dependence limit a woman's freedom of action.) Consider, too, how the daunting hardship of managing a working life such as that just depicted causes many working women, again not by free choice but by felt necessity, to shun child-bearing or to keep it less than they would desire.

Similarly flawed has been the according to women of the same legal rights and duties as men. This feminist aspiration has also, in its formal achievement, suffered devaluation. It represented for the women's liberation movement much more than a set of legal adjustments. Feminists held, and it was substantially true, that maleness had come culturally to signify the human norm. So legal equality with men meant the formal achievement by women of all that a human being—varying circumstances of wealth and office apart—could be. But once again, this was not to reckon with the consumerist agenda. In that perspective, the acquisition by most women of considerable spending money of their own must logically be matched by the abundant invention of commodities for them to spend it on, in their quality as women. So there emerged, with consumerism, as the proper object of female striving for equality, the Perfect Body, female version; a superhuman fiction composed almost entirely of purchasable goods and services.

For western women, as for women everywhere, there had existed, prior to the Perfect Body, a proper shape of body which varied in successive periods; and there had been successive imperatives, in large part decided by women, with regard to cosmetics, hair-dos and the like. But such matters apart, how a woman's body was in its various parts, and how well or badly its organs functioned, was a matter entirely left to women to attend to privately and individually. Moreover, showgirls apart, women's bodies were always substantially covered in public, and propriety forbade public discussion of female physical intimacies. These customary provisions excluded female bodies largely from public view or knowledge.

Consumerism's creation of the Perfect Body, female version, was made possible by its simultaneous baring of women, literally and figuratively, and abolition of the norms of modesty and propriety which had kept them, literally and figuratively, covered. The female

Perfect Body, now represented everywhere, is perfect in overall shape and the shapes of all its parts, and in its hair, skin and smell; and perfect, too, as a functioning system, in everything from its orgasms, nutrition and bowel movements to its blood circulation and menstruations. And lo, for every single element of its perfection, several purchasable commodities stand ready! However, between the female Perfect Body and the human male, as the embodiment of fullness and sufficiency of human being, there is an oppressive difference: equality with the Perfect Body is by the fact of its superhumanity impossible.

For an overall understanding of the present condition of western women, the weight of this impossible imperative which casts its shadow particularly on childbearing must be added to the compulsion women feel to have a lucrative occupation, while, in most instances, meeting the requirements of being a good mother and good in bed. None of this is to say that western women generally today are unhappy with their lives or feel oppressed. The high incidence of female self-harming notwithstanding, they are probably no less happy and feel no more oppressed than did western women half a century ago, before women's liberation arose to discomfort them for their good. Indeed, taught from girlhood that the previous condition of western women was dire, and that they belong to a liberated generation, many women feel grateful to the legislators and employers who have given them the lives they have. Pointing out the degradations, oppressions and dependencies which characterise these lives is merely to say, in a different way, what has already been said: namely, that the increased respect from men, and the greater personal freedom and social power and full control of one's life and body, all this amounting to adequacy of being, which feminism aimed at for women has not come to pass. To which might be added that now, as opposed to then, there is no women's liberation movement in sight!

The failure of feminism—or, more accurately, its defeat—can be summarised in the following manner. All the significant changes that have occurred in the condition of living women since the 1960s have derived, not from any enhanced appreciation of their human worth by men, but from men's greatly increased activation of their money-making capacity—on their own account, or for the profit of business people, or for the enrichment of states. Only in the case of forgotten dead women has the change brought about in their condition had a different

motivation. The states and businesses that funded their academic rescue from oblivion into remembrance did so as an additional and clearly disinterested way of indicating their sympathy with, and high regard for, the feminist movement; as also, indeed, their gratitude to it.

The gratitude of the West's ruling power to feminism is not only for its help in making available, for the construction of that Power, the labour, and the money-making capacity of most western women. It is grateful also to feminism for having given it a useful propaganda weapon in its assiduous effort to undermine non-western powers and rulers and to reduce them and their peoples to obedience. Seconded by the West's mass media in all their forms, and by many well-funded agencies promoting 'human rights' and 'women's rights', the hybrid Power ceaselessly directs something like the following message at the rulers of non-western powers whose rules are different: 'Shame on you, that you have not made your women free as we have made our women. Shame on you that your women—barred by male rules of female modesty from displaying their bodies and their sexual appetites, and by rules preventing all but the poorest from participation in your workforces—are not as western women are. Think well and note that while this remains the case, we will not approve of you or respect you, and you will therefore not have power in the world that remotely approaches ours, let alone be capable of participating in our Power. But only make your women live as western women do, transform your rules and your societies accordingly, and all this will be available to you.' To this insidious, subversive propaganda, the women in these non-western societies are the main countervailing force. Forming an idea, according to their possibilities, of how contemporary western women behave and live, only a few break ranks and opt for it, to the West's applause. The great majority shudder.

A word in conclusion. Nothing that has been recounted here is good or bad, except insofar as the world is good and bad. In broad outline—to repeat with variation something that has been said above—it is what happens when a liberationist ideology looks to a political power to effect its desired liberation, and such a power engages to do so. In a process of giving and taking, the power gives the liberationists what they asked for, but selectively, and in forms which are at variance with what the liberationists hoped for, because designed to increase the power of the giver: over them and those they speak for, and any others with reach. In the

end, it is a pragmatic transaction between rebels who want more power, and others, able to give it, who want the same thing.

## Report

Rev. Victor Griffin, the retired Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, has provided a surprising recollection of the late Charles Haughey, from when he was Taoiseach

### Haughey And The Church Of Ireland

"During my time as Dean of St Patrick's I was grateful for the help given me by Charles Haughey, especially on two occasions.

"(1) The proposal by the Dublin Corporation in 1987 to have a 90-foot wide carriageway in Patrick Street outside the Cathedral caused outrage and street protests in the Liberties. There was also the possible danger to the cathedral's foundation and fabric by increased traffic flow and vibration.

"Mr Haughey came to the rescue when he invited me and the cathedral's representatives to Kinsealy to discuss the matter with corporation planning officials. He had prepared meticulously for the meeting with an imposing large-scale model of the cathedral and dual carriageway on the floor of a spacious room. After much debate, a sympathetic Mr Haughey produced a compromise which suggested a narrower road at a distance of 45 feet from the cathedral railings, with the intervening space to be pedestrianised and treated in a manner in keeping with the cathedral's environs. So it all came about thanks to the efforts of Charles Haughey.

"(2) In rebuilding the cathedral's choir and grammar schools (dating from 1432) I was also indebted to him for his keen interest in their history and his resolve that the government play its part to ensure that an important feature of Ireland's history and heritage would not be lost. Twice daily choral worship in the cathedral for over 500 years!

When he visited the deanery I found him very informed on Swift and other portraits adorning the walls and the contribution made especially by Protestants in the cause of national freedom and justice and the revival of the Irish language. There was an affinity with the Swiftian '*saeva indignatio*'—"*Government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery. By the laws of God, of nature and of your own country you are and ought to be as free a people as your brethren in England*".

May he along with Swift rest in peace."

(Very Rev. Victor V. Griffin, Tyler Road, Limavady, Co Derry, *Irish Times* 22.6.2006)

Peter Brooke

PART ONE

## Israel / Palestine—The One State Solution

*What's in it for the Jews?*

### What Is A Nation?

Anti-Zionists argue that the Jews are not, or ought not to be, a nation. Jews, believing or otherwise, are scattered among many nations and should assume the nationality of the country they are living in (as most of them in fact do). Zionists, on the other hand, argue that the Palestinians are not a nation. They are Arabs more or less indistinguishable from their Arab neighbours who happened to live in a particular part of the Ottoman Empire but never defined themselves as a separate people—at least not until Jews began to claim that particular part of the Ottoman Empire as a national territory.

A nation however is, if nothing else, a people that believes itself to be a nation and is prepared to fight in defence of its perceived nationhood. The nation is a historically evolved ideological construction. Though there may be certain objective foundations (ethnicity, culture, territory), those are not of themselves sufficient to create a sense of nationhood. Noel Malcolm's *Short History Of Bosnia* argues that there is an objectively existing Bosnian nation and that Bosnian Serbs and Croats are wrong to think they are not part of it. But the argument is futile. Bosnian nationalism has as yet failed to create a Bosnian national consciousness strong enough to secure the existence of an independent Bosnian state.

National consciousness is established through a combination of nationalist ideology and circumstances, often adverse circumstances. A combination of Zionism and the adverse circumstances created by European anti-semitism has created a Jewish nation which has established a nation state. A combination of nationalism and the adverse circumstances created by the Zionist invasion of Palestine has created a Palestinian nation, which refuses to submit to the Jewish nation state. We may lament the existence of two nations on this narrow strip of ground but there is not much that can be done about it. Once a national consciousness has been successfully established it is very difficult to undo it—the break-up of the Soviet Union and of Yugoslavia are surely convincing proofs.

In these circumstances, the establishment of two nation states looks like the obvious solution and since my

own instincts are in general partitionist—opposed to obliging people to live together if they do not wish to—I might have been inclined to support it. In the circumstances of Israel/Palestine however—starting with the smallness of the territory under dispute—it has seemed to me from the start that it would not work. I can have no illusions about the difficulties posed by a 'one state' solution but in what follows I am going to argue that it is in the best interests of the people who might appear to be the losers—Israeli Jews.

### Can Two State Solution Be Final?

Most Israeli Jews, it seems, would support a two state solution. They would be willing to withdraw from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and may even support an arrangement that would enable the Palestinians to have a capital in Jerusalem. They would not object in principle to the Palestinians having their own sovereign state. At least so long as they could be assured that this would be a final solution and that Palestinians would be content with it.

But how can they be assured of this? Palestinian leaders can give assurances and sign agreements. But somehow it is difficult to believe them. Not because they are more dishonest than the leaders of other peoples but because the assurances they are giving, the agreements they are being asked to sign, are in themselves inherently unreasonable. No signed agreement can oblige the Palestinian people to accept the forcible displacement they suffered in 1948, any more than any signed agreement could oblige the Jewish people as a whole to accept the forcible spoliation of their property and the ensuing horrors they suffered in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s. If Palestinian leaders recognise the right of the Jewish state to exist it is, plainly, because they have been reduced to such a state of powerlessness that they have no choice. But if that is the case then from the Jewish point of view they must be kept in a state of powerlessness. It makes no sense to allow them to construct a real independent state, least of all one which sits right at the heart of the territory of the Israeli state.

The two state solution is based on a pretence that the wrong done to the Palestinians began in 1967 with the

seizure of the West Bank. The wrong would then be righted when the West Bank was restored. Unfortunately, however, the decisive wrong was done in 1948 at a time when the Jews, given what they had suffered in Europe, believed that the need to establish their own state, their own place of refuge, was so pressing that it overrode any normal moral considerations. That is a situation that is commonplace in war, when peoples will do anything to survive as a people.

But the 'hot' period of the establishment of Israel is now at an end. Ariel Sharon has, if I remember aright, expressed anxiety that his generation, the generation that knew the circumstances in which the Israeli state was formed, is dying out. He is afraid of the emergence of a weaker generation that will not be ready for the tough measures needed to secure Jewish nationhood. We may read his policies as an effort to create a dynamic that these weaker successors will not be able to reverse. And that is indeed the problem. Short of a successful genocide such as the Anglo Saxons achieved in North America and Australia in the nineteenth century, the exclusively Jewish state can only be maintained by a continued, hard, work of repression. Even if Palestinians are squeezed out of the West Bank (which I assume is the 'solution' Sharon is envisaging) this merely creates a new crime, a new incentive to militant opposition to the state of Israel. Analogies are never precise but we may remember the strength that the Fenian movement in Ireland gained from the emigrants who had been pushed out to America during the mid-nineteenth century famine.

### An Irish Analogy

Ireland is worth thinking about in this context. In the eighteenth century it might have appeared from a British point of view that the Irish problem was solved—Catholic Ireland was so heavily subdued that there was no prospect of it reasserting itself. Or so it seemed. It may be mentioned that the British could argue—one of the leading theorists of British Imperialism, J.A.Froude, did argue—that the Irish, hopelessly divided among many different clans prior to the conquest, were not a nation.

Unlike the British in Ireland, however, Israeli Jews will not have the luxury of nearly a century's respite from their 'Palestinian question'. To preserve the *status quo*, they must maintain constant pressure for the foreseeable future. It is just possible to imagine that a generous two state strategy might have done the trick but realistically-speaking the territory is too small to maintain two genuinely independent states. A

generous settlement would enable the Palestinians to develop an independent military capacity; and it is very doubtful if it would have resolved the vexed question of the Palestinian refugees.

### **A Burden On The Jews**

I would suggest that this continual repression exercised against the Palestinians is a burden on Israeli Jews—and indeed on Jews worldwide. Most will cope with it by ignoring it; some are able to maintain the required 'hot' feeling through moral indignation at Palestinian 'terrorism'. But a permanent condition of hatred and contempt for one's neighbours (all one's neighbours given the general Arab sympathy for the Palestinian cause) poses a terrible strain; and the great moral asset of the Jews—the sympathy generated throughout the world by their sufferings in the mid-twentieth century—is gradually wasting away. There is also something illusory about Israeli independence. The immense expenditure that has been felt to be necessary on security has left Israel in reality wholly dependent on the charity of the United States, at a time when the policies of the United States are exciting hatred throughout the world. The pro-Israeli political commentator Jared Israel argues on his 'Emperor's New Clothes' website, that the United States is in fact deliberately provoking Muslim militancy to create a ring of Islamic states round Russia. Whether he is right or not this end result—the strengthening of political Islam—is the predictable outcome of current US policies and creates a very dangerous environment for Israel.

Furthermore, the epicentre for the Israeli/Palestinian confrontation is the West Bank—precisely the area that Jews serious about a return to the biblical heartland most desire. For religious Jews living so close to Hebron or Shechem/Nablus but being unable to visit them freely must be very frustrating. For those who have a real love for the land, the scars imposed physically by the Israeli infrastructure designed to separate the two peoples must be deeply painful.

### **Advantages Of A Single State**

The one state solution creates a coherent, defensible national territory and gives Jews free access to all parts of the West Bank. A unified Israeli/Palestinian military force would give each side control over the other's military capacity. By opening the main territory of Israel to Palestinians it would end the most substantial of Palestinian grievances. It would also provide Israeli Jews once again with an abundant supply of Palestinian labour (we may assume that Jews would continue to dominate the managerial, employing class for the

foreseeable future). These are advantages on the Jewish side. The question remains if they are sufficient to outweigh the great apparent disadvantage—loss of exclusive control and perhaps of the 'Jewish state'.

### **Disadvantages Of A Secularist Single State**

I say 'perhaps' because I would argue that Israel/Palestine could still be described as a 'Jewish state', meaning at once a favourable environment for the integral practice of the Jewish religion but also a country whose policies would be determined by Jews, albeit in agreement with non-Jews. The difference is it would not be an exclusively Jewish state. It could also on the same terms be described as a 'Muslim state' and—who knows?—a 'Christian state'. I disagree with the 'secularist' ideology of the mainstream one-state movement and believe it is important that the state should allow for the religious identity of its citizens. I follow what I would see as the 'British' model here rather than the French. In Britain, religious tolerance developed through compromises that had to be made between rival powerful religious movements (most obviously the Established Church and the Dissenters) which were not themselves committed to an ideal of tolerance or compromise; there was no substantial secularist movement as such. In France there was a conflict between a single very powerful Church and the forces of secularist republicanism. State recognition of religion has the advantage of giving the state some leverage in religious affairs. In the United States it could be argued that the eccentric variant of Christianity which has come to the fore with President Bush evolved precisely because the state was secularist and had abdicated its responsibilities in matters of religion.

### **A Change In The Atmosphere**

But a one state solution, especially if it is combined, as it must be, with recognition of a right of return for Palestinian refugees, means rule by a government in which, sooner rather than later, the Palestinians will be a majority. And, though the great grievance of exclusion from their own national territory will have been addressed, a multitude of grievances stemming from the Jewish takeover of Palestinian land will remain. In the atmosphere of mutual hatred generated by the present Israeli policies it is difficult to envisage. For the moment let us say that before we reach this stage the atmosphere will have to be changed utterly. Unlike other one state advocates I think it will require a period of transition in which a Jewish

Government continues to exercise control at the expense of Palestinian political rights, but increasingly assumes responsibility for the social welfare of all the people living in the territory of a greater Israel that includes the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In other words, the Zionists do what they want to do—take the whole area—but they take it with the people living there and with the responsibilities that implies. That this would be a natural development is rather implied by the lengths Ariel Sharon is going to try to avoid it and to keep the two peoples separate.

Of course from the Jewish point of view this perspective is risky. But the alternative is a literally endless brutal suppression of the Palestinians and I do not believe—and I don't believe Sharon believed (this was his dilemma)—the Israelis as a people have it in them. We might make more headway however if One-State advocates stopped presenting their case as the most militantly anti-Zionist option—the destruction of the Jewish national identity—and instead argued for it as a fulfilment of what is best in the Zionist idea: the establishment of a just nation living in security in the land of its fathers.

## *PART TWO*

### **What's in it for the Palestinians?**

A single democratic secular state covering the whole area of Israel/Palestine, from the River Jordan to the Mediterranean, was the original demand of the Palestine Liberation Organisation; and a single state, though perhaps not so democratic or secular, is still the demand of Hamas. It seems that already, should such a state come into existence tomorrow, the Palestinians, or non-Jews, would be in a majority and they would of course easily be in a majority if the refugees' right of return was respected.

So it should not be difficult to argue that a democratic one state solution would be a 'liberation' for the Palestinians. As things stand at present it would indeed appear as a mighty victory for the Palestinians and a defeat for the Israelis. But since, as things stand at present, all power is in the hands of the Israelis and very little power is in the hands of the Palestinians, this really amounts to an argument against it, or against the possibility that it will ever be implemented. (I say 'very little' power is in the hands of the Palestinians because they do have some capacity, at enormous cost to themselves, to make life uncomfortable for the Israelis).

## Congo

King Leopold II of Belgium (1835-1909) commissioned the explorer Henry Stanley to help him secure nearly two million square kilometres of the Congo basin as his private estate. The world was desperate for Congo's rubber and along with this precious material, Leopold's brutal army and administration also sapped the life blood of Congo's people.

In 1876, Leopold founded the International African Society which was the humanitarian front for his criminal activities. In 1884, when the European powers met to carve up Africa at a 14 delegation Conference in Berlin (only one of the 14 attendees had ever been to Africa), Leopold called Africa "*that magnificent African cake*".

Leopold was responsible for what Joseph Conrad once called 'the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience.'

Leopold sold his Congo Free State, to the Belgian state after perpetrating a holocaust whose victims are estimated to be 10 million Africans. When the Belgians finally left Congo in 1960 despite the fact that several missionaries established schools and hospitals, Congo had only 27 university graduates.

And in 2002, Belgium finally admitted its complicity in the assassination of the first Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba within months of his assuming office.

(International Humanist News, June, 2006).

## One Million Euro Donation

Locals in Innishannon and Knockavilla were speculating as to the source of a Euro 1 million donation made to their parish renovation fund.

The massive donation was announced by Parish Priest Rev. Fr. John Kingston at Mass but parishioners were left in the dark as to the source of the donation. The family involved wish to remain anonymous and Fr. Kingston would not be drawn on any details relating to the donor.

An estimated 3 million is needed for the full restoration of both churches with work on the Innishannon project complete.

The announcement comes shortly after the St. Luke's Nursing Home in Cork netted Euro 27.5 million from the sale of an 11-acre piece of land left to them by former resident, Sidney Northridge, a gentleman of the Church of Ireland persuasion.

I have therefore felt the more important task was to develop arguments that would show how a One State solution is in the interests of the Israelis—even suggesting that it is the only solution, short of a renewed bout of outright ethnic cleansing, that would fulfil the most basic of Jewish nationalist aspirations: which is to live in security in the Biblical homeland. If the concept of Biblical homeland is to be taken seriously, it must include the territory now known as the West Bank, where the Palestinian population is concentrated. So long as this Palestinian population constitutes a separate political entity, it will cut Jews off from full and free access to the heartland of 'Judaeo-Samaria' and it will pose a perpetual threat to Israel's security. This is true whether the Palestinian political entity is a separate, fully sovereign state, which is the professed aim of the 'international community', including the USA (and Israel is a dependency of the USA); or even if it takes the form of a powerless archipelago of irredeemably aggrieved Bantustans, which seems to be the preferred option of the Israeli Government.

The security of Jews living in Israel/Palestine requires Jewish control over Palestinian military capacity. This can be achieved either as at present through naked terrorism; or through agreement on a common polity with a common army in which each side will have control over the military capacity of the other.

A one state solution argued in those terms may of course look less attractive from a Palestinian point of view. It is not a Palestinian victory; it would initially be implemented with the Israelis still in a position of strength and it would therefore be weighted, probably very unfairly, in the Israeli interest; and it requires the Palestinians to renounce the one project in which all their hopes have been invested since the destruction of the Ottoman Empire—the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian state. I have said that a combined Israel/Palestine could still be called a 'Jewish state', but it could not be an exclusively Jewish state; by the same token it could be called a 'Palestinian state', but it would not be an exclusively Palestinian state.

However, hellish as the Palestinian condition has been since the formation of the state of Israel, it has surely only been made worse by the false hope offered first by the struggle for an independent Palestinian state covering the whole area, then by the 'International Community' in the form of the 'two states solution'. Indeed the one victory the Palestinians appear to have gained in this context—the refusal of the

'International Community' to recognise the Israeli occupation of the West Bank—has worked to the advantage of the Israelis, since it has released them from any pressure to recognise the democratic rights of the people living there or even to take responsibility for their welfare. The political energies of the Palestinians have been diverted into a hopeless task since there is no possibility whatsoever that the Israelis will renounce effective control over the West Bank. Or of the Gaza Strip. The Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip is based on much the same principle as the withdrawal of Poles from the Warsaw Ghetto. The 'two state solution' has condemned Palestinians to a dreadful roller coaster ride of alternating hope and disappointment with, I believe, no real prospect of any eventual escape. False hope is in itself a form of oppression and to renounce it would in itself be a small liberation—a liberation and clarity of vision that is already enjoyed by the followers of Hamas.

Coming to terms with reality means coming to terms with the fact that the One State already exists. The whole area from the river to the sea is already a single polity with a single government—the Israeli government. Instead of engaging in a futile effort to escape the sovereignty of the Israeli government, the immediate task should be to impose on the already existing government of the area its obligation to provide for the welfare of all the people living under its control.

Some time ago, I argued in the context of a One State discussion list that this process could begin with a demand, raised loudly and clearly, that Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, should have the right to hold Israeli passports. This suggestion went down like the proverbial lead balloon, but I still hold to it. It does not of itself imply renunciation of separate Palestinian nationhood or statehood. It is a first statement of the principle that so long as Palestinians are being ruled by the government of Israel they should, without prejudice to their long term aspirations, have the rights of citizens of Israel. It is a position analogous to that of Republicans in Northern Ireland in the late sixties who demanded the full rights of British citizens without renouncing their ambition to abstract themselves from the United Kingdom. The principle is unanswerable. Recognition of it would, I believe, be a first step towards the liberation of both sides in this seemingly endless and futile quarrel.



### Con-Celebration

The Augustinian Order has apologised to the Catholic hierarchy for allowing three of its priests to concelebrate the Eucharist in a 1916 Rising anniversary Mass with a Church of Ireland minister.

It was the first public concelebration in Drogheda of the Eucharist by a priest of the Anglican tradition in a Catholic church since the Reformation.

Last night, the Irish Province of the Augustinian Order said *"it deeply regrets the pain, confusion and damage caused as a result of the Easter Sunday Eucharistic celebration at its church in Drogheda"*.

The apology was welcomed by Archbishop of Armagh, Seán Brady. The written apology from Fr Richard Goode, Fr Ignatius O'Donovan and Fr Noel Hession was also sent to the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Giuseppe Lazzarotto; and to Fr Robert Prevost, Prior General of the Augustinian Order, resident in Rome.

"Having reflected on the seriousness of their actions, their letter apologises unreservedly for the ill-considered celebration and gives an absolute commitment as to future conduct in matters liturgical," a statement from the Augustinians said.

Rev. Michael Graham, Church of Ireland Rector at St Peter's Church in Drogheda, was invited to concelebrate the Mass by member of the Augustinian community.

Rev. Graham was greeted with prolonged applause by the large congregation when he appeared on the altar on Easter Sunday.

The Mass, to mark the 90th anniversary of the 1916 Rising and to honour Irish deaths in World War One, took place at the Augustinian priory in Drogheda. Rev Michael Graham was invited to attend by the former Augustinian prior, Fr. Iggy O'Donovan. Fr. Richard Goode, the current prior, and Fr. Noel Hession also took part in the Mass.

Up to 20 members of the Church of Ireland congregation attended the Mass and received Holy Communion. Rev Graham took part fully in the consecration of the sacrament.

However, Fr. O'Donovan said he believed much of the debate surrounding intercommunion between the Christian churches involved the 'hair-splitting' of theological differences.

The priest said he was prompted to arrange the Mass after the public appeal by Taoiseach Bertie Ahern to find inclusive ways of celebrating the 90th anniversary

of the Easter Rising. *"I decided to break bread together like the early Christians"*, he said.

In a *Sunday Independent* poll of 100 priests on 23rd April 2006, 76% of the priests polled agreed with Fr. Iggy O'Donovan's decision to concelebrate the Mass with a Church of Ireland rector.

The row centres on the Catholic Church teaching on transubstantiation. Canon law explicitly forbids priests from concelebrating *"the Eucharist with priests or ministers of Churches or ecclesiastical communities which are not in full communion with the Catholic Church"*.

It is not clear whether or not the case will continue to be investigated by Vatican authorities.

### Huguenots

Some of the world's leading historians have backed a campaign against controversial plans to build on one of only two historic Huguenot cemeteries left in Europe.

Carolyn Lougee, the Frances and Charles Field Professor of History at Stanford in California; Dr. Robin Gmynn, an eminent Huguenot scholar from New Zealand; Professor Eamonn Ó Carragáin, Professor of Old and Middle English at UCC, and Professor Ruth Whelan, of NUI Maynooth, are among the leading academics who have lent their weight to the campaign against the plans for the cemetery on Cork's Carey's Lane.

Restaurateur John Murphy is again seeking planning permission to build on the tiny, derelict cemetery.

Mr. Murphy's application proposes *"alterations to an existing yard for use as a coffee shop-come exhibition area"*. It is understood the plan includes interpretive panels to highlight the historic nature of the cemetery.

But Petra Coffey, a founder member of the Friends of the Huguenot Cemetery, said the cemetery is an invaluable piece of Cork history.

She has collected hundreds of signatures objecting to the plans and has submitted them to the city council's planning department.

In her submission, Prof Whelan described the cemetery as *"unique heritage"*. She added: *"It would also be possible to restore the small site in Cork respectfully leaving the surviving gravestones in situ and have the name of all known to be buried there engraved on stone, and allow visual access only by the public via railings that could be*

*placed over the existing entrance (which at present is a sheet-metal gate)."*

Europe's only other remaining Huguenot cemetery at Merrion Row in Dublin has been restored and is in perfect condition.

The Huguenots settled in Cork from the mid-16th century. The French Protestants were followers of Jean Calvin who fled their country to escape religious persecution. The first Huguenots were living in a small colony in Cork by 1569.

They had a temple, a pastor's house, school-house, an alms house between Carey's Lane and French Church street.

The 8x10m cemetery was built in 1720. It was subsequently sold to the Methodist Church and was in constant use until the trustees sold it in 1901.

Over the years, the Huguenots produced five or six mayors of Cork, including Vesien Pique, Mayor in 1796, whose remains are buried in the cemetery. Ms Coffey said there is a good chance that the remains of Joseph Lavitte, who was Lord Mayor in 1720 and after whom Lavitt's Quay is named, could also be buried there.

### Mass Broadcasts stopped

Churches broadcasting Mass on the radio to housebound worshippers have unexpectedly found a new audience—pilots flying transatlantic planes at 30,000ft.

Now churches across the country have had to cease their daily FM broadcasts following fears over interference with air traffic control communications.

But the ban has come under fire from priests as well as parishioners, who said the religious broadcasts were a lifeline for the housebound.

Father Brendan Quinlan used to broadcast Mass on the 106.5FM frequency from the Mother of Divine Grace Church in Finglas, Dublin, to listeners at three nearby nursing homes.

"These broadcasts were greatly appreciated, especially by the housebound.

"It was a lifeline—they kept in touch with what's happening but we had no idea it was causing any interference."

The ban was brought in by communications regulator ComReg after an investigation by the Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) into interference being suffered by pilots.

IAA spokeswoman Lilian Cassin said:

"Our engineers on the ground could not find anything but pilots in the air were reporting interference.

"It occurred to one of our engineers that the problem was caused by broadcasts of Masses because of the times that the interference was being reported."

Pilots flying between Europe and North America reported the interference to air traffic control transmissions while flying over Ireland at high altitude.