

# Church & State

---

*A Pluralist Review Of Irish Culture*

---

## The Long Imperial Road To The Pakistan Crisis

**Catholicism And Marxism**

**Kansas Again!**

**The Taming Of The Jew**

**British Anti-Popery In 1918**

---

**No. 91**

**First Quarter, 2008**

***Price: €2.00/£1.50***

# The Long Imperial Road To The Pakistan Crisis

George W. Bush had the makings of a reasonably good American President. He had no foreign policy. He didn't know or care where the world was or who was governing it. He just wanted to be President.

The only world he knew or cared about was the United States. But the other world wouldn't let him be. It attacked him because of what his predecessors had done to it during the preceding half century.

Little though he knew about the world, he knew immediately which bit of it attacked him on 9/11 [2001]. The Bin Ladens were friends of the family, and among family friends these things are known.

Maybe it wasn't actually Bin Laden! Who knows? But it might have been Bin Laden. And in the end Bin Laden was willing to take the credit. And that's close enough.

Something had to be done in response to the Twin Towers escapade. And it had to be done to somebody else, even though the Twin Towers was an inside job.

The attack on the Twin Towers could not have been a foreign attack. It could not have been launched from beyond the borders of the United States. It could only have been an inside job, made possible by all the exciting toys the USA lays on for its own enjoyment. Where else could the ordinary decent citizen acquire at an amusement arcade the ability to keep an airliner flying and the skill to aim it precisely at a small target.

But it was necessary that the demolition of the Twin Towers should be represented as a foreign attack—a psychological or spiritual more than a mere political necessity. And Bush was therefore obliged to peer out at that obscure world beyond the Pacific and the Atlantic and do something to it in retaliation for what it had supposedly done to his world.

What he has done is destroy two states. He would have destroyed a third state, and possibly a fourth and fifth, if he had not found it so difficult to extricate himself from the second after destroying it.

Would a smarter President, who knew more about the outer world, have done something entirely different after 9/11? Probably not. The United States is more of a democracy than most of the states which go under that label, and it was wholly supportive of the President when he launched the Rampage or Crusade against Evil in the outer world. Possibly a smarter cookie would have struck at Iran after Afghanistan. At least that is what some of the smart cookies have been saying. But is it likely that the outcome could have been better from anyone's point of view—barring that of Al Qaeda, supposing that it exists.

When George W. was obliged to discover the world, the Neocons were on hand to guide his perception of it. But the Neocons are not aliens. They are in essence only Believers in the American Dreams. And they are perhaps less alien than the Brzhenskis and Kissingers who went before them.

The Government of Afghanistan was knocked over as the liberal West applauded. It is easy to knock over a Government of Afghanistan because the people it governed never invested heavily in it. Supercilious people took to describing the conflict in Northern Ireland over the last 30 years as tribal—which it

was not. But the Afghans, by and large, wanted no more than to be let alone to live in tribes or clans, as was once the case with the Irish. Like the Irish, they were prevented from doing so by the British Empire.

The Afghans were unfortunately situated between two expansionist Empires: the British and the Russian.

Tsarist Russia was the great civilising force in 19th century Asia. It was recognised as such by influential elements in the Imperial British ruling class. But that only made it more dangerous from the British viewpoint. So the Great Game over Afghanistan began, and continued until in 1905 Russia suffered defeat at the hands of the burgeoning Japanese Empire, which was allied to the British Empire.

Following its defeat by Japan, Russian expansionism was diverted westwards, towards Constantinople (Istanbul). Britain made a deal with it over Persia (Iran) whereby Russia had control of the Northern third and Britain controlled the Southern third (extending the Indian Empire westwards to the Gulf and crossing the Gulf by means of a secret Treaty with a local chieftain in what is now called Kuwait). The middle third of Persia was nominally independent, but care was taken by the allied hegemony that it should be powerless.

At the same time Britain called off its long-standing antagonism with France, and arranged the Triple Entente of itself, France and Russia, directed against Germany and Austria.

Most of the Germans had been united into a political state as a consequence of the French war of aggression against Prussia in 1870, after which France lost the predominantly German-speaking region of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany. The purpose of the Triple Entente from the French viewpoint was to gain allies for the reconquest of Alsace-Lorraine. Its purpose from the Russian viewpoint was to gain allies (moral cover) for expansion through the Balkans—an old ambition which had been thwarted by Britain and France in the 19th century.

Constantinople was awarded to Russia by the Treaty of London in 1915. But it was awarded ownership in advance of possession, and the Tsarist State broke up under the strain of trying to gain possession.

Britain secured its Asian Empire by victory in the Great War as far as military power was concerned. All it needed to do was govern it.

But it had not really won the Great War. If the USA had not intervened very actively in 1918, Britain would have had to make a settlement with Germany or else risk defeat—but in the circumstances of Britain's participation in the War a settlement would have been tantamount to defeat. So it gambled on all or nothing, and apparently it gained all. But in both military and financial terms it was America that won the War. In its crucial battles with the Americans in 1918, the German Army for the first time encountered an enemy that could hold its own on equal terms. And the USA, a debtor state in 1914, emerged from the war a creditor state.

By means of the American defeat of Germany, Britain enlarged its Empire far beyond its power to govern it. In fact, its ability to govern contracted as the region to be governed expanded. And both in India and the Middle East it took short cuts, and resorted to government by bombing where, before 1914, it would have engaged in policing on the ground. Many

admirers of the British Empire were greatly disillusioned. These included the Italian Prime Minister, Francesco Nitti who, on seeing at the Versailles Conference how Britain used its victory, realised that he had placed his trust in an illusion.

The first admirer of the British Empire to be disillusioned was Houston Stewart Chamberlain, one of those awesome late-Victorian intellectuals who grasped at omniscience. For a generation before 1914 Britain had been presenting itself to the world as a new, and even better, Roman Empire. Chamberlain was an offspring of late 19th century Europe. He was English *and* French *and* German, entirely at ease in all three languages and cultures. But in August 1914 he had to choose. He did not choose England. What put him off was the immediate propaganda of the British Government, directed towards businessmen, pointing out that, as the Royal Navy had cut Germany off from its markets and foreign possessions, they were available for plunder. He did not think that that was the first thing Rome would have seen. And he concluded from it that Britain had lost the Imperial touch.

His comments were published in London under the title, *The Ravings Of A Renegade*, but Britain's conduct of the expanded Empire after 1918 showed that he had grasped a reality.

What Germany would have done with the world, if America had not intervened and saved Britain, cannot be known. Francesco Nitti, an enemy of Germany, thought it could not possibly have done worse than Britain did.

Britain's Great War made the world into a kind of unity in which no bit could be let be. After all that had happened, the victor would be under a kind of moral obligation to determine events everywhere. The notion that Germany had a scheme of world conquest in 1914 is mere British war propaganda. It had no territorial demands. Its march through Belgium had the purely military purpose of getting around a military encirclement. Its Navy, never equal to Britain's, had the purpose of protecting its foreign trade, and when the test came wasn't even equal to that.

But the achievement of world dominance was what Britain had been about for generations. The justification was that, since Britain had made itself dependent on the world for food and raw materials, it had to control the world as a matter of self-defence.

From 1919 to 1939 there were two world institutions—the British Empire and the League of Nations. The League existed in the shadow of the Empire. It was a thing of little consequence because it did not even have notional authority over the Empire, and because the United States played no part in it because the British and French Empires at Versailles had refused to make a settlement in accordance with the principles on which the Americans had entered the War and won it.

The League, as De Valera found out, was a delusion. And Britain ignored it when deciding to have another Great War in 1939. (Having instigated Poland to refuse to negotiate over Danzig with Germany, Britain might have fought along with Poland against Germany in September 1939—as it was under Treaty obligation to do. It preferred to let Poland fight alone, and then it began to fight a confused and protracted war against Germany over something else, which was never quite specified, involving other countries at every opportunity. And, as the first Great War launched by Britain was won by the Americans, this was won by the Communists.)

Britain's most able military man was General Monck, who in 1660, when England seemed destined to be what we now call a banana republic or a failed state, restored the monarchy and established Britain as an aggressive naval power. During a time spent in the Tower of London, he wrote the only

To page 4

## Contents

	Page
<b>The Long Imperial Road To</b>	
<b>The Pakistan Crisis.</b> Editorial	2
<b>Catholicism And Marxism.</b> Conor Lynch	6
<b>The Christian Right, Kansas And Ulster</b>	
Stephen Richards	
(Review: <i>What's The Matter With Kansas?</i> Part 2)	8
<b>Church Developments.</b> Pat Maloney	11
<b>Martin Mansergh's 'Dark Corners'</b>	
Report on Coolacrease letters in press	12
<b>Cooneyites And Coolacrease</b>	
Report of Emmanuel Kehoe article	14
<b>Vox Pat:</b> Violence; Canon Joe Condell; Muslim Plots	
More Marriages; Single Parents; Acts Of Murder	
Pat Maloney	15, 36
<b>Mary Kenny, Point Of Correction</b>	
Mary Kenny (letter and reply)	17
<b>Mary Kenny On Moral Maze (2006).</b> Report	18
<b>The Taming Of The Jew.</b> Pat Walsh	19
<b>Irish Politics, British Law And Anti-</b>	
<b>Catholicism, 1918-1919.</b> Eamon Dyas	22
<b>Protestants And Republicans During The War</b>	
<b>Of Independence.</b> Unpublished letter	23
<b>Power Of Jewish Lobby.</b> Report of	
Holocaust Educational Trust	25
<b>A Journey Around Tom Dunne</b>	
Brendan Clifford (Part 3)	34
<b>Poor Little Belgium.</b> Pat Maloney	36
<b>Multi-Denominational Schools.</b> P. Maloney	36

The web addresses for the Church & State and associated sites are as follows:—

### **Church & State:**

<http://www.atholbooks.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.**

worthwhile British manual on war and politics. Britain conducted its affairs in accordance with Monck's advise until 1914.

Since Ireland under Bertie Ahern has become a militaristic state—though not yet really a military—and seems intent on making war on the world in a European Battle Group—it is as well that it should try to have some understanding of war and politics which is not a mere Churchillian hand-me-down.

Britain in its 1914 War put itself in the position warned against by Monck (who we might even claim as an Irish General, in view of the important things he did in Ireland, which included deceiving us for the purpose of putting us down—for our own good, of course):

"An offensive war will keep you from civil war at home, and make you feared of your enemies, and beloved of your friends, and keepeth your gentry and commons from laziness, and all sorts of luxury. But here you must note, to entertain a foreign war, is not good to be observed, but by such kingdoms and states that are able to go through with their designs they undertake. Because as a foreign war is necessary for rich and potent kingdoms and states; so it is hurtful to petty kingdoms and states, for being being too weak to gain by it, they will, in the end, but lose their design, their honours, and monies, and impoverish themselves, and increase their enemies. It is not for kings and states to undertake a troublesome and dangerous war upon an humour, or any other slender motion: but diligently weighing the circumstances thereof, and measuring the peril and hazard with the good consequents, to inform their judgments of the action, and so try whether the benefit would answer their labour... And he that maketh an offensive war, must so proceed therewith, that he be sure to keep what he getteth, and to enrich, not impoverish his own country. For he that doth increase his dominions, and yet groweth not in strength, must needs go to wrack. Now those grow not strong who grow poor in the wars, although they prove victorious: because their conquests do cost them more than they get by them. This error many run into by not knowing how to limit their hopes; and so grounded on their own vast conceits, without weighing their strength, they are utterly ruined. For conquests, not having power answerable to their greatness, invite new conquerers to the ruin of the old.

"That prince who putteth himself upon an offensive war, ought to be master of his enemy in shipping, purse, and men; or at least in shipping and purse" (*Observations Upon Military And*

*Political Affairs*, Chapter 3).

Although Britain never declared its war aims, and had no territorial claims asserted before the event, Britain embarked on an offensive war in 1914, which it was unable to carry through with its own resources and those of its initial allies, even though the Entente enjoyed a great preponderance in men and materials over Germany and Austria. It seized some German possessions in August 1914 and agreed that Japan should seize others. But its offensive war was the war against Turkey, which it set about provoking when Turkey declared neutrality.

It was in the Middle East that it most obviously expanded the Empire beyond its power to govern it systematically, but that inability soon began to be evident in India, from which the invasion of Mesopotamia was launched.

Britain profited handsomely from all its previous Great Wars, becoming richer and increasingly eager to engage in systematic government of the expanded Empire. But not this time. It became a debtor state in the course of fighting the War. It also became a democratic state, through the 1918 Reform Act. But the democracy, though fanatically supportive of the War, did not have the will to govern the Empire systematically and purposefully—or to let go of it.

Britain might have done something different in July-August 1914. It might have limited—perhaps even prevented—the European War set off by the Serb assassination in Bosnia. And, if that war was not preventable, it might have prevented the German march through Belgium. What it actually did was to mislead the Germans about Belgium and then use it as the reason for joining the European War and developing it into a World War. But, in the course of sustaining that War for four years, it weakened itself financially and undermined Imperial morale in Britain to such an extent that it could no longer govern the empire—but not enough to reconcile it to letting the Empire go.

After more than two centuries of successful foreign wars, the reason it handled this one so badly seems to be that it rushed into it as an escape from the civil war that seemed to be imminent at home. A Home Rule war had begun to seem unavoidable. A rival army within the state had been formed by the Parliamentary Opposition. And, as a consequence of the Curragh Mutiny, there was no War Minister at the critical moment to take effective control of military affairs. The Government was rushed off its feet by the Opposition and by popular enthusiasm, and soon found

itself raising an Army of millions, in the Continental style, which had not been in the plans at all.

These are the conditions out of which the Middle East mess and the Pakistan mess arose.

The disorderly conduct of world affairs by the British Empire, the greatest state in the world, after 1918, led to the next Great War twenty years later, which was also initiated by Britain, and which led to an ever greater loss of both military and financial power, and of political competence, but still with an unwillingness to let go of the Empire.

Dirty Imperial wars—racist wars—were fought by Britain in Malaya and Kenya in the decade following the defeat of Nazi Germany by Communist Russia, but India had to be let go, and Burma had to be let go.

The concession of Indian Independence without a war was presented after the event as the implementation of what had always been British policy. It was in fact an event which happened only because of the drastic decline in British military power and prestige caused by the two Great Wars and by what Britain had done in the twenty years between them.

In 1914 the 'Indian Government' joined Britain the War. As a department of the British State it could hardly do otherwise. And under the influence of British prestige the Indian population supplied cannonfodder for the War. But it had no sooner rallied to the call to fight for Democracy and the Rights of Nations than the Indian population was subjected to the Amritsar Massacre, under the authority of Sir Michael O'Dwyer—a 'moderate' Irish nationalist.

In 1939 the Indian Government was still British, and again it declared war. But the experience of a quarter of a century of British war and peace had led to a considerable cooling off of Indian enthusiasm for British affairs. The Congress Party had become a power in Indian society and it declared neutrality. Churchill (who had gone into the wilderness in the early 1930s in opposition to a very small measure of "appeasement" of Indian nationalism) sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India to plead with the Congress to support the War in return for a promise of something after the War.

Sir Stafford was a revolutionary socialist before the War, and was expelled from the Labour Party for extremism in the late 1930s. But now he went to India in the service of the Crown to meet the Congress leaders, some of whom had been his political colleagues before the War. They

expected that he brought independence in exchange for a declaration of war, But Churchill was firm in his determination to maintain the Empire. So their anti-Imperialist colleague Cripps only brought them promises. Some of them were inclined to do something in return for the promises, but Gandhi put his barefoot foot down, and that was the end of that. Independence now was his minimum demand, and he would urge no Indian to fight the Japanese in defence of British possessions.

Britain still raised some cannonfodder in India, despite Gandhi and the Congress—but the Indian National Army, that was raised at that juncture by Bose (the popular hero of post-war India) aligned itself with the Japanese in Burma.

The refusal of Indian independence in 1941 led to a state of affairs in 1945 in which it was not refusable. The Empire in India and Burma was gone. Britain, a straw on an angry ocean, could not even have made a fight of it. The days of administrative massacres like Amritsar were gone.

But in leaving India Britain divided it, decreeing the creation of Pakistan.

A couple of centuries of 'civilising' British rule in India culminated in a sectarian war of gigantic proportions, with a million deaths and nine million refugees.

Two generations earlier, Charles James O'Donnell of Donegal resigned from a responsible position in the British administration of India on the grounds that a sectarian policy of Divide and Rule had been introduced.

We are told by Professor Girvin that Britain's 1939 War was such a good war that it was immoral of Ireland to have been neutral in it. Why then did Britain hang on to the main Imperial possession until the bitter end and then wash its hands of it, having reduced it to a state of carnage?

If responsibility in public affairs means anything, then Britain can no more be excused of responsibility for the million dead in India in 1947 than for the million or two dead in Ireland a century before. In both cases it took control by force and monopolised government for centuries on the ultimate basis of force, and by use of its arbitrary power as conqueror it did things to society which had these outcomes. This might be written off as a 'past', on which there is no advantage in dwelling, if it actually was over and done with. But it isn't. Britain in 1947 washed its hands of responsibility for the consequences of what it had done to India and Palestine, and let things rip. And now, amidst the ongoing consequences of that

Pontius Pilate act, it is re-asserting pride in the Empire as a glorious and constructive event in human affairs.

Having refused as an Empire to shape India for independence, it pulled out in 1947 amidst scenes of carnage because that was what it found convenient in its own interest. Hindu India had managed, in some degree, to prepare itself for Independence, despite British overlordship. Pakistan was extemporised on the spur of the moment. It was listed among the "Nation states" of the world, even though there was no popular sense of Pakistani nationality, and the Imperial administration was not organised in a way that was easily adaptable to the requirement of a Pakistan state.

And there was no immediately available Pakistan Army, despite the strong Muslim presence in the British Army. The British Army was the Indian Army, and much of it was suitable for being taken over by the new Indian State. And, behind that Indian Army, there was the spirit of the other Indian Army, Bose's, which had joined the other side in the World War.

Pakistan came into being because of the sudden British rush to acknowledge Indian independence after generations of denying it. That the Indians may have demanded independence is beside the point. They had demanded it long before 1947, in circumstances that were far more favourable to its orderly implementation than in 1947. It just suited Britain to do it in 1947, when a Muslim separatist movement had sprung up within India.

When Sir Michael O'Dwyer authorised the Amritsar Massacre, the national distinction of Hindu and Muslim was undeveloped, both having contributed to the British war on Germany and Turkey. A process of separation began in the 1930s, with the activity of the Muslim League. It seems to have intensified during World War 2, when the Hindu leaders either declared neutrality (and were interned) or allied themselves with Japan, while the Muslim leaders again supported the British war effort.

The Professor of History at Maynooth (R.V. Comerford) has recently proclaimed that nations are imaginary entities. The Pakistani nation was certainly imaginary in 1947, as was the Pakistani state. In fact both remained to be imagined, not to mind constructed,

The fact that a Pakistani state and something like a Pakistani nation were constructed out of largely unsuitable social materials, and in the face of Indian hostility, is due largely to General Ayub Khan, who fought in the British Army against the Japanese, and then, as first

Commander-in-Chief in Pakistan, drew together an army for the state and made it the hub of the state by developing an economic and social infrastructure for it. This Army was the effective national institution of the state.

In the late fifties, amidst the chaos of politicians, Ayub took control of the Government, and tried to establish the social-political preconditions of representative government. This took the form in the first instance of setting up *Basic Democracies* as regional self-governing bodies, with the idea that, as they became functional, they would elect members to an Electoral College that would take on functions relevant to the general Government of the State. This was called "*guided democracy*", and around 1960 the term was ridiculed in Britain as self-contradictory on the grounds that, if there is any guiding force operating on a democracy, it is not a democracy.

That is true of course. If the democracy is supervised by anything outside itself, it is not a democracy. But that criticism, while true, also belongs to an era of illusion. In our era it is close to being the case that weak countries must do what the US and EU require of them—i.e., they are supervised—and democracy is not accepted as a valid excuse for doing the wrong thing.

What we call Democracy is a highly artificial contrivance whose basic preconditions—representative government by parties in a functional state—came about by historical accident in England between the late 17th and mid-19th centuries. But in the self-righteous ideology of the EU at the moment it is depicted as a simple and obvious arrangement which only the malevolence of self-seeking politicians and Generals prevents from existing everywhere. Ayub Khan's view is much nearer the reality of it:

"...a great debate started [in the late 1950s] as to the respective merits of the parliamentary and presidential systems of government. Some... held that the parliamentary system in the country had been condemned without having been given enough time to establish itself. What they meant, perhaps, was that we had not given ourselves enough rope to hang ourselves with. Had we gone on for another five or ten years the way we were going, we should have been doomed.

"The point is that a parliamentary system can only work when you have well-organised parties, and a limited number of parties, each working for a clear-cut social and economic programme. Some people say, 'What does it matter if we have five or ten

parties? We can always have a coalition government?... Can coalition governments, in a developing country, take difficult and firm decisions, sometimes against tradition and the customary way of life? A responsible government cannot be a prisoner of wayward public opinion. You have to move ahead of public opinion and draw the people in your direction. The objectives before me were the unification of the people and the development of the country. To attain these objectives we required a stable representative government, continuity of administration, and well-planned programmes of economic growth...

"It is easy to talk about removing the inhibiting effects of history: it is a different thing dealing with them in practical life. How can you run a parliamentary democracy when you have big landlords in the country who can influence thousands of votes? How can you run a parliamentary democracy when you have *pirs* [spiritual guides] and *faqirs* who can influence the people indirectly? How can you have parliamentary democracy or stability when you have ten or fifteen or more political parties in the country without any programme whatsoever?" (*Friends Not Masters*, 1967, p206).

"It has been my task to identify the new philosophy, which would enable our people to lead a fuller and more progressive life. This philosophy has to be such as people believe in and are ready to defend and support. Weaning people away from an established system which they have long known, even if it is decadent and remote from their requirements, is a very difficult job. People tend to embrace the comforts of the old, rather than risk the hazards of the new" (p220).

Which brings us to "*fundamentalism*", to "*Islamism*".

Pakistan was comprised from the start of Muslims who were not willing to exchange British rule for Hindu rule. It was not what is now described as "*Islamist*". Its ideological founder, Jinna, was far from Islamism, as was Ayub Khan, and as is Musharraf. The first Pakistani demagogue was Bhutto who, after he broke with Ayub Khan, revelled in extravagance. He had been Ayub's Foreign Minister, and his Minister for the Basic Democracies, which after the break he denounced as Fascist. He also played the part of heroic warmonger against India, and helped to lose the more populous part of Pakistan, East Bengal, which became Bangla Desh, closely aligned with India.

In well-established states, inured the

verbal extravagance of party politicians, the demagogy is heavily discounted by an entrenched cynicism. Such cannot be the case with a mushroom state like Pakistan, with scarcely any national history prior to independence.

Musharraf says that his object is to do what Attaturk did—establish a secular national state against the grain of traditional (pre-national) practices. That is not something could be done through demagogic party-political conflict—especially when the party politicians make themselves instruments of American policy.

The breakthrough into Islamism was brought about through American influence and the embedding of American Intelligence services in Pakistan. "*Islamic fundamentalism*" was required for the war against the secular Government of Afghanistan aligned with

the Soviet Union, so Islamic fanaticism was carefully fostered under American hegemony in Pakistan, and 'democratic' demagoguery went along with it. (The late Benazir Bhutto was closely allied with this policy.) Now that it no longer serves an American purpose, what is to be done about it? It exists. It is no longer a residue of *pirs* and *faqirs*. Democracy is no remedy.

Democracy, long ago, used to mean the people giving expression to what is in them when governing themselves. But that is not allowable now. What American influence helped to bring to the fore amongst the people (for an ulterior purpose) must not be allowed to determine the governing of the state. Having served its purpose, it must be stifled. And the stifling must somehow be done in the name of democracy—of giving expression of what is in the people.

Conor Lynch

## Catholicism And Marxism

Some time ago I read a report that the Catholic Church had come to an agreement with the Lutherans on the matter of what is required to be saved. This would mean at least a compromise by the Catholics on their position that you are saved according to your good works on earth. The Lutheran position, as far as I can tell, had to do with faith in Jesus.

Joe Keenan tells me that there is a form of Protestantism, quite widespread, which believes that who is saved and who is not is predetermined. I wondered how you can tell. I must assume that if you believe that doctrine you are one of the saved, and if you do not, you have a rough time ahead of you. From observation all shades of Protestantism tend to a greater or lesser extent towards this position.

All this matters very much. It means, if the reports are to be believed and if the matter is carried through, that the Catholic Church is repositioning itself in the world, and not for the better.

When the Pope spoke a year or so ago in Germany, most noted were his tasteless remarks about Islam. But connected to that, and more important, were his remarks to the effect that the secular world was really a part of the Christian world and should be treated as such.

This is in contrast to the views of Pope John Paul who saw Catholics having more in common with Islam and

having nothing in common with the globalised and atomised world being striven for by the Protestant and lapsed-Protestant establishments of England and America.

I heard the view (or hope) expressed when the Pope took the name Benedict XVI, that he was paying homage to Benedict XV who strove to stop the Great War and have the European powers come to a position of mutual respect and tolerance. Germany and Turkey were prepared to go along with this. Britain and France were not and denounced the Pope as pro-German for his troubles. For that and for trying to keep Italy out of the War. Pat Walsh tells me that the only statue he knows about of Pope Benedict XV is in Istanbul!

But it is equally believable that the present Pope wanted to replace the memory of one Benedict with that of another. John Paul did not make himself popular with the Anglo-Americans and their recent military and imperialist adventures. They did not feel confident enough to take him on and waited him out. Now official comment on his life has to do entirely with his anti-Communism and his Polishness. He was a Polish nationalist, a force which, whatever happens to poverty and taxes, seems destined to be always with us.

His problem with Communism, apart from his nationalism, was to do with its atheism. Communist Atheism saw itself

as the highest form of philosophical being. Therefore it looked down on agnostics and those of a religious persuasion. But among religions it regarded Lutheranism as by far the best of a bad lot.

That is why Martin Luther's face adorned one of the East German bank-notes, along with Marx and the rest of the lads. But there was little or no Lutheranism in the Soviet Union. There was the Russian Orthodox Church and there was Islam. And when the curtains were pulled aside in 1990 it would appear that both were largely left alone.

There is a scene in the film "Reds" where Jack Reid is giving a rousing speech on international workers' solidarity in one of the Southern Republics. He is appalled to discover that the "translator" is giving a Parallel rousing speech calling for Holy Jihad against the White reactionaries. One is given to believe that this must be done so as to get backward peoples on side.

I am not so sure. There was enough of an anti-imperialist impulse in the Russian Revolution for many of its leaders to see the Bolsheviks and the Islamists as having common cause against the British and other imperialist backed White Armies.

But to the extent that Bolshevism, and what came out of it, was Marxist, and that was to a very great extent, it did indeed look down on anyone of a religious bent, often taking pity on or tactically pandering to their backwardness. That was my experience as I entered socialist politics in Cork many years ago.

In my youth I knew a few atheists but these were really lapsed Catholics who enjoyed winding people up. Like most lapsed Catholics they just weren't interested anymore. When I was about 16 I met a Soviet diplomat who someone asked how he could possibly be an atheist. He replied: "*for the same reason that you are a Catholic, my mother and father were atheists*".

(There were also atheists in Cork who were members of the Irish Workers' Party, later the Cork branch of the Communist Party of Ireland. But their views on God were a well kept secret as was their Communism. They attempted to influence the Republican Movement, but as most of the ones that I met were of the respectable classes and the Republicans were most definitely not, the scope for influence was minimalised by the a reluctance to cross the social divide. It was all very odd. I believe that matters were much different in Dublin.)

The comments of the Russian made sense and I gradually lapsed myself.

Then I read an excellent booklet by Karl Kautsky *On Religion*. This related the variety of religions to the economic systems prevailing at various times and in various places. Kautsky was, to my mind, the purest of pure Marxists. And pure Marxism was wedded to a chronological inevitability in the history of mankind. An economic determinist view.

I had time in jail to read all volumes of *Capital*, *Theories Of Surplus Value* and much else. These made sense to me, being locked up in England and coming from an Ireland which was partly a product of British political economy—especially in its urban aspect.

But probably the two most fascinating Marxist books I read were *The Family, Private Property And The State*, and *Anti-Duhring*, both by Engels, and the latter the best written and most comprehensive summary of Marxism—or Scientific Socialism as he preferred to call it.

Both books also began to disturb me. They contained a kind of doctrine of inevitability. Many religions also tend towards the inevitable. And there is the Anglo-American notion of historic destiny—in both religious and secular forms.

There have been and still are many people who are driven towards great and appalling actions by the impetus of inevitability, of matters pre-determined. I am not and have never been one such person. I have no interest in the inevitable. I have been and am inspired by what I regard as being desirable goals.

I have taken part in agitations for particular ends—some successful and others not. I find the notion, very prevalent in politics, of getting involved in agitations for higher purposes or for recruiting members, repugnant.

I carried on working within some kind of Marxist framework so long as it didn't get in the way. But it got seriously in the way in the 1970s in Britain when that State had its first opportunity in 300 years to become a normal State on an equal footing with other countries, by becoming just another European country and developing a socially orientated economic system.

But this didn't fit in with the economic determinism of Marxism. And it is now almost impossible to appreciate how widespread were Marxist notions and their derivatives in the Britain of the 1970s. (The magazine *Problems of Capitalism & Socialism* is being resurrected at the beginning of February 2008, to explain the politics and the general state of mind of that period. It is estimated that at least twelve volumes will be necessary for that purpose.)

It was around this time that I began to travel around Europe—as a traveller rather than as a tourist. More recently I have begun to familiarize myself with even more different cultures in Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Iran and that very strange place, New York.

Personally I have found the more Marxist backwardness to be the more humanly congenial. I have happily lived on a remote Spanish island and found myself quite at home in Damascus. In these "backward" cultures I constantly meet and enjoy the company of interesting individuals. In London I have foisted on me a succession of mindless clones.

Lenin made a substantial break with Marxism by rejecting Kautsky's idea that socialism was only possible in "advanced" countries and even in a combination of such countries. This led inevitably to him taking an anti-imperialist position, whether for opportunist reasons or not it doesn't matter.

But he could not break with Marxism. Social Democracy was the only game in town at that time. Lenin was determined to be the recognized leader of social democracy. He succeeded. Social democratic parties which remained outside of his orbit didn't amount to very much and were largely superseded by Christian Democracy insofar as the side of the "goodies" was concerned.

Bolshevism became very influential in the "third world" and especially in the Middle East. More important than ideology, it supplied trained cadres and weapons in abundance. And it provided a safe hinterland. Something without which, for example, the South African National Congress could not have survived.

But once the Soviet Union collapsed, those peoples seeking their freedom were thrown back on their own resources. The Mahdi Army in Iraq is largely composed of young men whose parents were in or associated with the Communist Party.

But as people were thrown back on their own resources they found that those resources were sufficient for not only their political purposes but for their general social and personal development.

In Palestine there is no end of smart alocs from the old days at the top of Fatah or the PFLP who either sneer at Islam or go along with a reformed version of it. Such people quickly become lickspittles of America. They are definitely among the most boring people it has ever been my misfortune to meet. The young lads of Hamas are both interesting and good *cratic*.

And so back to the Pope. Whatever

lapsing I have done in my life, someone is always around to tell me that I am a Catholic. Whether that someone is a Belfast Protestant or a Tel Aviv Jew or a Gazan Muslim. Well that's fine by me. So it matters to me as a Catholic, and a lapsed Catholic, and a Communist and a member of the human race what side the Pope comes down on. Whether it is on the side of the me feiners of the Anglo-American Protestants and Post-Protestants, or the sinn feiners of those real societies which have developed

through the "backwardness" of Catholicism, Islam, and a lot of others besides.

But of one thing I am sure. Secularism in whatever manifestation I have so far come across it, is a fraud. Mind your own business Protestantism, as found in Northern Ireland still, is fine. But secularism is the cutting edge of Protestantism with an unpleasant social mission. That is the direction that the Pope is hinting at going.

as wild and woolly, anti-intellectual, uneducated indeed, but full of Yeats's passionate intensity. These are the ones that Frank introduces us to, the loony right. If we were relying on Frank, or on a lot of other writers, we would be unaware of the huge numbers of 'normal' Christians and normal churches that still form the bedrock of American religious life. We would also be unaware of the Christian seminaries and universities all over the nation, most of them with handsome endowments, where Theology in all its aspects is still taken seriously and hasn't degenerated into Religious Studies. These institutions are keeping Christian scholarship alive, a bit like the monasteries in Ireland in the Dark Ages. This might all be loopy too, but at least it's an intellectually rigorous loopiness.

## Stephen Richards

Part Two of Review of *What's The Matter With Kansas?* by Thomas Frank (Owl Books, 2004, 2005) Part One appeared in the Autumn 2007 issue of *Church & State*

# The Christian Right:

## *Kansas And Ulster*

When we took our leave of Kansas in the Autumn the place was seething with anger, frustration and all kinds of built-in ironies and contradictions. The economy was suffering a makeover at the hands of unregulated "market forces", and people were very unhappy, but were still calling for more of the same. Thomas Frank also exposes the religious confusion which, as in a zombie film, turns hordes of regular American types into fruitcakes. In fairness to Frank, his tone as he encounters these people is more baffled and bewildered than mocking; and the mockery when it comes is kept within acceptable limits.

### The American Scene

It's also true that the more one considers the American religious scene as a whole, not just Kansas, the more puzzled one becomes. When I was growing up in a more than averagely biblically literate culture I had no idea at all what a religious society America was. The realization came slowly to me over many years. The massive American fixation with all things Christian formed no part of the image of the nation that was presented to the world at large. It didn't really feature in the 'official' American culture, mediated in my boyhood by John Wayne, Bob Hope, Elvis and the Beach Boys. Church never was mentioned in any of the sitcoms; and the redemption portrayed in films like *It's A Wonderful Life* was totally unrelated to any specifically Christian dogma. I'm not qualified to comment on the great American novels as I've read so few of them, but I don't think any of them deal with recognizably Christian communities.

Sad to say, it was my exposure to country and bluegrass music that first gave me an insight into the dark underside of America where the emotional heartbeat of the nation resonates in religious vocabulary. It was said of John Bunyan that his blood was bibline, and so with the iconic figures of modern American music, Dylan, Springsteen, Johnny Cash, and a host of lesser-known figures: they operate within imaginative categories laid down by Scripture. By comparison the emotional range of "Britpop" is limited, with the significant exceptions of one or two bands and individuals from Ireland.

The big puzzle is that Christian America sits not altogether uncomfortably alongside equally conspicuous phenomena which it should hold repugnant, in particular the fatcat corporate America that we looked at before. Linked to that there is the godless media industry, whether in the form of MTV, Hollywood, or the pornographic film industry, which last apparently is an even bigger moneyspinner than Hollywood. I'm not suggesting at all that these are different sides of the same coin, but there must be more of an overlap than some would admit. Or, as the Gospels would put it, the wheat and the tares are growing together.

I'd like to make a further comment before we get back to Frank. I think we tend to have an erroneous picture of Christian America, where the only recognizable types are the New England liberal Episcopalians and Methodists on the one hand, sympathetic to Third World causes and all things gay; and, on the other hand, the divers tribes of "fundamentalists", not so much woolly

### Hearts And Minds

I'm taking so long to begin maybe because I'm not quite sure where to begin. Frank's analysis is quite complicated. One of his preoccupations with the extreme Right in Kansas ("*the backlash*", as he calls it) is the problem of identifying the tail, and the dog which is being wagged by it. The traditional right-wing establishment is keen to manipulate the backlash and is fearful of being manipulated, and the same applies to the backlash. But who is fooling whom?

In setting up this vision of a hostile world [John D. Altevogt, a columnist of the backlash] draws heavily on the language of the other side. Once upon a time, protecting the victims of bigotry and directing the anger of the working class onto their real oppressors were qualities associated with the left. They were what gave the left its purpose, its righteousness, its sense of juggernaut inevitability. And that is why backlash leaders work so hard to claim these qualities for themselves....

"Dwight Sutherland Jr., the Kansas City brahmin mentioned previously, also uses the analytical framework of the left, but in a far more measured and thoughtful way... When I talk to him he inveighs against 'wedge issues', deploring the way abortion, gun control and evolution have been used to manipulate voters. But he means this in precisely the opposite of the usual way. For Sutherland 'wedge issues' aren't a Republican strategy to split off parts of the New Deal coalition, but a moderate and maybe even a Democratic strategy to keep conservatives in check, to split working-class conservatives from upper-middle-class conservatives who ought to be their allies...

"It's all sham battles and empty culture-war issues, distracting the rich from their real concerns. It is even 'false



consciousness.' In using this Marxist term, the archconservative Sutherland is not referring to workers being tricked by some misguided fear of black people into ignoring their interests and voting Republican, but to wealthy people being tricked by some misguided fear of the religious right into ignoring their interests and voting Democratic."

Sutherland goes on to cite the example of a wealthy friend who was sufficiently spooked by the pro-life stance adopted by Bush Senior in 1992 that he voted for Clinton, only to rue the day when his tax bill came in. Maybe the image of the tail wagging the dog is less apt than that of a team in the three-legged race, stumbling towards a common goal, alternately helping and hindering each other.

### Noblesse Oblige?

Through reading an editorial by Steve Rose in the *Johnson County Sun* Frank gets to hear of a character called Tim Golba, who is a thorn in the flesh of the local Republicans:

"This monster Golba, whom Rose described as 'brilliant' and 'cunning' and 'leaving his imprint all over Kansas' was in fact 'a worker at the Pepsi bottling plant in Olathe'—Olathe being the suburb Rose had identified previously as the other Johnson County, the fever-swamp of the Conservative revolt. I called Golba up; he answered his own phone. What kind of work did he do at the bottling plant? Just regular line work, he told me. A curious day job, I thought, for a man who bosses the entire state...

"Yet this 'little old blue-collar worker', as he describes himself, has helped make possible Kansas's conservative movement. With only a high school diploma and little resources to speak of, Golba built his organization, Kansans For Life, into one of the most powerful political groups in the state. Travelling the state in the eighties and nineties, Golba recruited hard-line anti-abortion conservatives to stand for election, and, more important, secured a base to make sure his candidates won. Here in Johnson County it was Golba who signed up all those precinct committee people back in 1992, eventually conquering the local Republican Party.

"...He will never be named 'Johnson Countian of the Year' or sit on the board of a charitable Kansas City foundation. For him it is all about principle, and principle is precisely the thing the bland, comfortable Mods do not have... He tells me story after story about the high and mighty laid low by working-class people: the carpetlayer who beat the Speaker of

the Kansas House; the wealthy Mod who outspent one of Golba's candidates by a factor of ten but who still lost 'big-time'.

"Ignoring one's economic self-interest might seem like a suicidal move to you and me, but viewed a different way it's an act of noble self-denial; a sacrifice for a holier cause. 'If you're like me, consider yourself to be a born-again, Bible-believing Christian, then the issues are black and white,' Golba says. 'There's not much room for gray area. You've got to take a stand.' When he tells me that his movement would be the rightful contemporary home of the Kansas hero John Brown... I momentarily think Golba might be on to something."

But Frank can't resist the sting in the tail:

"He denies himself so that others might luxuriate in fine mansions; he labors night and day so that others might enjoy their capital gains and never have to work at all. Humility in the service of its exact opposite; is there not something Christlike about it all?"

Surely there are echoes too of the bitter ideological and theological feuds, with interludes of kiss-and-make-up, which have characterized Ulster Unionism. The Ulster Unionist establishment was accused of being at best lukewarm in its commitment to the Protestant *raison d'être* of Northern Ireland. The establishment was made up of bigwigs who spent their time out hunting and shooting, and lesser breeds who were the mainstays of their local golf clubs. They were collectively dismissed as "*the fur coat brigade*", who prospered parasitically on the backs of those who had gone through fire and water on their behalf. The Unionist class alliance was matched by an equally profound class antagonism. The difference with Kansas is that the Ulster representatives of the militant Christian tendency lacked the positive attitudes of their Kansas counterparts. They were never really out to convince the voters on the doorstep. Their energies were confined to rallying the dormant faithful. And in the grey light of 2008 one has to wonder just how sincere was their commitment to the scriptural causes they were protesting about. Was it really all about power?

No such doubts over our next witness, the Latin Mass Catholic Kay O'Connor, "*mother of six and grandmother of many*", again from Olathe. From Frank's description O'Connor seems to be a more charming version of Tim Golba. Forty-three years married,

"I am obedient to my husband in all

things moral. And the other half of it, for a Christian, is my husband has to love me and care for me as Jesus loved and cared for the church. And Jesus died for his church, so my husband has to be willing to die for me. And if he's willing to die for me, the least I can do is be obedient in moral things, right?"

Once again she and her husband "*are not wealthy people, by any standard. ....and she went out of her way to impress upon me her lack of means*". This same woman re-mortgaged her house so she could finance a campaign for school vouchers. A low-wage economy at the bottom, a low-tax economy at the top, conservative Christian values in the legislature, the home and the classroom: this is a package from which you can't pick and choose. O'Connor is one of the strong-minded women, "*the no-nonsense types who are every bit the equal of the menfolk in the war to restore the mythic social order of a distant past*".

### Gesture Politics

The Clinton Presidency coincided with the glory days of the conservative revolution, strangely enough because in economic terms Clinton was well to the right of (for instance) David Cameron's Conservatives. Like Blair after him, Clinton made a calculation that politically correct gesture politics could placate the Left of his party, and the interests of organized labour could safely be ignored. This wasn't a huge risk for New Labour because its core vote had really nowhere else to go, but it turned out to be disastrous for the Democrats. According to Frank indeed it was "*purest folly*". The attempt to outflank the Republicans resulted in the total disintegration of the shaky Democrat coalition. The white working class in particular didn't have much of an incentive to stay loyal. All they saw was a clutch of privileged baby boomers in the White House who were pro-gay, pro-abortion, pro-evolution in schools, and anti-patriotic.

It's a major part of Frank's thesis that the *Cons* are the poor bloody infantry, wave after wave of them, throwing themselves in vain up against the ramparts of America's secular consensus. All they achieve is to safeguard the corporate fortunes of the elite classes. It seems to me that the *Cons* have achieved more than that, but at some cost to themselves.

In Kansas a successful campaign was mounted, not to ban the teaching of evolution in schools, but to ensure that the theory of "*Intelligent Design*" was taught alongside it. Frank seems to be stuck at the Scopes Monkey Trial of 1925 which indeed was one of the most bizarre episodes in American legal

history. The veteran lawyer and three-time Presidential candidate, William Jennings Bryan, was prevailed upon to lead the prosecution for the State of Tennessee, with Clarence Darrow for the Defendant. An interesting account can be found on Wikipedia. Scopes was convicted but the conviction was later set aside on a technicality.

The Scopes case turned Bryan into a laughing stock, and was later celebrated by Hollywood in the movie *Inherit The Wind*, with Spencer Tracy playing Darrow. Progressive elements concluded that by the mid 1920s Bryan had lost the plot. The fact that his other prominent role at this time was as a Prohibition campaigner gave some substance to this view. However, Frank points out that Bryan had a respectable socialist basis for his hostility to evolution: "*In his mind evolution led irresistibly to social Darwinism and the savagery of nineteenth-century capitalism; undermining it would make the country less capitalist, not more.*"

When dealing with the evolution debate Frank tends to throw up his hands in horror at the absurd fundamentalists. Some of them no doubt are absurd, but he has failed to pick up on the nuances of what has been going on. In particular he doesn't seem to have noticed the proponents of Intelligent Design. This theory is held almost exclusively by religious believers but isn't predicated on any religious belief whatever, and is claiming equal airtime with Darwinian evolution. Its leading proponent is Michael Behe, Biochemistry Professor at Lehigh University, Pennsylvania, whose 1996 book, *Darwin's Black Box*, popularized the concept of irreducible complexity, and sparked a vituperative reaction on the Internet, and across the campuses of the nation. Behe's own University has taken the unusual step of dissociating itself from his publications in this area. Behe has an easy, lucid style, a bit like Dawkins, and takes on his critics with an amused *insouciance*.

Dawkins himself has recently explained that he himself has become a *bete noire* among evolutionary scientists in America. They argue that the exclusive teaching of Darwinian evolution in schools is not part of a secularist crusade. According to the jargon we are dealing with two non-overlapping *magisteria*, namely science and religion. Religious truth and scientific truth don't operate on the same plane, so neither is a threat to the other. Then along comes Dawkins and frightens the Christians to death by saying that it's part and parcel of the same struggle, to eliminate all notion of God from the public consciousness. And of course there are major differences among young earth creationists, old earth

creationists, theistic evolutionists and so on, but you would get no hint of this from Frank's book. The 'religious right' have succeeded in this area beyond what they dared hope, and if it weren't for the inbuilt Darwinian bias of the British media, especially the BBC, more of the debate would be allowed to filter through to us. I realize I'm beginning to sound like one of the conspiracy theorists deplored by Frank.

### *Roe v. Wade*

But the campaign closest to the heart of the backlash activists is the struggle to reverse *Roe v. Wade*. This is where they have come up against a brick wall, and Frank gives them no hope of success. He makes the interesting point that *Roe v. Wade* is a monument to the power of the medical profession. It was the doctors who got abortion outlawed on medical grounds, and it was the doctors again who brought about the change:

"The list of groups that submitted *amicus* briefs to the Supreme Court in favour of abortion rights in 1973 reads like a veritable Who's Who of the nation's medical hierarchy. Furthermore, the justice who wrote the *Roe* decision, Harry Blackmun, had spent his legal career as the attorney for the Mayo Clinic, and according to two journalists who have studied the controversy, it was the 'rights of the physician' to treat his patient 'according to the best professional judgment' that was foremost in Blackmun's mind in *Roe*, not the rights of the pregnant woman.

"*Roe v. Wade* also demonstrated in no uncertain manner the power of the legal profession to override everyone from the church to the state legislature. The decision superseded laws in nearly every state. It unilaterally quashed the then nascent debate over abortion, settling the issue by *fiat* and from the top down. And it cemented forever a stereotype of liberalism as a doctrine of tiny clique of experts, an unholy combination of doctors and lawyers, of bureaucrats and professionals, securing their 'reforms' by judicial command rather than by democratic consensus."

I talked earlier about two types of Christian community at opposite ends of the spectrum. But the abortion debate also reveals widely differing approaches on the part of conservative believers who would appear superficially to have much in common. We have the Pietists on the one hand and the activists on the other. A strong Pietist tradition lives on in a huge variety of Christian groupings across the nation. They get on with their lives and try to put up with government agencies as best they can, and they live

typically in well-defined subcultures. They're not out to change the world except by way of evangelism at a personal and congregational level. The activists are the ones we know all about. There's no doubt that Pietism is closer to the New Testament model, but to say that isn't to sort out the dilemma of how Christians should behave in a social and political environment which is antipathetic to the beliefs they hold most strongly. This is where we get into classic *Church and State* territory.

### Ulster Comparisons

In the context of Frank's book and the Northern Ireland experience I think it's possible to make a few observations which are in no way intended to be a theoretical basis for anything.

First, I don't think that full-blooded Christians, whether Catholic or Reformed, have any option but to get engaged over certain moral issues. They just have to be very careful about where they take their stand. I would think that Christians have to engage in the abortion debate. However complex it is around the edges, what is at stake in the Christian understanding is the wilful taking of human life. The same kind of ultimate question is raised by aspects of embryo research. Feminist and gay issues seem to me to fall on the other side of the line. As a church or denomination you can work out your policy in these areas but you don't have to get involved in the public square except in so far as the government starts to try to tell you what your policy should be.

Secondly, and this is where the Cons trip themselves up, as do the liberal English bishops, there's no point in getting steamed up over rival versions of the best economic model for the nation to follow. Church people aren't necessarily cut out to be economists. There's some scriptural support for everything from *laissez-faire* liberalism to Marxism for those who trawl around for it, but they're missing the point of the message. Anyway, the secular world can always turn round and say "*Physician, heal thyself*". Churches have the power to follow their own prescriptions in these areas but very often don't.

Thirdly, and linked, it's absolutely crazy for Christians to hitch their fortunes to any one political party. The Republican Party, like the Emperor Constantine, is interested in power primarily, and other professed interests will always be subordinate.

But my final point in this four-point sermon is the most important. The problem with believers when they get into campaigning mode is that they cease to be contextual beings. It's been

especially noticeable in Northern Ireland. Free Presbyterian posturing (or witnessing?) in relation to matters as diverse as Ecumenism, Sunday Observance and Homosexuality have backfired catastrophically and cringe-makingly. This applies to theology proper too: a text taken out of its context is only a pretext. The Ulster fundamentalists (in which camp Brendan Clifford thinks I belong) have a way of turning Biblical propositions into slogans and in the process somehow emptying them of their content. The strategy seems to be: "Let's be as offensive as we possibly can be in presenting our ethical concerns. If our listeners react in a hostile way then that just reveals their deep-seated enmity to the Word of God." But when you hammer somebody over the head with a slogan you just knock them out. The very effort defeats itself. People like to be surprised by something they haven't considered before. This isn't a fastidious reaction to ignorant hot gospellers, but simply an observation.

The big danger for campaigning Christianity is that the political activism starts to suck the spiritual life out of the churches, and this happens when the political cause becomes an end in itself. The gloss soon wears off any victories that are won at that cost. The main preoccupation of Christian leaders should be to build up strong Christian churches and communities, the effect of which is bound to have a trickle down effect on the culture. An unhealthy focus on the culture wars is bound to be self-defeating.

The paranoid posturing of the Christian right is no doubt over the top, as Frank tells us, but they do have a point. The secularist *nirvana* is a very finely balanced and (in historical terms) unusual mechanism. If the churches lose, it becomes only a matter of time before they have to bow before the *diktats* of the state. America has avoided this because of the native vigour of the churches. In Britain and, increasingly, in Ireland, the churches are more supine. And in Europe as a whole we're seeing something different again: the post-war secular consensus is beginning to come apart under the pressure of Islamic expansionism. Maybe a strong Christian culture could withstand this pressure, but the liberal secularists have been divided and rendered incoherent.

Anyway, I feel I haven't really done Frank's book justice. He certainly doesn't fall into the easy mode of sloganizing from the left. I would say this has been the second best book I've read in 2007. The best was Byron Rogers's outstanding, and pleasantly concise, biography of the Welsh poet R.S. Thomas: *The Man Who Went Into The West*.

## Church Developments

"SO FAR as arguing against Catholic power is concerned, few want to commit matricide. Yet there comes a time when an adolescent has to stand on his own two feet and a time when a society has to make politics out of the play-pen. There is, at present, no organization to embrace all policies against the Church. Unless the slow death of what was once a great power is to proceed in the most conservative, piece-meal fashion, the struggle to replace clerical power will have to be taken up by a coherent group which regards it as a full-time political task to press for change.

"It is certain that each further step of the withering away of Catholic power will lead to problems of finding alternatives. Once that necessity is recognised, it is clear that this is no short term venture. Replacing the Church involves changing the body politic of our society." (*CHURCH & STATE* editorial—Number Three issue—Spring, 1974).

**THE SENTIMENTS** expressed in this publication in 1974—thirty-four years ago—were a clear and vigorous response to what appeared to be the decline of the Catholic church!

Who today could believe that the church could still, even now, retain the powerful influence it still has? If anything, whatever decline occurred didn't emanate from a robust and thorough secular movement, it in many cases was self-inflicted or conceded as the lesser concession and with a view to 'holding-the-line' until more favourable forces emerged!

"...*The body politic of our society*" has displayed anything but courage or independence of spirit in "*finding alternatives*" to church power, in fact, it is wholly shame-faced in the manner in which it has dismantled church principles on social or political issues. Almost apologising for having to do it.

Their approach has been entirely "*conservative*" and "*piece-meal*" in fashion.

*Church & State* magazine has always refused to make small of Catholic social teaching, what it did do was attempt to explain it and understand its social role. The so-called radicals who emerged in the developing Ireland scoffed at the necessity to explain the phenomenon of Catholic social power, all the while

boasting about the philosophy of the individual.

A healthier Ireland, indeed, a healthier Church would have arisen out of a robust and manly engagement: alas, in 2008, we have neither!

An insightful little commentary in *The Phoenix Annual 2007* claims that the Catholic Church in Ireland is going through a period of "Roman Restoration", largely unnoticed by the public and ignored by the media.

"Little publicity was given to the significance of the appointment in September of a new bishop of Ossory, the oldest diocese in Ireland, whose boundaries cover most of Kilkenny, parts of Laois and the 'island' parish of St. Kieran in Co. Offaly.

"Father Seamus Freeman, a 63-year-old parish priest of the Church of St. Vincent Pallotti at Pietralata in Rome, was named as the successor to Laurence Forristal, who retired at 76. Freeman's selection dumbfounded the clannish Ossory clergy, who asked themselves "Seamus who?". Freeman may be unknown in Ireland, but he was well placed for preferment as a prominent member of the small but elite inner circle of Rome-based Irish clerics who have clout in the corridors of the Vatican even though they have spent most of their working life away from their mother country.

"Freeman was a two-term head of the world-wide Pallotines, an international society of priests and brothers working in over 40 countries.

"Clearly, Freeman was chosen for his Romanitas—formation in the Roman mould—rather than for his familiarity with grassroots Catholicism in Ireland. But a further intriguing feature of his parachutage into the Episcopal Palace in Kilkenny is that his elevation brought the total number of bishops from religious orders to four (out of 33 bishops in total), a record in modern times. Since 1870, only 14 out of over 200 bishops heading Ireland's 26 dioceses have been from orders who owe their direct allegiance to Rome.

"Freeman, who speaks in a strong Italianised accent far removed from his Tipperary tongue, takes his place at Maynooth cabals along with the Bishop of Cloyne, Dr. John Magee (a Kiltegan Missionary who still basks in his fame as the secretary to three Popes, the Bishop of Raphoe, Dr. Philip Boyce

(a contemplative, Carmelite monk and author of learned tracts on the nineteenth century English scholar, John Henry Newman), and the ageing auxiliary bishop of Dublin, Dr. Fiachra O Ceallaigh, a Franciscan friar. This tally would have stood at five if Bishop Brendan Comiskey of Ferns, a member of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, had not resigned over his failures in handling child sexual abuse cases in Wexford.

"Freeman's appointment, therefore, fits into the tendency by the Holy See to give preferment to clergy steeped in the Roman mentality but with huge international experience compared to home-grown clerics. Notable cases have included the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, Dr. Sean Brady, a Cavan man who had been Rector of the Irish Pontifical College in Rome before his surprise selection to take over from Cardinal Cahal Daly at the height of the abuse scandals.

"John Fleming, like Dr. Brady, a Rector of the Irish College in Rome, was catapulted into the West of Ireland diocese of Killala, even though he is from Limerick. But the best known example of this Romanisation policy was the sending of Vatican career diplomat Diarmuid Martin to the powerful diocese of Dublin to clean up the mess left by Cardinal Desmond Connell over his abject failure to deal with clerical sexual abuse, the subject of ongoing inquiries by the Commission of Investigation headed by Judge Yvonne Murphy." (*Phoenix Annual 2007*).

The *Phoenix* speculates that all this ecclesiastical and diplomatic manoeuvring is geared towards a visit to the Six Counties by Pope Benedict XVI; and a visit to Dublin by the English Queen, Elizabeth II.

At the centre of this *haute politique* is President Mary McAleese, who was granted a private official audience in the papal apartments last March, 2007, during which she assured the Pope that the Irish Government and the Northern regime would give him a resounding reception. Pope and President chatted again in May at the canonisation of the Dutch-born priest St. Charles of Mount Argus.

"Remarkably, since Joseph Ratzinger was elected Pope in April, 2005, President McAleese has met the German Pontiff five times. No other head of state—not even the President of the Republic of Italy—has had as many face-to-face meetings with His Holiness. Catholicism has become a defining badge of McAleese's presidency. This public display of her

Catholic faith defines a strong religious dimension to her presidency, in contrast to Mary Robinson's advocacy of a pluralist secular Ireland. If Benedict comes to Armagh—and Queen Elizabeth makes a parallel visit to Dublin—these, along with the spectacle of Big Ian [Paisley] praying in the Aras, would be the remembered features of the McAleese Presidency." (*ibid.*).

For the first time in history, Ireland has three resident Cardinals. At 68,

Brady joins Cardinals Daly, 90, and Connell, 81, in the College of Cardinals but, unlike them, he will vote at the next conclave to elect Benedict's (81), successor.

The *Phoenix* refers jovially to the President as "*Mother Mary*"—they want to be careful—though the President may not succeed Pope Joan as the second female Pope, and Sainthood can only be procured after extinction of the mortal coil, many believe the President is a 'living Saint'.

## Report

At a sensitive time for RTE Martin Mansergh TD went to its assistance with a letter in the *Irish Examiner* (7.1.08). The Broadcasting Complaints Commission is currently considering complaints against RTE's Hidden

History programme about the Pearsons of Coolacrease and no doubt finds itself in a dilemma because the programme in question was crude, mendacious and unhistorical. In his *Examiner* letter Dr. Mansergh, who has failed to study the detail of the matter, asks readers to stand back and look the bigger picture—one he gets totally out of focus. We reproduce

Dr. Mansergh's letter below, along with a reply by Pat Muldowney

### Martin Mansergh's 'Dark Corners'

**Martin Mansergh:**  
*Hidden History debate casts light into some dark corners*

The *Irish Examiner* is to be congratulated on the amount of space it has given in its letter columns to the debate on Niamh Sammon's Hidden History programme on RTÉ on the killings at Coolacrease. The charge that the programme was insufficiently nuanced may well be true, but reflects in large part the limitations of TV history, limitations which are offset by visual opportunities with which cold print can rarely compete.

In any age, executions rarely reflect well on the perpetrators and, when carried out on a large scale, can ruin a cause. They did not happen on any large scale on the Irish side in 1916-1921, though the 1922-3 period was slightly worse.

The justification of military necessity is doubtful in the case of Coolacrease. Did the Pearsons think they were challenging marauders cutting a tree on their property at a time of much lawlessness, or did they fully realise that they were taking on the local IRA?

For most people, the legitimacy of the independence struggle is not awns, though that does not mean every individual action in support of it was necessarily right or justified, or should be defended. The fate of the small Protestant minority in the South during the revolutionary period is undoubtedly a problem area, notwithstanding a small number who participated actively in the

revolution (they too could be suspect), or the Southern unionist elite who were found a place in the Irish Free State Senate.

However, by far the largest number of casualties on each side consisted firstly of IRA volunteers and, secondly, of RIC men, a force which was at least 80% Catholic outside of Ulster and quite often Irish-speaking. The War of Independence, for that reason, cannot possibly be described as sectarian.

During a conflict in which most were bystanders, the minority in the South were undoubtedly vulnerable and, in many cases, suspect. To the extent that they relied on the British connection, they were on the losing side. Anyone from that background who got in the way could expect to get hurt, and reprisals could be savage and disproportionate. Their continued presence and the integrity of their property, and whether they were considered to be just harmless Protestants or loyalists as well, were matters largely at the discretion of the local IRA, in a complete reversal of the local power relationships that had existed up to a couple of generations previously.

The policy that de Valera and Collins were articulating just before the Truce took as a model the approach of the rebels vis-à-vis the loyalists in the American War of Independence, that "when the enemy began to burn or destroy any town, to burn and destroy the houses and properties of all Tories and enemies to the freedom and independence of

America ... always taking care not to hurt them or their families with wanton cruelties."(Piaras Beaslai's *Life of Collins*).

That is largely what happened in 1920-1. Far more left the country or, in the case of some estates, had their houses burnt. Relatively few lost their lives, but, and maybe it was a close-run thing, the majority of Southern Protestants survived in situ and were allowed to remain with their property more or less intact. It can be questioned whether the treatment meted out to the Pearsons met the standard of avoiding 'wanton cruelties'. There was an unresolved tension between the exigencies and pressures of a barely successful battle against a vastly superior power to cast off colonial and settler domination and the creation thereafter of an equal and tolerant society which, in the short or long-term, could be any way attractive to those who had determined that Northern Ireland would opt out. There are hidden histories and tragedies to be explored on the losing side, to which neither blanket defence nor blanket condemnation of the War of Independence is likely to do justice.

The transformation of relations that has occurred since, especially in recent times, means that, as with the Civil War previously, the taboos against exploring the meaning of historical dark corners should be lifted. Reconciliation requires a full and rounded appreciation of the past. (Friarsfield House, Tipperary)

#### **Pat Muldowney: *The Ultimate Taboo: War or Democracy***

Martin Mansergh's defence of RTÉ's Coolacrease programme won't pass muster (Letters 07 January 2008). If television uses fewer words and more images than "cold print", that surely obliges television producers to choose the words with even greater care. The difference between "groin" and "genitals" may escape Dr. Mansergh's political colleague, Senator Harris, who has honestly stated his view that he regards facts as unimportant in comparison with the higher truth which he sees. But it is a difference of basic fact rather than "nuance". And the national broadcaster, who dominates the air waves, should have some concern with factual accuracy.

What was at issue in 1921 was not merely "the legitimacy of the independence struggle", as it was with the Easter Rising and the Fenians, but whether the democratic political mandate of the Irish electorate was to be over-ridden by British military power.

Most people were not "bystanders" on that issue. They had voted. And, if most people were not active in the war,

that is usually the case in all wars. Unless Dr. Mansergh thinks the crucial thing was the war rather than the vote it is hard to understand his argument.

The Pearsons knew what the democracy had decided, but they chose the other side. If there was "much lawlessness" in the country at the time that was because British power was deployed against the clear decision of the democracy. The Pearsons took sides with the Imperial Power in the attempt to make the country ungovernable by the democracy.

Dr. Mansergh suggests that they may not have been aware of what was going on in the country and were protecting their property against vandals. But the "property", the tree the Republicans were cutting down for an ambush, was where it was needed for an ambush: on the side of the road and about half a mile from their house.

I'm all for breaking "taboos", but not at the expense of historical fact. The greatest of all taboos, which RTE has never addressed, or Dr. Mansergh, is the decision of the first democratically-elected British Parliament to act in the old Imperialist mode and make war on the Irish who had been so presumptuous as to vote themselves independent. (Derry)

#### **Jack Lane: *A Response***

Mr. Mansergh comes to the defence of Niamh Sammon and the Hidden History programme in his Examiner letter when he says that "The justification of military necessity is doubtful in the case of Coolacrease". He asks "Did the Pearsons think they were challenging marauders cutting a tree on their property at a time of much lawlessness, or did they fully realise that they were taking on the local IRA?"

The Pearsons are here painted as pretty silly people who did not know what was going on in the world around them and why. Did they not read the papers?

Surely they knew there was a war on to implement and defend the Irish Government and its policies following the overwhelming 1918 and 1920 Election votes for independence?

Were they really so naïve that they mistook an armed group felling a tree to make roadblock across the public road half a mile from their house as simply marauders? As well as being on the roadside this particular tree was also on the 'bounds ditch' with another farmer, J J Horan, and technically cannot therefore be even described simply as their property.

And why take the law into their own hands? Why is one of our legislators condoning armed vigilantism? There was

a very effective Republican Courts system in operation.

The reality is that they decided to engage militarily in the war against the Irish democracy in support of the Imperial government that sought to crush it.

Furthermore, if we are to believe the actual circumstances as described in some detail by Alan Stanley in his book that inspired the RTE Programme and this whole debate, "I met murder on the way" there could not possibly be a case of mistaken identity on the part of the Pearsons. He reports on verbal exchanges between the IRA group and Richard Pearson about the tree felling. Being neighbours they all knew each other very well.

He writes "Richard challenged these people but they warned him off, making dire threats as to what would happen should he attempt to interfere. My father said Dick was somewhat hotheaded and further antagonized the intruders by trading words. "Aren't you the brave fellows with all your guns?", he admonished." Richard is then reported as going back to the house.

Two Pearson brothers approached the roadblock, not from within their land, but along the public road, where they opened fire and hit three people - on the public road.

Mick Heaney was sentry on that side of the roadblock. He challenged them and they responded by opening fire, shooting him in the stomach (he died later). The sentry on the far side of the roadblock ran towards them, they fired, he fired. He was injured, slightly. Bert Hogg, the retired RIC man who had been arrested earlier was hit as he ran away. He lost a lung from his injuries.

How can these actions, which were also verified by the RIC, as shown in this thread, be described as anything other than initiating a military engagement with the IRA who were then the legitimate army of the democratically elected Irish government defending it against attack by the British government? Such actions inevitably lead to military retaliation in these situations.

There was no 'nuancing' of these facts in the Hidden History programme—there was blatant distortion and Mr Mansergh seeks to make excuses for that.

It simply does not wash. Niamh Sammon needs a better advocate.

<http://www.indymedia.ie/article/85285>

## Report

Emmanuel Kehoe's television review of the Hidden History programme on the Pearsons of Coolacrease (extracts)

### Cooneyites And Coolacrease

#### Editorial Note:

In the *Sunday Independent* of 28th October 2007 Senator Eoghan Harris castigated members of the Church of Ireland for not yielding to his demand for a pan-Protestant crusade of solidarity with the Pearsons. One reason for such lack of enthusiasm is to be found in the *Sunday Business Post* of the same day—that C of I members might not have felt particularly warm towards a family whose hate-filled creed viewed all other Protestants as deserving to be consumed by everlasting fire. Emmanuel Kehoe's TV review in the latter paper—entitled *When History And Hearsay Collide*—has been the one exception to the mainstream media's wholesale swallowing of the Harris line pursued by RTE's *"Hidden History"*. Kehoe had smelt a rat and, while he did not access any of the documentary evidence that would have enabled him to dispute the version of the executions themselves, he did go to the trouble of investigating if there was any basis in fact for the Harris/Sammon claim that the Cooneyite religious beliefs of the gun-toting Pearsons were akin to those of the Amish—a pacifist community who take the injunction to *"turn the other cheek"* so literally that they would not even raise a fist in self-defence.

As we can see from Kehoe, in 1909 the guiding light of the Pearsons, Edward Cooney himself, condemned to hell's everlasting holocaust every man, woman and child in Co. Fermanagh who was not a Cooneyite—specifically listing the damned as Calvinist, Methodist, Episcopalian, Plymouth Brethren, Salvation Army and Roman Catholic. (Cooney was probably ignorant of the fact that there were also 3 Jews in the county to be added to what he called *"the condemnation of Fermanagh"*.) As Cooneyite true believers inspired and fired by such invective, the Pearsons would have firmly held that that the 48,500 Catholics, 5,300 C of I, 280 Presbyterians, 370 Methodists and 5 Jews in their native Queen's County (Laois) fully merited being consigned to hell's fires. And when they moved to King's County (Offaly) shortly afterwards in 1911, they would have extended that same Cooneyite damnation to the 51,200 Catholics, 4,900 C of I, 350 Presbyterians, 270 Methodists and 3 Jews of that county as well. Not to mention any poor unfortunate member of the Salvation Army who might be foolish enough to approach the Pearsons with a collection box! So, fair play to Emmanuel Kehoe for shedding light on such a 'gentle' faith!

#### "When History And Hearsay Collide

by Emmanuel Kehoe

"...In *"Hidden History: The Killings at Coolacrease"* (RTE 1) Dr. Terence Dooley of NUI Maynooth, who has written much on the agrarian element of the Troubles, said, "The revolutionary period was essentially used as a pretext to run many of these Protestant farmers and landlords out of a local community for locals to take up their lands." Many might find his use of the word 'essentially' in the context of the national enterprise as a whole somewhat hard to swallow. In the case of *'Hidden History'*, his observations placed the killing of Richard and Abraham Pearson by the Offaly IRA in the context of land hunger. The Pearsons, who had a farm of 200 acres in Co Laois, had bought a 339 acre farm in 1911 from another Protestant family in Co Offaly and this handing on of land from one to another, Dooley said, added a sectarian tinge to the situation. Basically, the programme seemed to suggest, the Pearsons were surrounded by Catholics living on uneconomic holdings who saw in the Troubles their chance for a landgrab. But the War of Independence was not driven by ethnic cleansing. It wasn't some kind of Balkan cauldron. There was no mass oppression of ethnic or religious minorities or wholesale atrocities, no Srebrenice. In the cities, Protestants who dominated the legal and accounting professions were not herded onto cattle boats and expelled. It wasn't Idi Amin's Uganda.

"The Killings at Coolacrease" was made by experienced documentary maker Niamh Sammon who previously made the Haughey and Fine Gael series for Mint productions, both of which were shown on RTE. Two nicely timed pieces, one by herself in the *"Irish Times"* ("A True History of Violence") and another by Sarah Caden in the *"Sunday Independent"* ("Speak it in a Whisper: Irish Ethnic Cleansing") no doubt increased interest in the film. Sammon says her own interest was stirred when she read a book by Alan Stanley, the son of William Stanley who was staying with the Pearson family, but who escaped the IRA when they arrived on June 30, in 1921. William Stanley, as the programme pointed out, was already in trouble with the IRA, though whether it was from simply associating with members of the RIC or actively assisting Crown forces remains a matter of bitter debate in the area, probably even more bitter now things have been stirred up.

The Pearsons, she wrote, were members of a p"peaceable, non-political, dissenting Protestant sect known as the Cooneyites". They were likened in the programme to Amish. But were the Pearsons entirely peaceable? Locals

accused them of harassing people who used a traditional Mass path over their land, of being spies and informers and perhaps, most outlandishly, of running a local militia. Finally there was an incident in which Richard Pearson shot at a group of local IRA men cutting down a tree on Pearson's land to block a road. "The Pearsons are merely doing what they think any law abiding citizen should do and legally they are within their rights to defend their land and as they would see it to protect it against terrorist activity", Professor Richard English of Queens University said. Within their rights maybe, but off their heads. When the two young men were shot it was alleged they were killed in front of their women relatives and shot in the genitals and the buttocks and left to die. Eoghan Harris said he wanted to see documentary evidence that Pearson had actually wounded an IRA man in the shooting over the tree, but viewers might have liked to see documentary evidence of this very peculiar, brutal method of execution presented here as fact.

Harris wrote about the Coolacrease killings some time ago, and it appears to be one of those isolated incidents out of which he cuts a stick to beat a rather large drum. In the film Harris recalls that "My father ran a small wholesale grocery business in the 50s" and the Cooneyites used to come into him. "They were terribly quiet, very, very gentle decent people. They were pretty much withdrawn from the world as a whole. I would say they found the whole world outside confusing. They were really husbandry people, you know, the land. Quiet evenings spent in reflection and meditation. These are the kind of people they were." But were they entirely so? Founded by William Irvine, an evangelising Scot, in 1897 and Edward Cooney the son of a Fermanagh magistrate, the Cooneyites still exist today, some in Ireland, some in the United States and in quite large numbers in Australia where the Pearsons moved after the killings and the burning of their home. Some today would regard them as a cult and their beliefs in 1921 would have set them apart from their mainstream, churchgoing Protestant neighbours.

Whatever about the Cooneyites today, or when Harris met them, in 1909 they were creating a bit of a stir at their convention in Ballinamallard, Co Fermanagh, so much so that the *"New York Times"* reported on August 9 under the heading *'Cooneyites Await the Millennium'*: "It is the belief of the sect that the millennium may be ushered in at any moment, and prayer meetings are

to page 15, column 1

V  
O  
X

**Violence**  
**Canon Joe CondeLL**  
**Muslim Plots**  
**More Marriages**  
**Single Parents**  
**Acts Of Murder**  
 (back page)

P  
A  
T

bishop said yesterday.  
 "Bishop Leo O'Reilly, who chairs the Bishops' Commission for Education, was commenting on the claim made by a Church of Ireland bishop [Bishop Burrows] that the legislature had failed to address its responsibilities.  
 "Bishop O'Reilly, however, said he understood the reluctance of politicians to introduce legislation that would open the way for abortion in Ireland when people had already decided in a referendum it should be prohibited."  
 (*Irish Examiner*, 3.10.2007).

**VIOLENCE**

"The challenge of violence in society may only be overcome by "the mobilisation of communities" and by "active citizenship", the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin said yesterday.  
 "Dr Diarmuid Martin told senior judges and lawyers at a special Mass marking the opening of the new law term that while the law had a role to play in setting standards of behaviour, it would not, on its own, create a virtuous society. Law, he said, must be "rooted in our communities".

"At the Mass, the Protestant Bishop of Ossory, the Right Reverend Michael Burrows, attacked the "systemic spinelessness" of the legislature.  
 "He said the failure to legislate on the X abortion case and in relation to other issues, including human embryology, had left doctors and lawyers floundering, and reflected an ostrich-like approach by politicians" (*Irish Examiner*, 2.10.2007).  
 "The reluctance of politicians to enact legislation in the wake of the X case was "understandable", a Catholic

**CANON JOE CONDELL** will be moving to his own private house as soon as the arrangements can be made, it is understood.

While a Church of Ireland spokesman said yesterday he is "not going to be thrown out onto the streets", she confirmed he would be leaving the rectory in Roscrea, Co. Tipperary.  
 "There will be a house move to sort out."

Canon CondeLL has a wife and children but the children are grown up, while he has now formally resigned from the Church of Ireland. He had previously retired from the ministry. Pastoral provision is to be provided for Canon CondeLL's family and for the parish in Roscrea, according to Bishop of Limerick Right Rev Michael Mayes.

In a statement Bishop Mayes yesterday expressed his "deep personal sadness" at the nature of the charges to which Canon CondeLL pleaded guilty in Nenagh circuit court.

Bishop Mayes described child pornography as portraying "the cruel degradation and sexual exploitation of defenceless children for financial gain" and said it was "completely at odds" with the nature and purpose of pastoral ministry.

The investigation into Canon CondeLL took off in January of 2002 when his home and the Church where he worked were searched and computer equipment seized.

"Court proceedings got under way in July 2003, but after a complaint that members of the media had acted in a hostile and aggressive manner towards him Judge David Anderson granted an order to prevent Canon CondeLL being named in the media. The judge felt such an order was necessary to ensure a fair trial for Joseph CondeLL.  
 "This was appealed by four media groups including the *Irish Examiner* and in February of last year Justice Frank Clarke quashed the anonymity order in the High Court. The case was regarded as a notable victory for freedom of the press in Ireland." (*Irish Examiner*, 3.10.2007).

**Cooneyites, continued**

being held almost continuously. .. All the pilgrims are dressed in coarse, plain clothing. The men are unshaven and wear rubber collars. On the heads of the women are straw sailor hats. All are busily engaged in manual labor or domestic duties milking, butter making, cooking, sewing, boot-making, carpentering, etc—every one being assigned to a daily task." Reporting on the same convention on August 5, 1909 the Fermanagh newspaper, the "Impartial Reporter", was rather more hostile:

"Mr Cooney spoke for over two hours. It was not a Gospel address, or one of teaching; but one of condemnation of those who differed from his views. They were all going to hell. He knew all about it .. He repeated his denunciation of John Knox, Calvin, John Wesley; they had all gone to hell .. There was the usual torrent of abusive talk, bristling with denunciation and everlasting torment .. it was a repetition of former harangues .. One of the first points which would strike a listener to Mr Cooney's discourse, was the entire lack of charity and kindness. Mr Cooney is excellent as a spouter of damnation and hell fire, but when it comes to the love of God, and the tenderness of the Saviour for mankind, Mr Cooney appears to know nothing of it."

" 'We are the light,' he [Cooney] proceeded, 'and the condemnation of Fermanagh is, that they won't have the light, but choose the darkness, Methodist darkness, Episcopalian

darkness, Plymouth brethren darkness, Salvation Army darkness, Roman Catholic darkness: you have been with the clergy, and supported them here, and you will be with them in hell. What would you think of the Rev Jesus, MA or BA, with £3 a week with an encouragement to get married with £12 a year or 'Father Jesus' hoping to die a Pope some day, or 'Rev Jesus' with his eye on the Archbishopric of Canterbury, or 'Lieutenant' Jesus hoping to become a Colonel or General some day in the Salvation Army? Would to God that this dirty devilish poison crammed into you at the Sunday school, took in through every bone of your body in the clergy house as the workings and doing of Christianity, were crushed out of your lives.' "

Does this suggest that the Pearsons, not so long afterwards, might have been somewhat less benign and pacific than Harris or Sammon makes them out to be and that this, combined with a stiff-necked loyalism and their extensive lands may have made them more noticeable than other loyalist Protestants in the area? Is it conceivable that a group following Cooney's preaching could, for example, hassle local people over the sensitive issue of a right of way to Mass? Television histories have an odd habit of leaving the viewer wondering. This film, with its mixture of innuendo and hearsay, claim and counterclaim made me wonder what truth could be got out of the story at all and what wider reference it could have..."

**Muslim Plots** A campaign by Clare's best-known Muslim to source burial plots for his community looking towards Mecca has proved successful.

This follows Clare County Council informing former Labour TD, Dr. Moosajee Bhamjee in December, 2007, that the council is in a position to provide a Muslim burial ground of 20 graves at the Drumcliffe graveyard outside Ennis. In a letter to the consultant psychiatrist, the council stated the graves are available, when required.

The letter states: *"All burials are to be in accordance with the regulations for the Control and Operation of Burial Grounds owned by Clare County Council"*.

The Council has also provided Dr Bhamjee with a map of the location of the 20 burial plots.

The move by the council comes against a 41% jump in the Muslim population in Ireland between 2002 and 2006, going from 19,147 to 32,539, while the census shows there are 728 Muslims in Clare.

Dr. Bhamjee said: *"I am delighted that the council has been so open to my suggestion and it has shown itself to be really proactive in catering for the needs of the growing Muslim community."*

Confirming the burial plots will face Mecca, Dr. Bhamjee said: *"There is growing pressure on burial space across the county and the council has demonstrated its generosity in providing the plots but also the realisation that the population of Clare is becoming increasingly diverse"*.

In spite of the increase in Muslims, the figures show in the next number of years, there will not be a great need for the 20 burial plots due to the relative youth of the Muslim population in Clare.

The figures show 72% of the Muslim population in Clare is under the age of 35.

Some 218 of the overall total are aged under 14.

The figures show that there are only six Muslims in Clare aged over 65 and 10 aged between 55 and 65.

Much more will be heard about the needs of the Muslim community in Kerry, following the release of the latest census figures. Kerry now has the largest Muslim population in the country, outside of major cities.

The number of Muslims living in Kerry has doubled in the past four years to just over 1,000.

There are now more Muslims than Protestants in the Kingdom.

Recently, the Dept of Education included Tralee among the towns countrywide to get Muslim primary schools.

Earlier this year, a mosque was opened at Killerisk, Tralee.

**Padre Pio** Republic of Ireland and Newcastle United winger and Padre Pio devotee Damien Duff at one time played with a relic of the saint in his football boot. His family also credit his recovery from glandular fever while at Blackburn Rovers with prayers to the Italian stigmatic.

The revelations are made by Damien's mother, Mary Duff, in a new book, *Padre Pio: The Irish Connection*, written by Colm Keane, which chronicles the Irish miracles and cures associated with the saint.

Damien's father, Gerard's, survival from a life-threatening triple bypass is also attributed by Damien's mother to devotion to the Capuchin mystic, who bore the wounds of Christ on his hands, feet and side for 50 years up to his death in 1968 and who was canonised in 2002.

"I always prayed to Padre Pio for Damien when he went away to England. About four years after he went to Blackburn he had glandular fever. He had to come home to recuperate because it takes a good while. We brought him over to the Capuchins in Church Street. Gerard and I used to go there once a month to the novena for Padre Pio. This friend borrowed one of the gloves and we left Damien with it. He got well again. There also was a time when Damien had a medal or a relic in his sock or in his boot. He's a good believer. He prays to Padre Pio, which is unusual for a young lad." (*Irish Examiner*, 9.10.2007).

### More Marriages

The CSO figures also revealed the number of couples getting married between January and March, 2007, has doubled in almost a decade—from 1,642 in 1998 to 3,399 in 2007, a rise of 107% in nine years.

The Catholic marriage agency **Accord** welcomed the rise but admitted to being baffled and unable to explain why more Irish people were choosing to get married.

"Figures show marriage is on the decline in Europe yet rising numbers of people are getting married here," said Accord's director of marriage education services Stephen Cummins. "It would be a fantastic piece of research if someone could find out why Ireland is bucking this trend."

In 2000, **Accord** gave marriage preparation courses to 6,030 couples intending to marry.

In 2006, the agency saw 9,320 couples, a rise of 3,290 or 55% in six years.

The figures showed marriage was still strong in Ireland, although couples were

leaving it later in life to get married.

"In the USA, where they have a divorce rate of something like 50%, people cannot understand why Ireland has not had a deluge of divorces despite having divorce laws," he said.

Mr. Cummins said high house prices meant couples had to spend years building a career before they could afford a home together.

### Single Parents

- \* **Children born outside marriage at an all-time high**
- \* **Single Parent families in 'dire poverty'**
- \* **Born out of wedlock children highest since 1911**
- \* **80,000 lone parents rely on social welfare**
- \* **New Government Welfare proposals for single parents**
- \* **A billion Euros spent on one-parent allowances**
- \* **Marriage doubles in a decade**

The number of babies born outside marriage is at an all-time high, figures have revealed.

Meanwhile, a European Union survey has revealed rocketing numbers of lone-parent families are living in dire poverty with four in five households having to go without heat, food or warm clothing.

Research has revealed that 32.5% of single-parent families were classed as "consistently poor" in 2006 compared with 27.2% the year before.

In the first three months of 2007, 17,473 babies were born, of whom more than a third or 5,905 were to unmarried mothers up 7.7% from 2006.

The total of first quarter births were up 9.5% from 2006, and up 30% from the first three months of 1998. Of the 5,905 babies born in the first three months of this year, 15 were born to mothers under 16 years old, the legal age of consent.

Of the 594 girls and women under 20 who gave birth during the period, just 44, or 7.4%, were married.

By contrast, 82% of mothers aged 30 to 34 years were married, figures published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) November 28, 2007.

Two mothers, aged 18 and 19, gave birth to their third and fourth child respectively, the figures showed.

**The rate of 5,905 babies born out of wedlock is the highest quarterly figure since records began in 1911, according to the CSO.** The January-to-March figure is almost equal to the total for the whole of 1986, when 5,946 babies were born outside wedlock.

The average age of first-time unmarried mothers was 25 years and eight months, and the place with the highest percentage of such births was Limerick city, where 57.9% of all newborns were to unmarried mothers.



The lowest was Galway county, where 19.9% of babies were born outside marriage.

The figures also confirmed the continuing trend of women leaving it later in life to have their first child.

The average age of all first-time mothers, married or otherwise, was 28 years and 11 months between January and March of 2007.

In the same period in 2006, the average age of first-time mothers was 28 years and six months.

Census 2006 recorded **189,213 lone parent families** in Ireland: 18% of all families are now one-parent families.

#### *Single Parent Poverty*

The European Union's survey on income and living conditions revealed 82% of lone-parent households had suffered deprivation at some point during 2006.

The year before, the survey found that 67% of such families had experienced deprivation, which is classed as living on less than €202 a week and going without essentials like heat, food or warm clothing.

The survey also revealed two-fifths of one-parent families had less than €212 a week to live on—even though average weekly income in Irish households has topped €1,000 for the first time. The average household now reaps €1,055 a week gross in pay and welfare benefits, according to the Central Statistics Office (CSO).

In 2005, 80,366 people were in receipt of One Parent Family Payment (OPFP) from the Department of Social and Family Affairs. Of these, 59% were claiming for one child. 42% of recipients were aged under 29: lone parents under 20 accounted for less than 2% of recipients. 98% of OPFP recipients were women.

60% of those receiving OPFP are in employment.

The CSO, which compiled Ireland's contribution to the EU survey, found that 6.9% of the general population were living in consistent poverty, down from 7% the year before.

The EU survey found Poland and Lithuania were the union's poorest countries with 21% of their populations in relative poverty.

The EU average was 16% but Ireland, Greece and Spain were joint third with 20% of their people in relative poverty.

Approximately 38% of people on local authority housing lists are lone parents. In 2005, according to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's Assessment of Housing Need, 16,795 lone parents were on the housing list.

## Reader's Letter

Mary Kenny responds to the Editorial of Autumn issue of *Church & State*

### Mary Kenny, An English Tory: Point Of Correction

I am most definitely not, as you claim in your editorial for Winter 2007, an "English Tory", and I must insist that you to print a correction. Your statement gravely misrepresents me, and my reputation.

I am not a member of any political party. When it comes to casting my vote, I am a floating voter: and sometimes an abstainer, if none of the political candidates merits my standards.

I certainly support the free market and liberty of thought and of debate, and I value tradition and religion. That may make me a cultural conservative—as was, for example, Daniel O'Connell—but that is not at all the same as an "English Tory".

Expressing concern that the name "Muhammed" is now the leading name given to infant boys in seven European cities is perfectly valid, and has a great deal to do with respecting the continuity of Irish values, too.

Dublin and Kent  
13th October 2007

#### Editorial Reply

The article to which Mary Kenny refers is *Dark Forebodings: Muslims, Demographic, Ireland And The West*, which appeared a year ago in issue 87 of *Church & State*.

It seems to be "Tory" rather than "English" that Mary Kenny objects to. That is sensible. Our impression is that for many years she had a presence on the English media rather than the Irish. And her presence there might easily have been understood to place her in what was loosely called the Tory Establishment. That, of course, is something that no longer exists. It was once a rather benign presence in English public life, but it was done away with by Mrs. Thatcher, who replaced it with the *laissez faire* liberalism of the old Manchester capitalism. Then Tony Blair remade the Labour Party as a Thatcherite party.

Regarding "Muhammed", there used to be a strongly asserted formal difference between the two English parties, though on closer inspection it was found to be insubstantial. The formal difference has now been done away with. It was a Labour Minister who told Muslim women he wanted to see their faces if they wanted to consult him in his constituency surgery.

Mary Kenny appeared on a BBC radio programme on the 'Muhammed' issue, and the good people running the programme were rather shocked when she said much the same thing as a member of the British National Party, and did not retreat when they remarked on it. That might once have been fairly described as indicating a Tory orientation. But those days have gone.

Mary Kenny says she is a free marketer and a cultural conservative who values tradition and religion.

O'Connell was certainly a free marketer, but he was not a cultural conservative. He was a reform Whig in British politics, and was associated with the radical uprooting that went with the 1832 Reform and the Anti-Corn Law League.

In Ireland he refused to talk to the people in their own language, which was also his language, and he insisted on Anglicising them while at the same time cajoling them with extravagant nationalistic flattery in English. He was culturally destructive, and he had nothing to put in place of the culture which he was intent on destroying. And then he tried to destroy the Young Ireland movement which was filling the cultural vacuum that he created.

In religion he was not traditional. He came to it with the zeal of a convert—because a convert is what he was. He came from London to Dublin around 1798 as an English utilitarian Deist or atheist, and conducted himself for a while as a kind of honorary member of the Protestant Ascendancy, before becoming an enthusiastic Roman Catholic during the great dispute over the appointment of Bishops. Then he directed a venomous sectarian tirade against Ulster Presbyterian reformers who had supported him in the Catholic Emancipation movement when they refused to follow him into the Repeal movement.

He was an elemental force in Irish affairs for a generation. He was not traditional or conservative. And the kind of Catholicism that became dominant in the Ireland that was shaped by his influence (and organised by his friend, Cardinal Cullen) was something new in Ireland. And, because it was new, it lacked the ballast of tradition—and it collapsed easily.

Around nearly two decades ago we were involved in a series of public meetings in Newmarket, in North Cork, where Cullen's reforms had been resisted to some degree and where religion was supported by tradition, and held out against the destructive influence of Vatican 2 longer than other areas. But it had finally given way. We asked what

people thought was the one thing that did the damage. A thoughtful farmer who attended those meetings, and who was the brother of Monsignor O'Callaghan who writes a column for *The Corkman*, said straight off: "*The mini-skirt*". And there was general agreement.

We doubt that the traditional Catholicism of Ireland, that survived the Penal Laws, and that was denounced by the Puritan crusaders for its idolatry and its loose living, would have been shattered by the mini-skirt. It was the unique Catholicism created in Ireland in the mid-19th century, through a combination of Victorian Puritanism with direct Roman control, that collapsed in the late 20th century. In other states of Catholic Europe the state stood as a mediating barrier between Rome and the national Church, and the Church was therefore national in a way that it was not in Ireland after 1850. Although a few Bishops subverted Roman directives on the land issue or the national issue, the direct authority of Rome over its Church in Ireland was not disputed.

The official reason for the conquest of Ireland by Henry 2nd in the 12th century was to bring the Irish Church under the authority of Rome. This was achieved seven centuries later. The British Government (Protestant or Liberal according to your fancy) was happy with the new arrangement because it hoped to curb national development in Ireland by means of influence with Rome.

In the early 19th century there were a number of serious Protestant attempts to convert the Irish. These Protestant Crusades concentrated their propaganda on the sexual immorality and idolatry of Catholicism. When the Irish were severed from their traditional life by O'Connell, the Famine and Cullen, and set about remaking themselves in accordance with strict Roman doctrine, they ended up with something very like the Protestant morality of Victorian England, but without the other things that were part of English culture.

Some areas held out against Cullen's iconoclasm. They continued to hold *Well Days* (the subject of many Protestant *exposés*) and *Stations*. But these practices were gradually weakened, eroded, by modernising influences. They were finally ended after Vatican 2, which struck off hundreds of local Irish Saints as mere idols.

Catholic Ireland is a very poor thing in the way of tradition today compared to 150 years ago, or even 40 years ago.

If it is the case that the mini-skirt contributed to the collapse of Vatican 1 Catholicism, Mary Kenny, in her attempt to restore whatever tradition there was

in the 1960s, is in the position of trying to undo her own influence. She was a famous mini-skirt pioneer, at the time when she also broke the ban on importing condoms (which was in fact only a ban on importing for sale). No doubt both would have happened without her, through the operation of the free market, and her individual responsibility for the state of affairs that she now disapproves of is miniscule, but her aspiration to restore tradition in the context of the free market is paradoxical.

Edmund Burke was a great upholder of tradition. He held that the present should not be treated as a fresh start, but as an interlude through which the past is transmitted to the future. He preached war on revolutionary France because it made a fresh start and its egalitarian ideology was threatening to subvert what he depicted as the traditional hierarchy of English life. But at the same time he wrote a treatise in praise of the free market, arguing that its operations should not be interfered with by Government even at a time of famine.

The England he idolised—the England of the Whig Ascendancy—was undermined by the war that he preached, and the expansion of the market which accompanied that war.

Swift, as a Tory, opposed the war against France in his time because it led to an increase in the money market and a consequent subversion of traditional values. Burke, an Old Whig, wanted to retain the traditional values but he wrote in praise of what was most likely to destroy them: war and the free market. (But it seems that, having written *Thoughts On Scarcity*, he did not publish it.)

Marx saw that the free activity of money as capital destroyed traditional values and exulted in it. But his assertion in *The Communist Manifesto* that free love etc. were not Communist aims, but would be brought about by the development of capitalism itself, can hardly be disputed in this era of triumphant globalist capitalism.

We are happy to let our readers know that Mary Kenny is not a member of the Tory Party or a Tory voter. We did not apply the word pejoratively. But we stand by that editorial of a year ago in its general content, with one other correction: it was not General Musharraf who overthrew the Bhutto Government in Pakistan, but General Zia.

If Muhammad is the leading name for infant boys in seven European cities, that only bears out what we said—that Islam is the culture most conducive to contented family life and to human reproduction, and that it offers the most effective resistance to the corrosive effect of the free market on traditional values.

If Mary Kenny's counter to Islam is to restore Christian values within the free market, we think it is a hopeless, self-contradictory project. As has been said before in this magazine, Western Christianity sickened of itself—it was destroyed by nothing but itself. But let her get on with it—and more power to her.

But if her purpose is to contribute to the brewing Islamophobia of post-Christian Christian Europe with the purpose of helping it to destroy Islam as Christianity destroyed itself, then we part company with her very decidedly.

## Report

### Mary Kenny On The Moral Maze

(BBC Radio), 15th November 2006

(The subject was whether there should be a law against incitement to religious hatred. Nick Griffin, the leader of the British National Party was against such a law, as was Mary Kenny, who came on after him.)

*A Panelist:* It seems that you're very comfortable sitting in the same seat as Nick Griffin expressing a pretty much identical view on this question. Does it worry you that you're in such company.

*Mary Kenny:* Well, that's your analysis. It's not mine.

*Q:* So you deny that you're making the same argument that he made.

*MK:* I don't have the same views that he has.

*Q:* Not about other things. But on this issue... you are making the same argument that he made.

*MK:* If you say so.

*Q:* Well, you are... He knows that there is very powerful latent anti-Muslim feeling there to be played with and encouraged politically. And that's what he's doing. And he's doing it because he favours a predominantly white white-supremacist Britain. How comfortable are you with that?

*MK:* Well, I mean there *are* problems with Islam, and we do have to talk about them. And we do have to talk about them in a very open and honest way. And we can't sort of tiptoe around and say, Gosh, we mustn't talk about this because it involves ethnicity. I mean the Muslim birth-rate in Europe is three to five times higher than the Christian, or post-Christian, or Judaeo-Christian birth-rate, if you like. That is actually a very serious subject. They are winning the demographic race, if you like. No pun intended. And that means there will be changes in our culture. Let's talk about it. Let's be open and talk about it. And let's not pretend it's not happening.

*Q:* Is it right to have laws which prohibit incitement to violence by racial hatred?

*MK:* Well, I think, as far as I understand it, laws should be judged on their outcome.

to page 19, column 1

Pat Walsh

A development of some ideas first put forward in *Ireland's Last Crusade*  
(*Irish Political Review*, December 2007)

## The Taming of The Jew

The British Government's decision to tame and turn the Jews in the midst of its predicament in 1917, after failing to convert their Great War on Germany into victory, is at the source of the instability of the Middle East and in the world today.

In the dark days of 1917, when the Russian Steamroller, on which so much had been staked by the Liberal Imperialist gamblers of 1914, had been stalled by the German Army and put in reverse by the Bolsheviks, a little light of cheer appeared in the major event of the war—the capture of Jerusalem.

*The Irish News* of Belfast welcomed the culmination of the last Crusade and the Imperial project for a Jewish homeland in its editorial of 11th December 1917:

"Fallen is thy throne, O Israel! The power of the Moslem in 'the Land of Promise' has fallen at last: we may assume that with the entrance of General Allenby's troops to Jerusalem an end has practically been made of Turkish rule over Palestine... When the Holy Land has been fully rescued from Turkish domination, who will possess and administer it? Official statements regarding the re-colonisation of the country by the scattered Jewish race have been made. Observers can discover no traces of enthusiasm for the project amongst Hebrews themselves. As an idea, nothing could be more sentimentally attractive; as a practical proposition, we believe each child of

Abraham would bestow a benison on his brother who migrated from the lands of the Gentiles to the shores of Lake Galilee and the slopes of Mount Olivet. Thus might the storied little territory become once more 'a land flowing with milk and honey'—greatly to the content of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who remained where they were. But an independent Jewish State cannot be established all at once, even did all the Rothschilds lead all their compatriots back to Jerusalem. The country must be 'protected'—in plain terms, annexed: a useful synonym in dealing with Oriental transactions might be 'Egyptised.' And the conquerors are, of course, the natural 'protectors' of the territory won by force of arms. Such has been the rule and practice from before the era of Moses and Joshua. We know all about it in Ireland. When the objects of the campaign in Palestine and Mesopotamia have been completely achieved, a solid 'block' of Asian territory will lie between the Germans and the Indian Ocean. The Turks gave the Kaiser's people a free passage from Constantinople to the Persian Gulf. The new occupants of Palestine and Mesopotamia will not be quite so accommodating. No one has hinted as yet at the ultimate fate of Constantinople itself: it was to have been the Czar's property, but poor Nicholas would rest satisfied with less nowadays. England, at all events, is carefully building up a wall against German 'aggression' along a line on which German eyes were cast covetously many years ago... There are really some arguments against a precipitate disclosure of the Allies 'war aims': one excellent reason for silence being that the Allies do not know how much they can aim at with a prospect of getting it."

By this time Ireland was completely in tune with British Imperialist ambitions in the world and quite in unison with the Christian fundamentalism that accompanied it. As the British advanced towards Jerusalem, many of them began to see themselves as taking part in the last Crusade: and all the Christian fundamentalism imbued in English gentlemen by their Biblical education in the Public Schools came flooding out in a great surge. They had reconquered the Holy Land for Christendom after 700 years of Moslem occupation. And what would the Holy City and the New Jerusalem be without the Jews?

Along with the conquest of the

Ottoman territories the other project close to the heart of Liberal England was the planting of a Jewish colony in Palestine for British Imperial purposes. The fundamental reason behind the alliance between British Imperialism and the Zionist Movement was the British desire to enlist the support of International Jewry in the war effort against Germany. The *Round Table*, a Liberal Imperialist periodical of the movers and shakers in the Empire, explained the background to the project in March 1918:

"There was, of course, a Zionist movement that also had the same objective of establishing a national state. But the Jewish nationalists did not have the power to realise it themselves in the region. Though various Governments had on occasion expressed sympathy with the aims of Zionism, and the British Government in particular had made the Zionist Movement an offer (which proved abortive) of a territory in East Africa as the home of a Jewish settlement with some measure of autonomy, Zionism was not, and had no apparent prospect of becoming, a factor to be reckoned with in international politics.

"Now, almost suddenly, all that is changed. Thanks to the breadth and sincerity of British statesmanship, to the inherent justice of its own aims, and to the ability with which those aims have been presented, Zionism has received the official approval of the British Government—an approval which, in the circumstances in which it was given, makes the realisation of the objects of Zionism one of the avowed war-aims of the Allied Powers. The way in which the Government's declaration of support has been received shows that substantially it speaks the mind of the whole British nation, and indeed of the whole Commonwealth."

The same article outlined the reasons why a substantial Jewish colonisation of Palestine was impossible under the Ottomans but became a possibility under British Imperial control:

"The potential value of the Jewish colonisation of Palestine—its value as an indication of what the Jews, and they alone, can make of Palestine—is enhanced by the fact that it has been carried out hitherto in spite of difficulties created not only by the absence of any State organisation behind it, but by the shortcomings of Turkish government. It must indeed be said, in fairness to the Turk, that from the Jewish national point of view his rule has had its good as well as its bad side. Talaat Pasha, in a recent interview, made much of the fact that anti-Semitism was unknown in Turkey, and that the Jewish colonies in Palestine had been allowed freedom in local administration and in the use of the Hebrew language for educational and general purposes. He had a right to take

Mary Kenny continued

Q: We have a law like that. Do you think that law should be repealed?

MK: I'm not in favour of hate laws, because I, because I do think it's a very slippery—

Q: —So we should repeal the law which outlaws incitement to violence through racial hatred?

MK: I'll have to think about that.

Q: Well that would lead to racial hatred. That would lead to violence, wouldn't it?

MK: Well, all sorts of things lead to violence... I'm not comfortable with the idea that action is judged according to how the victim perceives it. I think that's a very dangerous area of law. It's a bit Alice In Wonderland... Let's be a little bit more robust about this. You can disapprove of things. I disapprove of Gordon Ramsay effing and blinding all the time all over the television. But that doesn't mean, But that doesn't mean I want to prohibit him

credit for this tolerance, which, if it resulted rather from passivity than from active goodwill on the side of the rulers, was none the less of great value to the ruled. It may well be that if during the last thirty years Palestine had been in the hands of an efficient and centralised government, Jewish colonisation might have progressed more rapidly on the material side, though the settlers might have been much less easily able to learn the rudiments of self-government and to retain and strengthen their specific national consciousness. But there is a heavy account on the debit side. Not only has Jewish colonisation been hampered by burdensome taxes, restrictions on the sale of land, and the neglect of the Government to provide those material facilities without which a country cannot be developed on modern lines; but the absence of security has kept out of the country much Jewish energy and capital which would otherwise have flowed into it, to the benefit both of the Jewish national movement, of Palestine, and of Turkey as the overlord of Palestine. The Turkish revolution of 1908, which Zionists welcomed as the dawn of a new era of freedom and opportunity, turned out in fact to be the precursor of a policy of Turkification which was even more fatal to Jewish national effort on a large scale than the laxity of Abdul Hamid's régime; and since the war broke out much has happened to destroy whatever lingering belief Zionists may have retained in the possibility of achieving their object under Ottoman suzerainty. It is clear, therefore, that Zionism imperatively needs a substantial change—whether or not accompanied by a formal change—in the political position of Palestine if the work of a generation is not to be practically wasted, and if the Jewish people is not to be doomed once more to fall back on hopes and prayers."

During the nineteenth century a Christian Zionist impulse developed within the Nonconformist wing of Protestantism in England. This English Christian Zionism actually predated the Zionism of Jewish nationalists and developed from the Bible.

The English Puritans were always strongly inclined toward the Old Testament part of the Bible—much more so than Catholics were. Their Bible reading bred a familiarity with, and imbued a strong interest in, reviving the Holy Land and creating a new Jerusalem. There was a notion, encouraged by reading the Old Testament, that a Second Coming of Christ depended upon the return of the scattered Jews to the lands of their ancestors. So what happened to the Holy Land mattered to Christian fundamentalist England since great Messianic promises and millennial predictions depended upon it.

There was nothing ridiculous in the belief and desire that Imperial power could be used to bring about an end to history and the Second Coming. There was another factor that exerted a gravitational pull on England from the Holy Land. Since the break with Rome the English Church had lacked a spiritual home. The Catholic Church had rebuilt the spiritual home of Christianity in Rome but when Henry VIII made himself pope of the English he had to be content with Canterbury.

The more English Protestants read their bibles the more they yearned for their own spiritual home—in the original holy places of Judea and Samaria. And what could be more of a riposte to Rome than to expose its spiritual inauthenticity by trumping it with the original article?

Christian Zionism worked its way into the political classes of the British State as the Nonconformists came to political power and it became part of the political culture of Liberal England despite the fact that Darwinism seemed to undermine the religious impulse toward the end of the century.

Under the influence of Herbert Sidebotham, a prominent Liberal journalist, and C.P. Scott, the influential editor of *The Manchester Guardian*, there developed a Manchester school of Christian Zionism. The leaders of Jewish nationalism in England, Dr. Weizmann and Harry Sacher, were from Manchester themselves and the city became the hub for an Imperial Zionist project.

The *Balfour Declaration* was issued in 1917 just a week before Jerusalem was captured for the Empire. (To have done it earlier would certainly have had a disorganising effect on the Arabs who had been conned into doing some of the fighting for Britain.)

Lloyd George, the Prime Minister who authorised it, was raised by an uncle, a lay preacher in a millennial Baptist Church, and "*was brought up in a school where there was taught far more about the history of the Jews than the history of my own land.*" His biographer John Grigg described how the Prime Minister "*had been brought up on the bible, and the story of the ancient Jews was as familiar to him as the history of England... the idea of reuniting the Jewish people with the land of their forefathers appealed to him.*" In 1903, when an ordinary Member of Parliament, he had drawn up a *Jewish Colonisation Scheme* for Theodor Herzl, the founder of the Zionist movement. The colony was meant for British East Africa but by 1917 the real thing became possible.

The Prime Minister was not alone. According to Lady Hamilton in her book,

*God, Guns And Israel*, of the ten men who had formed the War Cabinet at one time or another seven had come from Nonconformist families. Three were the sons or grandsons of Evangelical preachers. They all had a close acquaintance with the Old Testament and the people of the book.

The proposed Jewish colony in Palestine was a British construction designed as a foundation for Imperial hegemony and as another buffer state between India and potential enemies. It would end forever the scheme of a Berlin to Baghdad railway and frustrate any designs the new potential rival, France, might have in the region.

Halford Mackinder, the Imperial geopolitics professor, pointed to a further desirable aspect of setting up a Jewish colony in Palestine—as a solution to the Jewish problem. In his book, *Democratic Ideals And Reality*, written a year after the capture of Jerusalem, Mackinder argued:

"The Jewish national seat in Palestine will be one of the most important outcomes of the war. That is a subject on which we can now afford to speak the truth. The Jew, for many centuries shut up in a ghetto, and shut out of most honourable positions in society, developed in an unbalanced manner and became hateful to the average Christian by reason of his excellent, no less than his deficient qualities. German penetration has been conducted in the great commercial centres of the world in no small measure by Jewish agency, just as German domination in southeastern Europe was achieved through Magyar and Turk, with Jewish assistance. Jews are among the chief of the Bolsheviks of Russia. The homeless, brainful Jew lent himself to such internationalist work, and Christendom has no right to be surprised by the fact. But you will have no room for these activities in your League of independent, friendly nations. Therefore a national home, at the physical and historical centre of the world, should make the Jew 'range' himself. Standards of judgement, brought to bear on Jews by Jews, should result, even among those large Jewish communities which will remain as Going Concerns outside Palestine. This, however, will imply the frank acceptance of the position of a nationality, which some Jews seek to forget. There are those who try to distinguish between the Jewish religion and the Hebrew race, but surely the popular view of their broad identity is not far wrong" (pp173-4).

A number of British writers believed that the Jews had been a significant element in the vigour and success of German commerce prior to the War and they determined to remove the Jews from this useful function in German life.

Germany was the closest thing that the Jews had to a homeland in 1914 and many found refuge there after the pogroms directed against them by Britain's ally, Russia.

The British offer of a homeland in Palestine presented a means of taming and 'turning' the Jew from his German, internationalist/socialist proclivities in the world, to being harnessed to more progressive, nationalist and British Imperial, purposes.

Of course, it was Halford Mackinder who provided Herr Hitler with the geopolitical inspiration required to facilitate what happened to the Jews, through Dr. Karl Haushofer. And it was the Imperial power politics, supported by Redmondite Ireland, that created the conditions in Europe for the destruction of the Jewish Going Concerns outside of Palestine.

But where would all of this leave *"those large Jewish communities which will remain as Going Concerns outside Palestine"* in a Europe of post-war nationalisms in which they could not fit? The great surge of anti-Semitism that gripped Europe after the War came in the new states set up out of the Hapsburg Empire by Britain and France at Versailles. In these concoctions of the Imperial powers the Jews began to be seen as anti-nationalist elements and they were treated accordingly by the new nationalist bourgeoisies during the 1920s and 1930s. At the same time the indigenous Arab people of Palestine began to be treated by the Jewish nationalists, under the aegis of the Imperial Power, in a similar fashion.

This was a natural outcome of the Imperial scheme to turn the European Jews into a nationality with their own nation-state along with the concocting of new 'nations' in Europe in which the Jews had no place.

I had not realised that anti-Semitism played a part in the downfall of the Coalition Government, at the hands of Tory backbenchers in 1922. Apparently some Tories believed Britain was being pushed into a war of plunder against Turkey because of Jewish interests.

I had presumed that much of the discontent had come from the Chanak humiliation and from the appeasement of the Irish. But in the course of writing this article I obtained a copy of Al Carthill's *The Lost Dominion*, a book about the Imperial misgovernment of India written by an influential Imperialist writer and published in 1924 by Blackwoods of London. In it 'Al Carthill' reveals some interesting assumptions held about the Jews in Imperial circles:

"That many subversives should be Jews

is not a matter of surprise... It may perhaps be admitted that the Jew, while using our civilisation, has a poor opinion of it. This is not unnatural. He has seen so many civilisations pass. He has used them all. The more degenerate they became, the greater the influence, and thus the greater the profit of the Jew... He was generally able to exercise great influence over the Government, and always found aiders and favourers among the powerful...

"The heathen imagine a vain thing, and their devices come to nought, but the Kingdom of Zion is an enduring Kingdom...

"The Jew, then, may be perfectly loyal to the ideas of the society in which he lives. Yet his belief in them is not of the degree that is requisite of martyrdom. Just as the most valiant and loyal mercenaries will break and fly after suffering losses which a national and volunteer army would bear without wincing, so the Jew is rarely prepared to stake all on the maintenance of a social state in the absolute value of which he has no belief...

"It is but recently that the influence of the Jew in politics, and particularly in foreign and imperial politics, has awakened uneasiness in England... In a country like England, where the small share of power which is not monopolised by wealth was wielded by intelligence, there was thus every probability of the Jew becoming one of the dominant castes. Jews were welcomed as intimates, advisers, and sons-in-law by leaders of both the great parties. Jews provided the empire with statesmen, lawyers, men of the pen, and men of science... For many years they have abstained from an active share in politics...

"This latter policy has been abandoned in recent years, to the regret of the old-fashioned pious Jew. And here, I think, the Fromme Jude was right. No one can be blind to the beginning of a reaction against Jewish control... The alleged monopolisation by the foreign Jew of certain reprehensible traffics has revolted the pious. There is therefore a vague anti-Jewish feeling floating about in solution in England which needs but a shock to crystallise it. The fall of the Coalition is principally to be ascribed to an uneasy and probably erroneous idea that the Jew exercised too much power in the counsels of that remarkable body, and that that influence was being applied to unpatriotic ends. Erroneously, no doubt, it was supposed that the last rags of honour of the British people, the last pieces of gold in an exhausted treasury, the last drops of the blood in the lacerated body of the republic, were about to be jeopardised, in order to decide which of certain Jewish financial houses were to have the profitable business of liquidating the Turkish Empire. The mere absurdity of the supposition is convincing proof of the reality of the general uneasiness.

"And as usual the uneasiness of the people, though in itself apparently baseless, was not actually without a rational basis. To return to first principles, it is inexpedient, in a world where rightly or wrongly the idea of nationalism has such power, that the affairs of the nation should be conducted by men who, in so far as they are not citizens of a foreign nation, are cosmopolitans by birth, training and inclination" (pp109-115).

To write what Carthill did in 1924 today would be to commit political suicide. But Carthill was not in favour of anti-Semitism and argued that it was unfounded in some of its manifestations. What is uncomfortable about his description is his failure to give an outright condemnation of it in his attempts to understand it in England. That would not have been politic after 1945 when a blanket taboo was put on thought about anti-Semitism as it became incorporated into the service of the Churchillian myth of history. And then it became a weapon to be wielded at anyone who dared to criticise the expansionist Zionism of the Jewish nationalist state—even those who had suffered directly at its hands.

Carthill talked of *"a vague anti-Jewish feeling floating about in solution in England which needs but a shock to crystallise it."* One wonders what would have happened if it had been crystallised?

In the post-War Europe that Britain organised at Versailles there were many shocks that led to such crystallisations—in countries that had substantial Jewish communities. And yet further thought about that is best avoided.

Britain, in attempting to turn the Jews, made a fatal miscalculation in the ecstatic confidence of the time of Imperialist triumph. If Britain believed the Jews to be mere mercenaries of Germany why could they not be also of Britain? The thought did not seem to occur that, by turning the Jews into nationalists of Zion, would they not cease to be mercenaries? Would they not see themselves, after their return to Zion, as real nationalists with independence as their aim—the only objective worthy of the name of self-respecting nationalism? And would that not make them resentful of the Imperial motherland which was not really a mother to them at all but really just a surrogate?

Finally, what would the attitude of thoroughgoing nationalists, imbued with notions of religious and racial superiority, make of a large and hostile minority/majority (?) within their midst?

That seems to be what happened in 1947 and then ever since, isn't it?

✱

## Irish Politics, British Law And Anti-Catholicism 1918-1919

When Edward Egan died on 27th December 1916 his last will and testament became the subject a legal fight to remove the second last active civil disability against Catholics in Britain (the *1701 Act of Settlement* prohibiting a Roman Catholic from sitting on the crown of England is still active on the Statute Book). What was ultimately at stake was the right of Catholics in Britain to determine the absolute use of their property after their death. The fight went through the entire legal process until it reached the House of Lords in 1919. That it was abolished at the final stage of due process is not surprising as by that time such legal disabilities against Catholics had become an acute embarrassment to the British establishment. However, there are certain aspects in the manner by which this particular law was over-ruled that reveals the mechanism by which the British constitution manages change in difficult circumstances. It also throws into relief the way tolerance has been used as a political tool in British history—something to be switched on or switched off depending on the circumstances.

Edward Egan created the problem because he left some money in his will to enable Masses to be said for the repose of his soul. The will was challenged and the case heard in the Chancery Court on 18th July 1917. Judgement was given by the Chancery Court that the payment for such Masses was illegal under English law. An appeal was lodged and the case referred back on the 4th June 1918. Justice Eve, after hearing the arguments concluded that the case law was too strong to reverse the original judgement and said that "*the law upon the matter had been settled now for well nigh a century. In those circumstances if any alteration was to be made that must be affected by the House of Lords. He had no power to do it. He could only do what he was bound to do, and declare that these bequests were invalid...*"

The case was then referred to the Appeal Court and was heard on the 22nd July 1918. The judgement of the Court was delivered by Sir Charles Eady, the Master of the Rolls, who said in judgment that "*The question raised by this appeal is whether several gifts to Jesuit Fathers, Franciscan Fathers, Dominican Fathers, and others 'for Masses,' bequeathed by the will of Edward Egan, who died on December 29 (sic), 1916, are valid. . . . Mr. Justice Eve decided that the bequests were*

*invalid, treating the matter as law which had long since been settled. We are of the same opinion.*" He continued, "*The law on the subject is too well settled to be shaken or disturbed by this Court . . .*"

The final recourse was an appeal to the House of Lords. On this occasion the judgment was finally reversed and the case was reported in *The Times* on the 4th June 1919:

"The House by a majority allowed this appeal from a decision of the Court of Appeal, affirming a decision of Mr. Justice Eve. The appeal raised a question of great interest and importance to Roman Catholics, namely, whether a bequest for Masses for the repose of the soul was valid."

Judgment was given by the Lord Chancellor:

"The Lord Chancellor said that this was a difficult and an extremely important case. Their Lordships could not in his view escape the duty, anxious as it undoubtedly was, of overruling decisions which had been treated as binding for generations. The question was whether, by the law of England today, bequests of personality to be applied to Masses for the dead could be supported. He had reached the conclusion, and he was bound to state it, that they could."

This was an unusual judgment under the circumstances. While it is not unusual for the House of Lords to revoke previous law, this normally occurs in relation to laws that have not been tested in the courts with such regularity. The particularity of this law was precisely the fact that it had been regularly tested and upheld over a long period of time. The Lord Chancellor was then compelled to make a foray into the previous legislation on which the law was based:

"His Lordship then discussed the history of the mass in England and came to the conclusion that the common law recognized the validity of gifts to establish Masses, and that the only Act upon which the respondent could rely in the attempt to establish the illegality of gifts for Masses for the dead was the Chantres Act of 1547." (The Times, 4 June 1919).

Having examined the *Chantres Act of 1547* he concluded that it only applied to contemporary conditions and "*There was not a word in the enacting part which prohibited such gifts in the future, and it seemed certain that the Act was not so construed at the period when it came into operation*". A long account of legislation and case law followed which essentially came to the conclusion that the invalid status of bequests for Masses for the dead was initially based on a misunderstanding of the 1547 Act and

that, in any case, all subsequent legal decisions which underpinned the legality of that misunderstanding lost their status as a result of the *Catholic Relief Act* of 1829.

"If there were, in fact, an unbroken line of authorities dating back 300 years, then it would have been a matter for grave discussion whether that House, in accordance with well recognized principles, would consent to break that chain. The authorities, however, were only uniform in result. Some depended upon statutes, some on the principle that no religion other than that by law established could be recognized and protected by the Courts, while others depended upon a misunderstanding of the ancient decisions.

"In his (his Lordship's) view it was undoubtedly true that ancient decisions were not to be lightly disturbed when men had accepted them and regulated their dispositions in reliance upon them. That doctrine was especially deserving of respect in cases when title has passed from man to man in reliance upon a sustained trend of judicial opinion. But that was not the present case. If his view was well founded citizens of this country had for generations mistakenly held themselves precluded from making these dispositions. He could not conceive that it was his function as a Judge of the Supreme Appellate Court of this country to perpetuate error in a matter of this kind. The proposition crudely stated really amounted to this, that because members of the Roman Catholic faith had wrongly supposed for a long period of time that a certain disposition of their property was unlawful, and had abstained from making it, their Lordships, who were empowered and bound to declare the law, should refuse to other members of that Church the reassurance and the relief to which their view of the law entitled them. He could not and would not be a party to such a proposal.

"The conclusion, therefore, so far as he was concerned, was that a gift for Masses for the souls of the dead ceased to be impressed with the stamp of superstitious use when Roman Catholicism was again permitted to be openly professed in this country and that thenceforth it could not be deemed illegal."

In other words, the case for upholding the appeal amounts to the fact that the original statute of 1547 was misunderstood and all the resultant case law, being based on that misunderstanding is therefore deprived of any standing. Also, it was only the fact that the law had not previously been appealed to the House of Law by aggrieved Catholics that this particular law continued to be applied. This failure on the part of the Roman Catholics perpetuated the error in law by default.

## Legal consistency or political expediency

The Lord Chancellor's fellow House of Lords judges, Lord Buckmaster, Lord Atkinson, and Lord Parmoor assented to this judgment. However there was one dissenting judge. The exception was Lord Wrenbury who argued against the judgment on the grounds that:

"There was a statute passed in 1547; an opinion was expressed upon its true construction in 1602; the construction accepted in 1602 was acted upon judicially in 1835; that judicial decision had been accepted ever since."

The original interpretation was reinforced in 1860, and 1861 and in 1875 the authority of the decision was upheld by the Privy Council. Based on the historical weight of legal opinion, he believed that the Court did not have the right to over-rule opinion of such antiquity which had so long stood unchallenged. He further contended that, even if it was accepted that there was some misunderstanding of the original statute the fact of the existence of a

consistent interpretation of such long-standing gave it the protection of "*a certain recognized state of the law*".

"It was a principle which recognized the importance of certainty and finality, and which in circumstances refused to disturb after a certain lapse of time a doctrine 'whether,' to use Lord Herchell's words, 'it rests upon any sound basis or not.'"

This is not to say that he found the law in question an acceptable one, but the law was the law and:

"If complete freedom of religious belief, which all would, he thought, today be desirous of giving, ought to be supplemented by removing illegality from dispositions such as were in question in this case, the matter was, he thought, one for the Legislature."

In legal terms there is no doubt that Lord Wrenbury's position makes the most sense. He accepts that the law in question is a law that no longer serves a purpose but, because of the length of time it has been in existence and the number of occasions it has been reconfirmed, it would be impossible to

re-interpret it in a way that upheld the appeal while at the same time sustaining the consistency which any legal code relies upon. Under such circumstances the best thing to do would be to refer the issue to the Legislature, i.e. Parliament, for a solution.

On the other hand, the way this issue was handled by the Lord Chancellor and the other Law Lords makes no legal sense at all. In the context of the previous history of this particular law, and remembering that this was a law that had been upheld a mere 44 years earlier by the Privy Council, the reluctance of the majority of the Law Lords to refer the issue back to the Legislature needs some explaining. Such was the oddity of the handling of this case that an editorial in *The Times* was compelled to state:

"notwithstanding the ingenious reasoning of the Lord Chancellor, we are confident that it will cause considerable surprise among lawyers, and that the more thoughtful section of the public will agree with Lord Wrenbury and with the Judges of the Court of Appeal [Sir Charles Eady

### Report

The following letter, submitted by **Jack Lane** on 28th December, failed to find publication in the *Irish Examiner*

## Protestants And Republicans During The War Of Independence

In his letter of 17 December Brendan Cafferty gives what appears to be very damning evidence of Republicans' attitude towards Protestants during the War of Independence. He quotes from an editorial of the Belfast Presbyterian paper 'The Witness' on 17 June 1921—"The plight of the Protestants in the south and west is sad in the extreme. They are marked, they are watched, they are raided, and some of them have been dragged out and shot like beasts. An air of suspicion and dread is about them day and night."

Like knowledge, a little quoting is a dangerous thing. Mr Cafferty should have quoted some more of the editorial to give this extract its proper context. Far from Republicans causing problem for Protestants the editorial actually says the opposite. It says that Protestants, as Protestants, had no choice but to oppose the democratically elected Republican government (twice elected by June 1921) and that was the source of the problem. But let the editorial called *The State of the Country* speak for itself. It begins as follows:

"The Honourable H.M. Pollock, D.L., M.P., the Minister of Finance in the Northern Parliament, presented the Report on the State Of The Country in

the General Assembly last Friday, and called attention to certain deplorable facts of which we are all more or less cognisant." [This is interesting in itself. The Finance Minister of the newly established Government of Northern Ireland reports to the governing body of a Church on the state of the country. Did Michael Collins, as Minister for Finance in the Dail ever consider going to report to Maynooth? JL.]

The Editorial continues (and I have italicised the part quoted by Mr. Cafferty, JL):

"He (Mr Pollock) referred in particular to the sufferings and persecution of Protestants, which undeniably form a part of the Sinn Fein policy of vengeance upon those who in any way stand opposed to this crusade of wickedness and wish to see the law of civilised society prevail. The Sinn Feiners, of course, deny that Protestants as such are persecuted, and there is an amount of truth in their contention, for their vengeance falls upon all who hinder them without regard to creed or class. But it is easy to see that this does not invalidate Mr. Pollock's assertion of the persecution of Protestants, for Protestants are loyal and law-abiding, and feel it as a duty which they owe to God and their own conscience to support the forces of the Crown in the repression of crime. There is no blinking the fact that this is the line which divides Roman Catholics and Protestants in general at the present time in Ireland. The vast majority of Sinn Feiners are Roman Catholics, and while there must be many Roman Catholics who hate and disapprove of the evil deeds of Sinn Fein, yet the Roman Catholic

population as a whole have provided Sinn Fein with a sphere of influence and moral, or rather we should say, immoral, support which render their foul work in Ireland possible. Protestants, on the other hand, are the bulwark of liberty and justice and the due administration of law, and it is only natural that Sinn Feiners should look upon them as enemies and wreak their anger upon them. Sinn Feiners may say that they do it, not because they are Protestants, but because they betray their cause; yet since Protestants cannot do otherwise in virtue of their religion, it comes to the same thing whether we say Protestants are persecuted for their religion, or are persecuted because they will not fall into line with Sinn Fein.

"Mr. Pollock is, therefore, perfectly right when he calls attention to the persecution of Protestants and evokes the sympathy of the Church in their behalf. *The plight of Protestants in the south and the west, (the 26 counties) is sad in the extreme. They are marked; they are watched; they are raided; some of them have been dragged out and shot like beasts; an air of suspicion and dread is about them day and night.*"

The subtlety and honesty of *The Witness* editorial, according to its own lights, seems beyond Mr Cafferty to appreciate but I hope that readers will appreciate that this fuller extract provides a proper and more comprehensive context. Such a context is essential when dealing with this subject and it is highly irresponsible to go in for a selective and tabloid approach to what was a life and death issue.

*et al*—ED] that a change in what has been deemed to be settled law for generations ought to be effected by legislation, and not by a novel interpretation of accepted legal doctrine." (The Times, 4 June 1919)

However, no further public attention was drawn to the anomalous judgment. While in legalistic terms, the judgment was unsustainable, there is little doubt that it suited the political requirements of the day. Given the political climate, there is no doubt that the most expedient solution was the one which the majority of the Law Lords favoured and the Lord Chancellor, none other than Lord Birkenhead (F.E. Smith), was someone well versed in the political value of expediency.

By the time of the judgment, the Allies had just won the most devastating war in history and Britain, the nation that more than any other had brought this war about, was attempting to salvage something of its power and prestige in the world. The immediate requirement was to re-establish social equilibrium through a solution of the Irish problem and to manage the unpredictable impact of the millions of de-mobbed soldiers about to re-enter civil society. In these circumstances to have referred the issue of a Catholic disability back to the Legislature would have opened it to the unpredictable winds of prevailing popular opinion—something that could not be encouraged when it came to abolishing a law that was proving to be an embarrassment in the post-WWI world of trans-Atlantic sensibilities. Although the law in question would probably have been neutralised by the Legislature, the attention and social debate unleashed as a result would not have contributed to the cause of social harmony or international standing that was the pre-requisite of the British establishment at the time. The embers of anti-Catholic sentiment, stoked by the media in response to the refusal of the Irish bishops to cooperate with conscription in 1918, were still smouldering in British civil society in 1919. A raking over these embers could only result in an increase in social tensions that did not suit the British political establishment in the summer of that year.

## **Military Setback in France & Political Resistance in Ireland**

The legal issue surrounding Edward Egan's will in 1916 was so problematical for the Law Lords because of the inherited climate in which they found themselves by the time it reached them in 1919. At first sight it appears that the judgement arrived at by the Lord Lords represents another milestone in the evolution of British liberal tolerance as one more disability is removed from a

religious minority. However, the sensitivity to Catholic sensibilities revealed in the 1919 judgment was a very young vintage indeed. The previous year in 1918 had in fact seen the threat of an "Anti-Popery" campaign being used by elements of the British establishment as part of their war strategy. To understand the 1919 Law Lords judgement it is necessary to examine it in the context of what had happened in Ireland, Britain and France in 1918.

By early 1918 it was becoming obvious that the social momentum in Ireland was rapidly moving in Sinn Fein's direction with the British continuing to depend on a combination of military power, the political influence of the Nationalist Party, and the social influence of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy to maintain order. However, there were already signs that the combined influence of the latter two elements was on the wane. Under the changing influence of the local community a growing number of parochial clergy were coming over to the position of Sinn Fein, in many cases in opposition to proclamations from the Bishops. Similarly the influence of the Nationalist Party was showing signs of diminishing and the failure of the Irish Convention in April further contributed to that decline. While this process was working itself out the British Army suffered a severe setback on the Western Front in France. By the end of March the German Army, reinforced by resources freed from the Eastern Front resulting from Russia's removal from the war, mounted a major offensive in the hope of gaining victory before the arrival of US troops. Within a short time the forces under Erich von Ludendorff had advanced 40 miles and taken 80,000 prisoners. The British line in the Arras sector was shattered and it seemed that they would be forced to retreat to the Channel. Although the line was eventually held, the crisis created virtual panic among the politicians at home. On the 9th April 1918, the Prime Minister, Lloyd George addressed the House of Commons on the crisis and provided an outline of the current situation facing the Allies.

He outlined his proposals for strengthening the Army to meet this challenge through a new Military Service Act. Among other things, the Act would cancel existing exemptions previously issued on occupational grounds, raise the military call-up age to 50 (and in certain cases to 55), remove automatic exemptions previously issued on medical grounds, reconstitute the Conscription Tribunals in a way that brought them under more direct control of the authorities (through the nomination of members and reduction of their size etc.)

as well as to limit the rights of appeal to such Tribunals, and to include ministers of religion within the Act as non-combatants. The Act would also extend conscription to Ireland but, because there was no machinery in place for its immediate activation, the Government would, as soon as such machinery was in place, implement the Act in Ireland by Order in Council. The reaction from the Irish benches in the House was reported as follows:-

### *"Nationalist Protests.*

The Irish section of the Prime Minister's speech drew a chorus of excited protests from the Nationalist members, who had mustered in full strength for the first time in many months. Mr. Dillon told Mr. Lloyd George that he would get no recruits from Ireland. The rival leader, Mr. William O'Brien, declared that the proposals were a declaration of war against Ireland. Mr. Devlin moved the adjournment of the debate, on the ground that the Government were ignoring a Sub-Committee of the Irish Convention, which had reported that, assuming that a scheme of Irish self-government was adopted, it would in practice be impossible to impose compulsory service on Ireland without the assent and cooperation of the Irish Parliament. The motion was defeated by 323 votes to 80, but the Nationalists were not to be denied, and they almost monopolized the remainder of the debate."

*The Irish Times* appealed to the Nationalist Party to reconsider its attitude to the Bill. It blamed the British Government for mishandling the issue of conscription in Ireland since 1916 by not dealing with it strongly at an earlier stage and estimated that the country could easily sacrifice another 150,000 men to the front. The fact that men up to the age of 50 (and, as it later materialized, in certain cases up to the age of 55—they became known as the 'Methusellers') were being considered to replenish the losses is an indication of just how far the human resources of Britain were being stretched. As the above report shows there was very little energetic opposition to the Bill from the Opposition benches and all the major provisions survived the various stages with the exception of the provision for calling up clergymen of all denominations. Lloyd George had on several occasions stressed that the main tenets of the proposed Bill were not open for discussion, yet the provision for calling up clergymen was abandoned mysteriously in the lead up to the Committee Stage of the *Military Service Bill* on 16th April leading to loud protestations from many Protestant clergymen eager to be conscripted along with their flocks.

On 9th April, the same day that Lloyd George introduced his proposals for the new Military Services Act to the House of Commons, a meeting of the Roman



Catholic Episcopal Standing Committee in Dublin passed the following resolution in response to the proposal to impose conscription on Ireland:

"With all the responsibility which attaches to our pastoral office we feel bound to warn the Government against entering on a policy so disastrous to the public interest, and to all order, public and private."

The resolution was signed by Cardinal Logue and the Bishops of Cloyne and Kildare and was to be early evidence of the Catholic Hierarchy's growing hostility to emerging Government policy. The Bishops and Cardinal Logue had come a long way since their energetic support of Redmond's recruitment campaign in 1914 and that distance is a measure of how much Irish society had moved towards the Sinn Fein position in the interim. On the 14th April 1918, a letter from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Cork was read in Cork City churches calling on young men in the present crisis to avoid playing into the hands of their enemies by a formal military rising, which would be crushed in a short time. He stated his belief that the coming conference of the hitherto divided Nationalist leaders, Constitutional and Sinn Fein, with the heads of the Labour Party, would give a strong lead to the country on how to proceed with the opposition to conscription. It was announced on 15th April that the leaders of the Nationalists, John Dillon and Joseph Devlin, had accepted an invitation by the Lord Mayor of Dublin to meet with the leaders of Sinn Fein, Eamon De Valera and Arthur Griffith, with the object of creating a united front in opposition to conscription in Ireland. At the same time Cardinal Logue, addressing the congregation in St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in

Dungannon, County Tyrone, condemned the Government's action and announced that he had convened a meeting of the Irish Bishops for the 18th April to discuss the conscription issue and formulate resolutions for action. On 16th April the following report was published in *The Times*:

"The fear of conscription has produced in three days a close alliance between parties and persons who have been at one another's throats for the last three years. Mr. Dillon is getting in touch with Mr. De Valera and with Messrs. Healy and O'Brien. The official and independent Nationalist newspapers are declaring in unison, and the whole movement is being led by the Church. Perhaps the Bishops welcome an opportunity of reasserting their shaken authority in political affairs. In any case they are gravely concerned at the prospect of widespread disorder in the country. On Sunday five Bishops cautioned their flocks against impulsive action and at the same time warned the Government against the dangers of conscription. A 'solemn league and covenant' to resist conscription was established yesterday at Armagh under the auspices of the local priests, and the chairman read the following message from Cardinal Logue: 'I am heart and soul with the meeting at Armagh. Forcible conscription is an outrage upon the people and clergy of Ireland. There is nothing for it but passive resistance to it in every shape and form.

"Yesterday meetings of protest against conscription were held in hundreds of parishes throughout Ireland, and in all cases the clergy took a leading part in them. Resolutions are pouring in from public bodies, and in country districts the Sinn Fein clubs are exceedingly active."

### An Irish Triple Alliance

The nightmare scenario in Ireland was quickly approaching for the British Government. On 18th April the

conference of Labour and Nationalist leaders, official, independent, and Sinn Fein—brought together for the purpose of forming a united front against the extension of military conscription to Ireland—announced that the united front had the support of the Bishops meeting at Maynooth. A declaration was then made to the effect that:

"Taking our stand on Ireland's separate and distinct nationhood, and affirming the principle of liberty that the governments of all nations derive their powers from the consent of the governed, we deny the right of the British Government, or any external authority, to impose compulsory military service on Ireland against the clearly expressed will of the Irish people. The passing of the Conscription Bill by the British House of Commons must be regarded as a declaration of war on the Irish nation. The alternative to accepting it as such is to surrender our liberty and to acknowledge ourselves slaves. It is in direct violation of the rights of small nationalities to self-determination which even the Prime Minister of England—now preparing to apply naked militarism, and force his Act upon Ireland—himself officially announced as an essential condition of peace at the Peace Congress. The attempt to enforce it will be an unwarrantable aggression, which we call upon all Ireland to resist by the most effective means at its disposal." (The Times, 19 April 1918)

The simultaneous meeting of the Roman Catholic hierarchy at Maynooth also issued a statement, declaring that:

"The Bishops consider conscription forced upon Ireland as an oppressive and inhuman law, which the Irish people have a right to resist by all means consonant with the law of God." (ibid.)

The shock to British political opinion was profound. Only a few weeks earlier Lord Curzon was expressing satisfaction "that the Roman Catholic clergy exercised their influence in every way to

### Report

Labour's Ruairi Quinn TD is now working for Israel and says "US Jewish lobby" is an anti-Semitic myth. Note that there has been an avalanche of pro-Israel letters and articles in the Irish Times recently—first noticeable after ICTU Conference July 2007 passed its strong motions on Palestine, but especially since the return of the ICTU delegation from Palestine in December 2007. Here is Quinn's contribution on behalf of Israel, which appeared as a letter, *Irish Times*, 8th January 2008

### Power Of Jewish Lobby

"The existence of a "Jewish lobby" that wields enormous ICTU political influence and power widely disproportionate to the number of Jews has been a common theme in anti-Semitic conspiratorial discourse throughout the 20th

century. We need hardly remind your readers of Hitler's poisonous rhetoric manifested in his writings, speeches and, ultimately, actions.

It should be recognised that vigorous criticism of Israeli domestic and foreign policy is articulated within Israel as well as internationally. Such criticism should not allow itself to be interpreted as anti-Semitism.

John Kelly (January 3rd) refers to the influence of a "Jewish lobby" in the US. There are many powerful lobbies openly active in Washington DC, including our own.

Why is it that the "Jewish lobby" is singled out for special mention?

Such sentiments expressed today recall almost verbatim the view expressed by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, in which he wrote about the "Jewish conspiracy to destroy the world by means of political infiltration and corruption".

We find it of grave concern that views such as this could feed a new generation with excuses for anti-Semitism. It happened before, and must never be allowed to happen again.

The complex politics of the Middle East is one matter. The continued typecasting of Jews into the 21st century is something far more insidious and dangerous. RUAIRI QUINN TD, Chairperson, Holocaust Educational Trust of Ireland, Dublin 2.

Editorial Note:

Quinn and his Trust are in good company in denying the existence of a "Jewish lobby" in the United States. Former US Ambassador John Bolton was asked on BBC's Radio 5 whether the present US policy of giving *carte blanche* to Israel owed anything to the Jewish Lobby and replied that the idea of a Jewish lobby is anti-Semitic.

*prevent collision and impose restraint".* From being an important element in maintaining the rule of British law in the country, the Hierarchy was now using its influence to organise the populace in a campaign which flew in the face of British interests. On the 21st April at every congregation throughout Ireland the following pledge was taken:

"Denying the right of the British Government to enforce compulsory service in this country, we pledge ourselves solemnly to one another to resist conscription by the most effective means at our disposal."

Where before there were warnings from the Hierarchy against illegal resistance now there was an encouragement to adopt "*the most effective means*" possible in alliance with Sinn Fein and the Nationalists. Labour also brought its influence to bear on the situation when a general strike was called for the 23rd April:

"The workless day has been a complete success from the point of view of its organizers. Presumably it was not observed in North-East Ulster, but it has been observed strictly throughout the rest of Ireland. Labour obeyed the mandate of the Trades Union Conference and abstained wholeheartedly from any sort of public or private work." (The Times, 24 April 1918)

The Irish correspondent of *The Times*, John Edward Healy (also simultaneously editor of the *Irish Times*) urged that:

"The Government's policy must be firm, for it cannot abandon the principle of conscription without giving an immense moral authority to the work of the most dangerous forces in Ireland. But firmness alone will not suffice. The Government must help Constitutional Nationalism to get out of a position which is fast becoming intolerable." (ibid.)

The most urgent political task now confronting the British state in Ireland was to somehow break this triple alliance between Sinn Fein, the Nationalist Party and the Hierarchy if there was any hope of extending conscription to Ireland. There was also the added danger that the direct involvement of the Irish Roman Catholic Hierarchy in this campaign would encourage other Catholics in mainland Britain to similarly defy conscription. Roman Catholics in Canada and Australia were a powerful force behind the anti-conscription campaigns in both these countries particularly among the Irish immigrants and there was a real fear that this would spread to Britain. From the point of view of the British establishment it was imperative therefore that the impact of this triple alliance should be neutralised and any meaningful strategy had to have as its purpose the destruction of this alliance. The first identified fault line was the Irish Roman Catholic Hierarchy.

It had a proven track record of supporting the War and its new anti-Conscription position sat uneasily with its recent history so it was inevitable that the reaction of the British establishment would take account of this.

## Instability of Religious Toleration

In the eyes of the British establishment the Catholic Church in Ireland had rapidly moved from something akin to a national church providing one of the central social structures upholding the law to one that was increasingly acting as a bandit church. The response was almost instantaneous. On the 24th April an editorial in *The Times* provided a sinister warning:-

### *"A Grave Responsibility.*

It says much for the forbearance of the British people, and for their real abhorrence of religious animosities, that so little protest should have been made in public against the latest action of the Roman hierarchy in Ireland. Yet there is no misunderstanding the tremendous gravity of the issue which they seem bent on raising. It goes far deeper than any mere question of the expediency of enforcing military service on Irishmen, though this is its occasion. At bottom it is nothing less than the old claim of a powerful religious organization to defy the law of the land in a matter which is not even remotely religious. Last Thursday the Roman hierarchy met in conclave at Maynooth and adopted a statement which virtually placed them at the head of the anti-conscription movement. They have already, therefore, given to that movement a great and inevitable stimulus. Individual Bishops have since done something to recommend that it should be carried out without bloodshed, and it is arguable perhaps that their policy was deliberately adopted in order to keep the forces of rebellion under discipline. But their responsibilities are incalculably serious henceforth, as our Dublin Correspondent has pointed out, and the real character of these responsibilities must not be forgotten. In throwing down a challenge to the Imperial Parliament the Roman hierarchy have done far more than repeat their old, obscure intervention as individuals in the Home Rule controversy. They have openly assumed the right to interfere as a Church in politics, and in so doing they have shaken to its foundations the whole edifice of religious toleration in these islands."

The editorial made great play of "*the forbearance of the British people*" and "*their real abhorrence of religious animosities*" but the context of the editorial undoubtedly implies that its definition of "*the British people*" is a people that does not possess a Catholic element. This Catholic element is something outside "*the British people*", that they can choose to tolerate or not depending on their behaviour. The traditional charge that is usually levelled against Catholics is one of disloyalty.

They are perceived as a body of people who have a higher allegiance to an organisation outside the British state and therefore cannot be trusted to act consistently in a way that suits the interests of that state. Consequently they are always on the brink of defying the law. In this instance there was no law broken by the Irish anti-Conscription campaign as conscription still awaited the Order in Council that would activate the relevant Act in Ireland. If the anti-conscription campaign continued after the Order in Council then the question of illegality would arise but only then. It was claimed that the act of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy assuming a right to interfere in politics was the central issue. The fact that the Church of England, and for that matter all the Protestant Churches in the UK, had long been involving themselves in the politics of war was not seen as an issue. Similarly the heavy involvement of the Irish Roman Catholic Hierarchy in the politics of recruitment in 1914 was not viewed as an over-stepping of the mark. In reality it was not so much a question of the Irish Roman Catholic Hierarchy involving itself in politics that was the problem, it was that it was now doing this on the wrong side—behaviour that according to *The Times* was threatening a breakdown in the foundations of religious toleration in Britain.

The warning was unmistakable but just to ensure that the message could not be misunderstood the same issue of the paper also re-produced part of a particularly vitriolic article from the *New York Times*:

"To the murders of priests, to the ravishers of nuns, to the destroyers of churches and cathedrals, to the slayers of Catholics on Good Friday at Mass in Paris, the Irish Catholic hierarchy now turns in friendship. By what monstrous delusion obsessed, plunged in what unhappy remoteness from the agony of Belgium and the world, does the Irish Church tie itself to the Sinn Feiners, the open friends of the Kaiser? These sermons and pledges against conscription, this union, or attempt at union, against conscription, this Sunday devoted to organizing resistance, this combination of priest and politician, in the supreme peril of civilization, this aid and comfort to the enemy—all this is a page of history that cannot be read hereafter without sorrow and shame. It is a strange attitude for the Catholic Church in Ireland or anywhere else to counsel resistance to lawful authority and government and to advise Irishmen to ally themselves with the public enemies."

The suspect loyalty of Roman Catholics is also tied up with their allegiance to Rome. The same issue of the paper published letters to the editor from maverick English Catholics. This is part of one signed by Bart Kennedy, an adventurer, novelist and journalist, and entitled "*Voila L'Ennemi*" ("There is the

Enemy"): *The Hierarchy and Civil Power*:-

"Berlin is behind this Mass [the one at which the anti-conscription pledge was taken—ED]. It was celebrated for the purpose of helping the Hun to crush and enslave mankind. The Vatican took its orders from Berlin, and the Bishops in Ireland took their orders from the Vatican. This Mass was a profanation of a most sacred and holy rite.

"The Vatican has thrown off the mask. It is at one with Berlin, for Berlin has promised to it temporal power. This is an open secret. The Vatican was behind the defeat of Italy. The Vatican is working with the Hun. It has condoned his horrible and bestial crimes. And now it has come out openly in Ireland. It is betraying Irishmen to eternal shame and dishonour so as to help Germany.

"The ecclesiastical politician! He is of all politicians the most deadly and the most sinister. He means, in the end, the doom of the Roman Catholic Church. He holds sway in Rome. He is the Vatican. The Vatican has betrayed the Roman Catholic Church. The Vatican has betrayed mankind. The Vatican has betrayed Christ."

And again from a reader anonymously signed "Civis Britannicus Sum" [in fact written by E. Goldsmith, a Paymaster in the Royal Navy]:-

"I can find no words to express my disgust at the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland today. The Church is far too well disciplined from Rome for there to be any possibility of trouble in Ireland, Quebec, or Australia, arising without the knowledge of Rome. It appears to me that Rome is deliberately challenging the British Empire, and that she believes the Central Powers will win this war. She is granted tolerance in the British Empire which she would never be granted in Germany, a tolerance which she never shows herself in Catholic countries."

The simultaneous publication of the editorial and the letters from English Catholics was meant to show the seriousness of the situation arising from the position adopted by the Irish Hierarchy and to make it plain that its continuance would result in an intensification of anti-Catholicism in the United Kingdom.

This brought forth a spirited response from Sir Mark Sykes, who, along with the Duke of Norfolk was a leading English Catholic Unionist of the period (he was also at this time actively involved in encouraging a pro-Zionist direction to General Allenby's administration in Palestine). On 25th April his letter to the editor was published under the repeated heading of the original editorial:

*"A Grave Responsibility: The Hierarchy in Ireland."*

To the Editor of The Times.

Sir,—If one is engaged in actual war business, it is difficult to divert one's attention to political and religious-political controversy, but certain items in your issue of today make it impossible to remain

silent. If I were to say that I had no time to devote to reflection on such matters, it would be but the truth, but occasionally questions intrude upon one's thoughts which refuse to be banished.

"To proceed as briefly as possible to the point at issue, I would summarize the matter, I think not unfairly, by saying that Mr. Kennedy's letter under the heading of "Viola l'Ennemi" attributes the action of the Irish Bishops to direct Vatican inspiration; the anonymous contribution immediately below it affirms that the Vatican stands on the side of Germany, and your leading article concludes with assertion that the whole edifice of religious toleration in these islands has been shaken to its foundations.

"When a country is tortured and stretched on the rack of war, as is this unhappy land, sharp and sudden things occur which might surprise people whom four years of dissolution, destruction, and melting away of time-honoured ideas have not awakened to realities. I myself am forced to two painful conclusions from reading the heading, the letters, and the leading article; firstly that, apart from the Irish or Canadian questions altogether, the general cry of "No Popery!" may have your approval; secondly that you consider the question of a re-enactment of penal laws against Roman Catholics throughout the United Kingdom may be necessitated as a war measure. In ordinary times, such inferences might be regarded as extravagant, but we live in extraordinary times, and extraordinary events are not impossible.

"As a Catholic who has studied the history of his country, I know that even such instruments as Titus Oates and Lord George Gordon were able in the past to achieve a good deal in moments of national stress and political exasperation. It would no be surprising to me, therefore, if a newspaper as powerful, sincere, and respected as yours could achieve at least as much at the present juncture. Also as a Catholic, I know that when religious passions are aroused neither the personal character nor the patriotism of members of my Faith, nor even the general sympathy of their Protestant fellow-citizens, can save us from the effects of persecution. But this latter is a minor consideration. Blessed Thomas More climbed the scaffold with a jest, and died with a prayer for his King on his lips; his fortitude and citizenship will, I make no doubt, inspire us to endure whatever inconveniences may be in store for us; the main point to my mind as an Englishman is whether the stimulation of religious conflict is likely to help to win the war.

"At this moment the crying needs are for unity of purpose between England and Ireland in the matter of the war, and for men to fill the depleted ranks of the Allied forces; I am of opinion that the substantial elements of this unity exists, and further, that the men are to be got, but I am equally certain that by adopting wrong methods opportunities will be missed which will never recur.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant. Mark Sykes, 9 Buckingham Gate, SW1, April 24."

Although published anonymously, the author of the editorial in question was in fact the Editor of *The Times*, Geoffrey Dawson who now took the very unusual step of printing his reply directly below the above letter:-

*"The Editor of The Times responds:* Sir Mark Sykes either misunderstands or confuses the point at issue as far as the comments of The Times are concerned. We have made no attempt as yet to assess the direct responsibility of the Vatican for the action of the Roman hierarchy in Ireland. That is a matter on which our Roman Catholic correspondents have their own opinion—an opinion which Sir Mark Sykes neither endorses or disputes. The whole point (to quote the article in question) is that the Roman hierarchy in Ireland "have openly assumed the right to interfere as a Church in politics." Whether their action is to lead to a "No Popery" movement in the United Kingdom depends entirely on themselves. They will assuredly have to face such a movement if they seriously challenge the authority of the Imperial Parliament."

So it couldn't be made clearer. When it came to the behaviour of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, *"Whether their action is to lead to a 'No Popery' movement in the United Kingdom depends entirely on themselves. They will assuredly have to face such a movement if they seriously challenge the authority of the Imperial Parliament."* There is little doubt but that this represented a crude threat, not directly against the Irish Roman Catholic Church, where a *"No Popery"* campaign would be meaningless, but more to rouse the British Catholics to steer clear of any association with the anti-conscription campaign and also to put pressure on their Irish co-religionists to remove themselves from this campaign. The response of the British Catholics was not to express outrage at this threat but, as in past times when such sectarian movements were threatened, to protest loyalty. Another anonymous letter from an English Catholic was published in the paper on the same day as the above exchange between the Editor and Sir Mark Sykes:-

*"The Oratory Record.*

To the Editor of The Times.

Sir,—The schoolfellows at the Oratory of your correspondent "Civis Britannicus sum" do not appear to share his difficulty in uniting loyalty to their King and country with fidelity to the Catholic Church. In proof, I tender the school record of services in the war. The number of old boys between 18 and 50 is 512. The number serving is 398; 71 have been killed and 73 have been wounded. Among the honours they have gained are a V.C., 20 D.S.O.'s, 34 M.C.'s, and over 120 Mentions in Dispatches. The witness of these figures is plain. We are proud of it, as Catholics and as subjects.

Yours obediently, An old Oratory Boy, April 24."

By proving that Catholics were just as willing to be slaughtered in the cause of Empire they hoped to deflect the traditional Protestant charge of disloyalty. The Jesuits, the traditional bugbear of Protestantism, were also eager to establish their credentials:-

*"Stonyhurst.*

To the Editor of The Times.

Sir,—I do not know when "Civis Britannicus" was a boy at Stonyhurst, but I went there in 1859 and have been in touch with the college ever since. If during this stretch of years I had come across any spirit of disloyalty or lack of patriotism I should have severed my connexion with the place. As a Catholic I allow no man to stand between me and my King and country. This, I take it, is the attitude of the Stonyhurst man, who is taught that patriotism is the fair bloom whose native soil is religion. Sir, in fairness to our 70 Jesuit Fathers acting as chaplains to the Forces, and to our 900 Stonyhurst men who are serving with the colours, not without distinction, may I ask you to give the publicity of your columns to this vindication of their character?

Yours faithfully, Bernard Vaughan,  
S.J., 114 Mount Street, April 24."

Such was the seriousness attached to the issue that the leader of the English Catholics, Cardinal Bourne, sought to publicly clarify the position of the English Catholic Church by providing a direct statement to the paper :-

"In view of the misrepresentations that have appeared in some of the papers, it is necessary to state accurately the attitude of the Catholic Hierarchy in England and Wales regarding the Military Service Act. It is quite in accordance with Catholic tradition that, in case of real need, priests should render non-combatant service of a kind compatible with the priestly character and dress, especially by tending the wounded."

He went on to reveal the number of Catholic priests working as Chaplains and otherwise occupied in administering to the spiritual needs of soldiers, On April 26, Sir Mark Sykes responded to the editor's reply to his earlier letter and, in the course of it, sought reassurance regarding the substance of the threat contained in that reply:-

*"A Grave Responsibility: Irish Bishops and British Catholics.*

To the Editor of The Times.

Sir,—I will deal as briefly as I may with the points raised in the editorial footnote to my letter yesterday. It is pointed out that The Times has not yet assessed the direct responsibility of the Vatican for the action of the Irish Bishops; I submit that the enormous resources of The Times ought to permit of this assessment and that in the public interest it should be made without delay.

"As to the personal opinions of your correspondents on this specific point, I hold the personal opinion that they are quite honestly mistaken, and that the Vatican

has as little to do with the attitude of Irish Nationalists as it has to do with General Hertzog. No one has yet accused Cardinal Mercier of acting on Vatican inspiration, and, until proof is forthcoming, I cannot see why the Vatican should be accused of inspiring Irish Bishops.

"I venture to quote the following words from the editorial footnote:- "Whether their action (i.e. the Irish Bishops) is to lead to a 'No Popery' movement in the United Kingdom depends entirely on themselves." I hope you will assure me that I am both misconstruing and misunderstanding you if I assume this to mean that in certain eventualities English Catholics are to be "pogromed" even though they may be opposed to Home Rule; that is to say, that an Englishman may be tolerated as a Protestant, though he sympathize with the attitude of the Irish Bishops, but not as a Catholic, though he sympathize with Sir Edward Carson.

"Again, at risk of trespassing on your space, I would once more urge that every effort should be devoted to the promotion of unity of purpose with a view to the prosecution of the war. Our passions must be preserved for use against the enemy, and our manhood rallied to the cause of liberty. I am convinced that, in spite of adverse circumstances, these objects can yet be achieved, by the exercise of reason, firmness, and common sense, but not by seeking and stimulating fresh causes of disunion and hatred.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant, Mark Sykes, 9 Buckingham Gate, SW1, April 25."

Once more the Editor responded directly, but did not deny the substance of Sir Mark Sykes letter or offer him the assurance he requests and by so doing deliberately left the threat intact:-

*"Editor replies:* Sir Mark Sykes insists on obscuring the fundamental point at issue, namely the claim of the Roman hierarchy in Ireland to intervene as a Church in political questions which have no connexion whatever with religion."

It was understandable that English Catholics should attempt to anticipate the threatened campaign by answering the charge of disloyalty in advance—this was a reaction based on the instincts of a community used to having to justify its existence in British society.

### **Reality of threat or threat of reality**

While the immediate subject of the threatened campaign was British Catholics, they were also being used as a means of putting pressure on the Irish Hierarchy. Richard Bagot, a Catholic convert and anti-Vatican British propagandist in Italy, refused to accept there really was such a campaign. In a letter published in *The Times* of 26th April he accused his fellow Catholics of being hysterical. He also blamed the Vatican for not doing enough to clamp down on the anti-Allies behaviour of the Catholics in Ireland,

Italy, Canada and Australia:-

"Sir,—The attempt made by Cardinal Bourne, and by your correspondents who reply to the letters of Mr. Bart Kennedy and "Civis Britannicus Sum," published in your columns of yesterday, deliberately to confuse the point at issue is ingenious and not a little Jesuitical. No one, as far as I am aware, has called into question the patriotism of British Catholics. If this patriotism has been called into question at all, it has been so rather by those who, like the Cardinal and Father Bernard Vaughan, "protest too much," and are likely therefore, to create the doubts usually engendered by excessive protestation.

"No one, as far as I am aware, has ever asserted that the Vatican was solely the cause of the Italian reverse of last autumn, or that it is directly responsible for the attitude of the Irish priesthood today. On the other hand, it is an incontrovertible fact that the present Pope and the Vatican have not exercised either the spiritual or political power of the Holy See to prevent, or even to discourage, such propaganda on the part of ecclesiastics and lay members of the Roman Church as has in Italy, and in Ireland, Canada and Australia, been distinctly prejudicial to British military and national interests and to the common cause of the Allies.

"This is, I would submit, the sole point with which we in this Empire can legitimately occupy ourselves. Italy, who has equally suffered under the "neutrality" of Benedict XV., can settle her own score with the Vatican. There is here no question of intolerance of Roman Catholicism, and no question of the loyalty or disloyalty of British Roman Catholics. This is a dummy point deliberately raised in order to divert the attention of the public from the real issue—which is that the political status of the Vatican alone rendered possible a declaration of neutrality in a European conflict on the part of the Head of a religious denomination; and that the "neutrality" of the Vatican in this war is a political neutrality, which has certainly not been benevolent to this Empire or to its Allies, but has, in various grave circumstances, directly and indirectly contributed to prejudice and to weaken our material, moral, and social forces.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant, Richard Bagot, The Athenaeum, April 25."

Bagot's claim that *"There is here no question of intolerance of Roman Catholicism"* flies in the face of the facts. The threat of a campaign based on such intolerance was the reason why the English Catholics were so preoccupied. His dismissal of the response of Cardinal Bourne, Bart Kennedy *et al* as deliberately confusing the issue and accusing them of Jesuitical behaviour is simply not sustainable. The threat was very real and Catholics undoubtedly felt it to be real and were behaving in a way that indicated they felt it to be real. It could be said that there was not an actual anti-Catholic campaign in terms of pogroms etc. but that begs the question of when

the threat of an anti-Catholic campaign becomes an active campaign. The point of transference is surely a metaphysical one if at the end of the day the threat succeeds in compelling the target community to change their behaviour in the way demanded. Once the threat goes beyond the stage of threat to a full-blown active campaign it becomes difficult to control. Sometimes the anarchy resulting from such sectarian campaigns is in fact the desired end but there are other circumstances where the preservation of control is critical. It is in these situations that the mere threat of a sectarian campaign is all that is required. Sir Mark Sykes put his finger on the reason why it was unlikely that such a campaign would materialise in Britain in the prevailing circumstances. Such a campaign would have created more problems than it would solve. What was required in Britain at this time was a unification of the society and the problem with sectarian campaigns is that they are very divisive. Although Sykes could argue the case why a sectarian campaign would not be in Britain's interest, he could not be sure that his warning would be heeded, and his letters display this anxiety.

That the leading representatives of Old Catholics in England were interpreting the signals in this way is some indication of just how powerful these signals actually were. *The Times* was therefore playing a very dangerous game in April 1918 but the mere fact of the threat reveals a profound reality of British society. Such threats only have a potency if the target community can experience it as a threat capable of being realized and this was undoubtedly the feeling among British Catholics. What prevented a full blown anti-Catholic campaign was not something intrinsic in British political culture, the so-called British tolerance. It was not British tolerance which was putting the brakes on the escalation of the threatened anti-Catholic campaign, it was the raw fact of British military interests. In a situation which required more bodies in the trenches it was necessary to take these where you could get them and there was absolutely no sense in mounting a campaign against a section of society which had the potential of supplying a percentage of such bodies. Also there were already hundreds of thousands of Catholics serving with the forces and such a campaign would undoubtedly have had repercussions for military discipline.

In the meantime however, the British Catholics continued to express their concerns at being viewed as disloyal. The same issue of the paper as the one in which Bagot's letter was published also printed letters from other British

Catholics that were keen to emphasize the difference between them and the Irish Catholics :-

"Sir,—As a member of one of the old Roman Catholic families in England, I endorse the remarks made by you in your leading article of April 24 under the heading "A Grave Responsibility." The action of the Roman hierarchy, on the subject of enforcing military service on Irishmen, calls for condemnation on the part of all law-abiding people, and the use they have made of the power their priesthood has vested in them, to encourage rebellion, is deplorable and will, I fear, do harm to the faith I belong to, amongst many.

Yours etc, H.C. Petre, Northampton, April 24."

"Sir,—May I, as an Englishman and a Catholic, venture to remind your readers that English Catholics are in not way in sympathy with the conduct of the Irish Catholic clergy; indeed, they are appalled at and disgusted with the scandal. The loyalty of Catholics here in England is beyond all question. The Army and the Navy are full of Catholics; so, too, are all the public services engaged in winning the war; and, for a further and conclusive proof, it is only necessary to refer to the roll of honour of the two Jesuit colleges—Beaumont and Stonyhurst. Their record of loyal sacrifice stands as high as that of any school in England. That educated opinion in general doubts the loyalty of English Catholics would, of course, be an absurd suggestion; the facts are too well known amongst the ordinary well-informed. But there must always be a certain section of people, less informed, who will simply look at the broad position in Ireland and then without consideration proceed to tar us all with the same brush. Hence this letter. It is to be hoped that Cardinal Bourne will presently act as the Bishop of London has acted and, by offering—freely and without stint—the services of his clergy to the country, thus make clear before all the world the views which we English Catholics hold.

I am, yours faithfully, Archibald Dunn. April 24."

"Sir,—The letter of your correspondent "Civis Britannicus Sum" is an insult to the body of Roman Catholics in this country, if he intends to imply that the difficulty he has felt in being at once loyal to his King and the Church is a difficulty felt by other Catholics.. The body of English Catholics have no difficulty in being at once loyal Englishmen and loyal Catholics. No body of Englishmen have proved themselves more loyal in the present war. To mention but one fact—in proportion to their numbers the Roman Catholic clergy in England have contributed more chaplains to the Army that has any other denomination. No body, too, feels more acutely the action of the Irish hierarchy in reference to the war, nor have been more saddened by the events of last Sunday. But the Irish episcopate is not the Catholic Church and the attempt to attribute their action to the Vatican is sheer nonsense. When your

correspondents speak so glibly of the Irish Bishops taking their politics from the Vatican, they evidently forget, or are not aware of, the history of the Plan of Campaign and the attitude which the Irish Bishops then took towards the Pope's intervention. On that occasion the Pope was given to understand that, whilst the Irish took their Faith from Rome, they claimed the right to decide political questions for themselves. I defy Mr. Bart Kennedy to produce one tittle of evidence that the Irish Bishops are not acting as independently of the Vatican on this occasion as they did in the time of the Irish land war.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully, Catholicus."

By this time the British Catholics were falling over themselves in asserting their loyalty and distinctness from the Irish. The leading Catholic journal in Britain, *The Tablet*, even lent its weight to the assertion of Catholic loyalty and, while not attacking the Irish Bishops in so many words, advocated the reasonableness of conscription for Ireland. It would appear that the Roman Catholic Hierarchy in England were refusing to publicly condemn the actions of the Irish Bishops at this time but were being placed under increasing pressure to do so.

### Conscience and law

An interesting sideline to all of this came from the legal profession in Ireland. Whilst the legal profession in Britain endorsed the Government's assertion of the responsibility of the Catholic Church to abide by the law, in Ireland 17 Kings Counsels dissented from this position in public. One of the most senior was Mr. Serjeant Sullivan. He was second law serjeant and Crown Prosecutor and in 1916 had been the defender of Roger Casement at his trial. He wrote a letter to the *Irish Times* arguing that if the Conscription Act is applied to Ireland it would constitute what the Church defines as a penal law. Such laws, according to the Church may be obeyed by all good citizens but similarly there is justification in their being disobeyed and the Church has the right of refusing to encourage its flocks to obey. The Catholic Bishop of Kildare confirmed Serjeant Sullivan's interpretation of the Church's case:-

"Speaking in the Cathedral at Carlow, Dr. Foley said that the Bishops' resolution meant that the conscription law was no law at all, that it was *ultra vires*, that it sought to impose on the conscience of the people an intolerable burden which no secular authority could impose, and that, therefore, the people concerned had a right to resist the so-called law by every means that was consistent with Divine laws. Dr. Foley added that the Bishops left it to the political leaders to determine what particular means would be the most effective at their disposal." (The Times, 27 April 1918)

As far as the Irish Hierarchy was concerned the issue of conscription was one of conscience. But a conscience that was not viewed through the prism of British Imperial interests. As we have seen, Catholics in Britain, on the whole, viewed the situation differently from their co-religionists in Ireland but there was an area where the world view of British Catholicism and Protestantism continued to clash. Given the original provision of the 1918 Military Service Act for the conscription of the clergy, Cardinal Bourne, the leader of English Catholics, in the letter to *The Times* referred to earlier (25th April) had this to say on the subject of priests being used in combat situations:-

"Allusion has been made in the Press to the clergy undertaking even combatant service. It must not be forgotten that it is directly contrary to Christian sentiment and to ancient Christian tradition that those who are consecrated to the service of the Altar for the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the administration of the Sacraments should be called upon to take part in the shedding of blood. France alone among the belligerent nations, impelled by anti-Christian principles and the hatred of religion, has violated the tradition of centuries. God, indeed, has made use of the heroic patriotism of the French clergy to undo some of the consequences of this enactment; but those who remember that the laws of Christian tradition cannot be violated with impunity may surely find in this violation one of the causes why victory is so long delayed. The example of the anti-Christian Government of France is not one to set before the people of Christian England."

This opened up a debate on the role of clergymen in war—a debate however, that went far beyond the issue in question and brought to the fore the basic foundations of both positions. The Church of England view on this subject was provided by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Browne in an article published in the paper on the 4th May and it is worth quoting in full:

*"Clergy Combatant: The Canons Against Shedding Blood."*

"Recent events have brought into prominence the question of the position of the clergy, now that the nation is engaged in a war on which the life of the nation depends, a war which under certain conditions might reach a climax in the devastation of the land by an invading army. The question had from time to time been discussed in one diocese and another, and opinions had been divided. There was vagueness, and the matter was left to drift. Then came the proposal to subject the clergy to conscription; and then the dramatic withdrawal of the proposal, presumably under pressure from some influential quarter. The heads of the National Church of England lost no time in declaring not only that the withdrawal was not due to them, but also that they

would themselves make arrangements for the entry of the clergy into the national service for the war.

"From very early Christian times the shedding of blood has been forbidden to the clergy. Council after Council, Canon after Canon, has forbidden it. The clergy must not carry arms, must not fight. Quotation is quite unnecessary. There is, however, one case where the position is so very interestingly stated that the canon or decree may be given. It is in the Code issued in 742 by Carloman, the Duke of the Eastern Franks, whose resignation made his brother, Pepin le Bref, Ruler of All the Franks, and thus led to the erection of a Frankish Kingdom under Pepin as King. This in turn led to the creation of the Frankish Empire under his son whom we call Charlemagne. The Code was drawn up under the influence of our fellow-countryman Boniface, the Apostle of Germany. The decree in question is as follows:-

"All ministers of God everywhere we have completely prohibited from carrying arms, or fighting, or going into the Army or against the enemy, except only such as are specifically appointed for the purpose of exercising the Divine ministry, that is, performing the solemnities of Masses and bearing the protection of the Saints. For this purpose, the prince should have with him one bishop, or two, with priest chaplains, and each prefect one presbyter, to hear men's confessions of sins and indicate the penance."

"In the times of the Danish invasions of England no doubt the clergy fought for their hearths and homes. When Athelstan won the great fight at Brunanburgh, his life was saved on the field by a bishop. The King's sword broke off at the hilt, Odo, the Bishop of Rarnsbury, was at the King's side; he picked up a sword from the ground, and gave it to the King. He himself was no doubt armed, but only with the club which the fighting bishop carried in order to beat down the foe without bloodshedding. Thus in the Bayeaux worsted-work we see William's Episcopal half-brother, another Odo, rallying the retreating Normans with a cudgel, with the inscription—Odo episcopus baculum tenens confortat pueros.

"Under the Normans the law against the clergy shedding blood was carried further, but still in accordance with ancient canons. At Lanfranc's Council in 1075 it was decreed that no cleric is to judge a man to be slain or dismembered, or to lend his authority to persons so judging. In obedience to this principle, the bishops used to leave of the House of Lords in cases of impeachment before the vote was taken on which the shedding of blood depended. It is claimed that by thus not fulfilling the whole duty of peerage they ceased to be peers and became Lords of Parliament.

"Thus the law of the Church, ratified by the State, was quite clear against shedding of blood by the clergy.

"These old canons are still in force. The clergy agreed, under Henry VIII, not to put in force any new canons without the previous consent of the King, which was a

return to the old arrangement. And they agreed that the King should appoint a Committee to consider the whole body of existing canons, and report which should be retained and which should be abrogated and annulled. But no report was made, and the old canons are therefore still in force, save where abrogated by statute or void by disuse. The canons against shedding blood by the clergy have certainly not been voided by disuse.

"When the power of the Pope was done away by statute under Henry VIII, some arrangement had to be made for the continuance of dispensations. Two simple instances of dispensations may be given. A licence for marriage is a dispensation from the requirement of banns of marriage; a licence for the non-resident of an incumbent is a dispensation from the law of residence. It was enacted by 25 Henry VIII., c.21 that the Archbishop of Canterbury should issue such dispensations as the Pope had been wont to issue. In case of a dispensation being needed which the Pope had not been wont to grant, the King or his Council must be advertised and approve.

"We may take it that the declaration of the Archbishop of Canterbury, acting in accordance with the opinion of the home episcopate, and with the opinion of his Majesty's advisers as declared in the original form of the Conscription Bill, is a dispensation from obedience to the canons against the clergy bearing arms. In this special case, as throughout the whole war, the leader of the Church of the English—to use the phrase of our founder, Gregory the Great—has spoken with no uncertain sound. And throughout the world too, the Churches in full communion with the Church of the English have spoken with no uncertain sound; in Canada, in Australia, in Ireland, to name with special meaning but three examples. Some ten weeks ago the ecclesiastical head in England of another communion exhorted us to submit ourselves to the stable, firm, and uniform guidance of the foreign head of his communion. Recent events in the three countries selected for mention, and at the central seat of authority of that other communion, make us more than ever thankful that we have not to refer any of the affairs of our national Church to a foreign authority, which is primarily political and may on occasion be actively hostile to our nation. Throughout the war it has been evident that the forces which caused our severance of relations with that foreign head of the 16th century may put a grave strain on the consciences of our eminently loyal fellow subjects who still look for divinely inspired guidance to that foreign authority."

Browne's position is that the canons against the clergy shedding blood are ancient and still valid according to the laws of the Church of England. However, when the power of the Pope was abolished by Henry VIII there remained the need for arranging dispensations from the ancient canons. This role, which was previously undertaken by the Pope, was subsequently vested in the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Church

of England. In his declaration on the 1916 Conscriptio Bill the Archbishop of Canterbury triggered a dispensation from the original canons and consequently enabled the clergy to bear arms during the present war.

This dichotomy between contemporary justification and historical jurisdiction has always been a difficulty for the Church of England. It was one of the preoccupations of the Oxford Movement in the mid-19th century and continues to this day and in some ways goes to the heart of British society. The core issue surrounding the suspect loyalty of Catholics is that their conscience had a reference point beyond the call of country while the Church of England, on the other hand, ring-fence its conscience within the terms of national interest. Of course both claim an ultimate call on their conscience in the form of God Almighty and individuals of both persuasions do break free from their respective theologies but that does not invalidate the gravitational pull of their different denominations. This has real repercussions for any belief system in a functioning society.

The Anglican theology, is essentially a component of the national identity and British society inevitably views those denominations that do not share this reference point as something that is suspect. These issues only become critical in times of social crisis. At times of normality, the need of British society to continuously ingest foreign labour and occupy itself in foreign fields, dictates that the culture assumes a veneer of tolerance. When the society comes under pressure its basic survival instinct shrinks this tolerance to the point of Anglican conscience. Individuals and religions which have abandoned their outside conscientious reference point can be accommodated (the Anglo-Jewish community is a case in point) but otherwise they are left outside the pale and subject to intolerance when circumstances dictate that they need to be brought into line (Islam is probably the latest expression of this phenomenon).

English Roman Catholicism, as the 20th century progressed, could also be considered an example of a religion which had abandoned its extra-national conscientious reference point and found an accommodation which harmonised with the Anglican terms of reference. However, during the First World War this was yet to be proved. Consequently we have the convoluted final comment by Bishop Browne. "*Throughout the war it has been evident that the forces which caused our severance of relations with that foreign head of the 16th century may put a grave strain on the consciences of our eminently loyal fellow subjects who still look for divinely inspired*

*guidance to that foreign authority.*" Catholics remained a peculiar form of *eminently loyal fellow subjects* whose loyalty remained suspect because their conscience still sought out a foreign authority for guidance.

## The Role of the Vatican

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, the suspicion persisted that the Vatican was behind the anti-conscription movements in the Dominions as well as in Ireland. *The Times* of 29th April reported on a sermon delivered by Rev. R.J. Campbell in St Paul's Cathedral. The fact that the Editor choose to publish the report under a repeat heading of the original "*edifice of religious toleration*" editorial was undoubtedly not lost on the intended target readership. In the course of his sermon the Rev. Campbell had this to say:-

*"A Grave Responsibility: Mr. R.J. Campbell on the Vatican.*

They did not want to be compelled to believe that the Church of Rome all over the world was working against them, yet so it would appear. In Italy, Australia, Canada, and now Ireland, the story was the same. The Church that had not one word to say in denunciation of the rape of Belgium was now gratuitously interfering in an issue which had nothing to do with the free exercise of her spiritual privileges. If her reason for thus acting were her dislike of all war, she might have shown it sooner, and in Germany; but she had never hampered Germany, and always her operations have told against the Allies. The Roman Church throughout the British Empire enjoyed the same liberty as all other religious bodies, a liberty she herself was not accustomed to accord to others where she had the power. They did not want to feel that it was being abused. Roman Catholics in England were sincere patriots and devoted heart and soul to their country's cause. Could they bring no influence to bear on their co-religionists in other parts of the Empire?"

Lord Denbigh also entered the fray with a letter published on the same day. Eager to deflect blame from the Vatican his letter included the following:-

"Sir,—Mark Sykes in your issue today is emphatic on the point, and I entirely agree with him from all that I know. Your correspondent "Catholicus" also does well to point out that the "Irish Episcopate is not the Catholic Church, and that the attempt to attribute its action to the Vatican is sheer nonsense." I was in Ireland when the Vatican sent over to inquire into, and subsequently condemn, the support given by the clergy to the Plan of Campaign agitation some 30 years ago, and I am certain that the Vatican has no more to do with this movement than it had with that one.

"I am equally confident that, whatever may have happened in past ages with regard to Vatican interference here with politics,

as apart from religion, our fellow-countrymen may rest entirely assured as to any recurrence in these days. The Irish Catholic Hierarchy has, by this deplorable hasty act, done more harm to the cause of Catholicism and to that of peace in Ireland than they can have any idea of. It has at once revived all the accusations against Catholics as to "dual allegiance," which we regard as nonsense, however much they may be credited by those making them. You are right in saying it has given a shock to the cause of religious toleration that all of us were appreciating so highly. It has also fanned all the dying flames of those bitter religious animosities which are admittedly the relics of the savage penal laws formerly inflicted by Protestant England. . . . .

Denbigh, 42 St. James's Place, SW1."

Civis Britannicus Sum, fearful that his earlier letter gave the false impression that he was having difficulty with his Catholic conscience wrote another letter correcting this erroneous point:-

"Sir,—I am sorry to see that my letter which you were good enough to publish on the 24th inst. has been so widely misinterpreted and the point so skilfully evaded. Sir Mark Sykes gravely prepares himself for an imaginary rack with all the patient resignation of the martyrs of the Middle Ages. Father Bernard Vaughan and "Old Oratory Boy" point to records of service and rolls of honour of my late schools. One is as much beside the mark as the other. Sir Mark Sykes will not, I imagine, be dragged to torture on Tyburn Hill; and no one can feel more admiration that I do for my school records. When I said I found it "difficult to be a loyal subject of the King and at the same time a Roman Catholic" I meant, for example, the difficulty I used to experience in praying for the conversion of England on the second Sunday of each month (as ordered by the Roman Catholic Church), when, in my inmost conscience, I did not think I was assisting my country's welfare by my prayers. I wrote my letter, Sir, from a sense of duty to my country, as I explained in the last paragraph, and I thank you, Sir, for having given it publicity. If the English hierarchy do not publicly condemn the attitude of Irish clergy, they must be taken as publicly condoning it.

Yours etc., Civis Britannicus Sum."

On the same day as all the above were published in the paper (29th April) the following short report from Reuter's News Agency was hidden away in the recesses of the paper:

*"Vatican and its Priests.*

Rome, April 27.—*The Corriere d'Italia*, the semi-official Vatican organ, commenting on the answer given by Mr. Balfour in the House of Commons to Major Newman about the attitude of Cardinal Logue towards the application of conscription to Ireland, says:-

"The Holy See has always left the Episcopacy of each country free to take what attitude it might think best in the internal affairs of its own country. Thus, whatever Cardinal Logue may consider it

expedient to do about conscription in Ireland cannot affect the impartiality or the neutrality of the Vatican in this war; nor can it be considered a violation of the policy consistently followed by the Holy See since the war began." Reuter."

The interaction between Balfour and Major Newman alluded to in this report took place in the House of Commons on the 25th April and amounted to a question from the latter on whether Cardinal Logue's anti-conscription activities warranted an official protest to the Vatican. Balfour declined to take the bait.

The English establishment Catholics, acting no doubt under pressure from the "Grave Responsibility" threat from *The Times*, were losing patience with their own hierarchy in their failure to directly condemn the action of the Irish Bishops, decided to protest directly to the Pope. The Council of the Catholic Union of Great Britain held a meeting on the 30th April and passed a resolution condemning the action of the Irish Bishops. A report in *The Times* of 1st May provided the details:-

*"Protest to the Pope: English Catholics and Irish Hierarchy.*

"At a special meeting of the Council of the Catholic Union of Great Britain held yesterday, Sir Francis Fleming, vice-President, Lord Denbigh, Lord Edmund Talbot, M.P., Sir Henry Jerningham, Sir Mark Sykes, M.P., Sir Stuart Coats, M.P., Mr. Joseph Maxwell-Scott, Sir William Dunn, Sir George Lambert, Colonel Archer-Shee, M.P., Mr. James Hope, M.P., Colonel Heathcote, and Mr. W.S. Lilly being present, it was resolved:-

"(1) The Catholic Union has viewed with the deepest regret the action which the Catholic Bishops of Ireland have deemed it necessary to take for resisting compulsory service in the present war, action which appears to support a movement for organized disobedience to the law.

"(2) The Catholic Union is of opinion that it is just and right that the people of every portion of the United Kingdom should take their share in the defence of the Empire and the liberties of mankind from the grave peril to which they are exposed through the conflict wantonly forced upon the world by a cruel and unscrupulous enemy.

"(3) The Catholic Union cannot regard without serious misgivings any interference by ecclesiastical authority in questions which are purely temporal and political and in no way connected with faith and morals.

"(4) The Catholic Union desires emphatically to dissociate itself from a movement which cannot fail to hamper the full development of the military forces of the Allies, and thereby endanger the cause of humanity.

"(5) The President of the Catholic Union, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Walter Kerr, is requested to communicate these resolutions to the public prints and to

forward them to His Eminence the Cardinal Secretary of State for submission to His Holiness the Pope."

One of the core accusations directed against the Irish Bishops and repeated in the Catholic Union's complaint to the Pope, was its encroachment into the temporal and political arena. The Church of England Hierarchy, on the other hand, could not be accused of prevarication on the matter of its own encroachment into these areas. They were in no doubt as to where evil lay and were not about to allow themselves to be contaminated by awkward beliefs about the shedding of blood or any other elements of the Romanist conscience for that matter:-

*"Northern Bishops and Church Abuses: A Rebuke to 'Objectors.'*

The Upper and Lower Houses of Convocation of York met yesterday.

"In the Upper House, in which the Archbishop of York presided. The Bishop of Carlisle said that the war was for truth, justice and righteousness, and he regarded it as a crusade. He felt that there was nothing inconsistent with the highest vocation in becoming a combatant. In this war there was something spiritual in the highest sense, amounting to holiness, in taking a combatant part in this war. He regards our soldiers of every rank engaged in the war as divinely ordained. If he had been of military age, even as Bishop, he would have joined as a combatant.

"The Bishop of Chester called attention to "the gravely disquieting symptoms of doctrinal error and ritual excess increasingly apparent in the National Church," and, "in view of the deplorable abuses, verging on the peril of idolatry, which have followed in many quarters upon tentative suggestions for a very carefully limited recognition of reservation for the sick," he urged that the whole matter calls for fuller inquiry. He said that Kaiserism was Vaticanism, and Vaticanism was an ideal towards which a large number of clergy were unconsciously drifting.

[The Bishop of Manchester contended that there had been for a very long time a deliberate attempt to undermine the teaching of the Church of England and substitute for it the teaching of the Church of Rome.

"The Bishop of Liverpool said that they would never stop the evil until Bishops made up their minds together. If they agreed on a policy and did not alter it every few years the evil would be crushed.

"The Bishop of Carlisle was in favour of reservation for the sick.

No vote was taken. " (The Times , 3 May 1918)

## The Waning of the Anti-Popery Threat

The first sign of an attempt by *The Times* to defuse the situation was in a report in the paper on the 4th May 1918. Hidden under the heading *The Vatican and Yugo-slavia* there is the first grudging statement by the papers own

correspondent (the earlier short note was a direct report from *Reuters*) acknowledging that the Vatican was not behind the action of the Irish Bishops:

"The English newspapers show that feeling in England in regard to the action of the Irish prelates is much stronger than the telegraphic dispatches had indicated, and that there is a not unnatural tendency to see Vatican inspiration in this action. It may be said definitely that this view is mistaken. The Vatican has not inspired the action of the Roman Church in Ireland. More than that, this action is a direct embarrassment to the Vatican, which is certainly not anxious to alienate the sympathy of England. On the other hand, there is the fact that in Ireland, Australia, and Canada the Roman Church seems for the most part to be occupied in putting spokes in the wheel of the Allies. Those who are convinced that the Vatican is hostile can hardly be blamed." (The Times, 4 May 1918)

Two days later, the Editor then decided to once more raise his voice on the issue. In an editorial published on the 6th May, he shifts the emphasis to one that defines the fact of the Irish Bishops opposition to conscription as one that emanates from their desire to scupper Home Rule, the advent of which they believe will dissolve their social power in Ireland. The editorial opens with an attempt to distance the paper from the old herring of Vatican culpability:

*"The Claim of the Irish Bishops.*

The extent to which the Irish Bishops are independent of the Vatican is a matter in which laymen will be careful of expressing a definite opinion. We have never attempted to assess it ourselves, and we have never thought it the essential point in dispute. What is really essential is the claim of any ecclesiastical authority whatever to interfere (as the Catholic Union of Great Britain have put it) "in questions which are purely temporal and political, and in no way connected with faith or morals." It is a claim which goes far beyond the present Irish controversy—which affects, for instance, the struggle of Hinduism and of certain elements in the Dutch Church against a genuine Indian and South African Statehood, which has been fought and beaten by the Canadians in Quebec, as one hoped that it had finally been laid to rest in our own chequered ecclesiastical history. We are glad to know that it is utterly repudiated by such representative and patriotic Roman Catholics as Lord Edmund Talbot, Lord Denbigh, Mr. James Hope, and Sir Mark Sykes himself, whose letters have sometimes left his attitude in doubt. There is literally no end to the menace both to the authority of Government and to religious toleration everywhere unless the claim of the Irish Bishops is clearly realized and decisively rejected.

"It is impossible to doubt, we are afraid, that they themselves are hostile at heart to any form of constitutional resettlement in



Ireland, and their attitude is sufficiently intelligible from their own point of view. Their political influence, especially in education, is bound to diminish rapidly with the growth of true democratic responsibility. That is one reason why we believe the fears of Ulster to be largely exaggerated on the ecclesiastical side, and why the new challenge of the Bishops make it imperative to lose no time over the Government of Ireland Bill. At least half of the opposition to Mr. Lloyd George's Irish policy comes from the belief that neither side of it is seriously intended. The other half might always have been foreseen. It is composed partly of those who oppose conscription everywhere and partly of those who have always opposed Home Rule. They, at all events, cannot be reconciled with any conceivable Irish policy, still less with one another."

The editorial mentions Sir Mark Sykes as a signatory to the Catholic Union of Great Britain resolution and he felt compelled to respond as follows on the 7th May:-

*"The Claim of the Irish Bishops: Religion in Politics.*

To the Editor of The Times.

"Sir,—You do me the honour of making special mention of my name in your leading article of today, wherein you state that my letters have left my attitude open to doubt in regard to the action of the Irish Bishops.

"The only letters I have written have been directed at combating the idea of a general campaign of No-Popery, and against the suggested connexion of the Irish Bishops' action with Vatican policy. We began with a leading article foreshadowing the end of religious toleration in these islands, a heading of "Voila l'Ennemi," and some rather strongly worded letters on the subject of the Catholic Church as a whole. We have now reached the stage at which your leading article compares the action of the Irish Bishops to that of certain elements of the Dutch Church, and refers to some English Catholics as patriotic. However, though this registers some progress, I regret to observe that The Times' assessment of Vatican responsibility has made no advance at all.

"My attitude, I think, is plain enough. I believe, in principle, that religion and religious ceremonies should never be used to reinforce a purely political movement. Your attitude, however, is not so clear: though you condemn the Irish Bishops on this occasion with great fervour, I would point out that you never condemned the religious complexion which was given to the whole Ulster movement, any more than you condemned the Bishop of Laibach for espousing the Jugo-Slav cause, nor the present Government for summoning the Irish Bishops to the Convention. If you need any assistance in assessing the Vatican responsibility, the Irish saying of "Faith from Rome, Politics from home," may help you in arriving at a more speedy conclusion.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant. Mark Sykes. 9 Buckingham Gate, SW1, May 6."

Once more, as had been the case in

all of Sir Marks Sykes previous letters, the Editor responds directly in person. What makes this significant is the fact that this latest response signals, for the first time, an attempt by *The Times* to disassociate itself from the threatened anti-Catholic campaign warned of in the earlier "*edifice of religious toleration*" editorial:

*"Editor's note:* The definite claim of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Ireland to interfere as a Church in politics differs altogether from the expression of their opinions by individual prelates, such as the Bishop of Laibach and the Irish Bishops in the Convention. As for what Sir Mark Sykes vaguely describes as "the religious complexion given to the Ulster movement," it was notoriously due to the fear of a minority (however exaggerated) that they were to be subjected to religious, as well as political, domination. We need hardly say that we are utterly opposed to religious intolerance wherever it is found."

The disassociation of the paper from "*religious intolerance wherever it is found*" undoubtedly came as a surprise to all those Catholics who were threatened by the "*Grave Responsibility*" editorial published in the paper on the 24th April. The fact that this was the first time such a sentiment was expressed by the editor in the extensive debate since then is an indication that the paper was not merely acting in the capacity of honest broker but was itself a component of that threat. What the paper's first declaration of its disapproval of religious intolerance did indicate was the fact that it now felt that the usefulness of any such threat was over. In the meantime however the momentum originally generated by the "*Grave Responsibility*" editorial still had a way to go.

Although welcomed by *The Times*, the behaviour of The Catholic Union of Great Britain in protesting to the Vatican brought forth a response from the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel (Dr. Harty)

*"Hierarchy and Vatican.*

The Archbishop of Cashel (Dr. Harty), speaking at Thurles, Co. Tipperary, yesterday, denied that the Irish Episcopate, in opposing the conscription of Irishmen were influenced by the Vatican, and said that all talk about the Pope arose from the imagination of some English bigots who attempted by their "No Popery" outcry to intimidate the Irish Bishops. Some of the titled members of the English Catholic Union who threatened to appeal to the Holy See on this question, supported the Carsonite movement, but these men did not represent all the Catholics of England, for they had been repudiated in their own land. "If they appeal to the Holy See," said the Archbishop, "it is not the Bishops of Ireland who will suffer." The Irish Bishops interfered because conscription raised a moral and religious question. It was a work of Christian charity to defend the

oppressed, and the Bishops of Ireland merely performed this duty towards their people when they counseled resistance to the unhuman law of conscription." (The Times, 7 May 1918)

We then had the second official report in the paper by *The Times'* own correspondent in Rome on the issue of the Vatican's culpability in the role of the Irish Bishops. This is significant because the correspondent must have known weeks earlier that the Vatican had played no part in the position adopted by the Irish Hierarchy. The delay in making this information public was undoubtedly convenient while the 'debate' on the anti-Popery threat was still felt to be serving a purpose. Now that the original purpose was no longer viewed as relevant it was felt necessary to re-emphasise the point as part of the pressure-release strategy:

*"No Papal Peace Appeal: Vatican and Irish Prelates.*

(From our own correspondent.) Rome, May 8.

"The rumour that the Pope intends to make a fresh move in favour of peace is without foundation. From inquiries which I have made, I am able to state that, in spite of his earnest desire for a 'just and lasting peace,' the Pope is convinced that any initiative on his part would only lead to misunderstanding.

"In regard to the action of the Irish prelates I understand that the Vatican only learned of it when the news came officially from London. As I have already said, this action has come as a distinct embarrassment to the Vatican. The situation is complicated, or simplified, according to the point of view, by the fact that the use of the Church for the anti-conscription pledge is in defiance of the new Codex. It is hoped and believed by many in clerical circles here that the policy of the Irish prelates was, in the words of The Times, 'deliberately adopted in order to keep the forces of rebellion under discipline.' But it is realized that the bitterness of feeling which has found expression in England is only natural." (The Times 9 May 1918.)

And this was reinforced by a member of the English Catholic Hierarchy who, at the same time urged his Irish counterparts to make "available once more the resources of glorious Ireland to fight the greatest menace to the world's liberties." A sign that the English Hierarchy was moving in the right direction:-

*"Roman Catholic Bishop and The Times."*

Dr. Keating, Roman Catholic Bishop of Northampton, addressing a meeting at Jarrow, said that the Irish Bishops had taken a grave step, but their action was exclusively their own, and they had not consulted the Vatican or even the British Bishops. He hoped the Irish prelates would yet find a way of diverting attention from domestic troubles, and would succeed in making available once more the resources

of glorious Ireland to fight the greatest menace to the world's liberties. Dr. Keating associated himself with the generous terms in which the Labour Party had addressed the Prime Minister a few days ago. The Prime Minister had a difficult task with the enemy, not only in front but also in the rear. He could however, see no justice in the anti-Popery campaign which he alleged had been started by The Times and other journals, and, snapping his finger and thumb, Dr. Keating declared "That for The Times." Speaking of the proposal for a league of nations, the Bishop said that the Pope, as the spearhead of Christian activity in the world, ought to be represented in any such league as a guarantee against secret treaties." (The Times, 14 May 1918)

By mid-May 1918 the situation had dramatically changed from that prevailing at the outset of *The Times* editorial of the 24th April. The German offensive on the Western Front had been halted and the danger dissipated as the existing American troops in France began to make their presence felt. At the same time the British Government was showing signs that it was beginning to realize that the game was up with regards the possibilities of imposing conscription on Ireland. The "*Popish Plot*" from this stage began to wane as an issue and was replaced by a new conspiracy designed to exploit the rift in the alliance between Sinn Fein and the Nationalist Party which had surfaced during the East Cavan by-election. The next fault-line in the alliance had now replaced the earlier one. On the 18th May the curtains rose on the Sinn Fein "*German Plot*" and the "*Popish Plot*" receded to the background. There then began another story.

### Political and legal fluidity

The substance of social prejudice which gave life to the original anti-Catholic threat still existed just over a year later in June 1919 when Lord Birkenhead was presented with the prospect of hearing the House of Lords appeal in the Edward Egan Case and it is in that context that his unusual handling of the case can only be understood.

It is no a coincidence that the single opponent among the Law Lords to the 1919 Egan judgement was Lord Wrenbury. He was someone who never seems to have understood the purpose of law in the functioning of British society. Lord Wrenbury was a man who instinctively believed in the consistent interpretation of law in a way which left little room for political expediency. Law to him was the foundation upon which British society rested and he simply did not understand that there were times when British interests dictated that the law would have to take second place to political expediency. It was these same

instincts that, a year earlier in 1918, had led him to publicly question the veracity of the Government's claim of the existence of a *German Plot*—an allegation which was used as an excuse for the deportation and incarceration of over a hundred Sinn Fein leaders. While he may have been a good jurist Lord Wrenbury would never have made a good Lord Chancellor.

In 1919 the political context within which the Egan Case had to be reconciled was one which required a Catholic Penal Law to be revoked in the post-war atmosphere of anti-Catholic resentment stirred up by the British media a year earlier. To do what was advocated by Wrenbury (using a strict interpretation of the law) and refer it back to the Legislature for revocation

was to open up the issue to public debate in what was the first democratic Parliament in British history. Such a course of action would have opened the issue to the prejudice of the British electorate in the immediate aftermath of their Great War against Evil—a war which they had recently been told had been betrayed by the Vatican and the Catholic Bishops of Ireland. The public airing of the issues at this time was not in the interests of the British establishment and F.E. Smith did what all good Lord Chancellors do in the circumstances. He exploited the fluidity of the law in a way that ensured a resolution of the issue by the jurists away from the influence of public debate. Thus was the second last active Catholic disability revoked in English law.

Brendan Clifford

Part Three

## A Journey Around Tom Dunne

I mislaid the continuation of this article, which had to be cut off arbitrarily for reasons of space last Summer, and I have forgotten how it went, so I will start with the first thing that caught my eye when I flicked through the pages of the book again—which is as good a method as any. I had underlined a sentence in which Dunne expressed his anger at "*those who believed their terrorism was justified by Irish history*", meaning the Provos (p86). This anger was his response when, after taking part in a meeting of academics in Dublin, he ran into a Republican demonstration:

"I watched its progress: black flags, grim faces, and those hate-filled refrains. Banners carried the names of the communities and organizations represented, and it became clear that virtually all were from Northern Ireland. This heightened the palpable sense of hostility to the audience of this orchestrated street theatre, the Dublin shoppers, who looked back with blank indifference at this strange, sullen anger, this unwelcome intrusion of Northern realities into their weekend routines. There was a clear social contrast visible... between the prosperous-looking Dubliners and the Northern marchers, mainly working-class, with whose problems most of the onlookers had long ceased to identify. My own response, as I remember it, was not indifference, but anger, mainly at the exploitation of the dead and the cult of martyrdom, once again, by those who believed their terrorism was justified by Irish history. The routine meeting of Irish historians that had taken place earlier seemed to pale into insignificance, yet I believed then, and believe even more now, that the quiet work of such groups offered the best hope of ending the nightmare..."

"At that point, like most citizens of the Republic (including possibly most historians), I had never been north of the

border, and felt ashamed of the fact. What finally brought me to Belfast a few years later, and regularly thereafter, was another cross-border academic venture. A number of us—two literary scholars, a philosopher and a historian—came together to plan a new critical journal, which became *The Irish Review*, and was aimed at that elusive but vital audience, 'the general reader'... (p86).

The four are pictured in what seem to be the grounds of Queen's University: Richard Kearney, "*a continental-trained philosopher lecturing at UCD*" [who retreated to the Continent soon after]; Dunne; Edna Longley, an English lecturer at Queen's University; and "*Kevin Barry, a friend of mine since Cambridge and then lecturer in English at Maynooth*".

*The Irish Review* appeared in 1986 "*and its lead article, Roy Foster's 'We Are All Revisionists Now', sparked off a major debate, still raging, on the writing of Irish history*". I must admit that, living less than a mile from Queen's and taking some interest in anything that might contribute to "*ending the nightmare*", I was completely unaware of this raging debate then, and I was unaware of the existence of *The Irish Review* until I read Dunne's book.

There were so many lavishly-funded academic enterprises over the decades that one soon lost track of them. They all left the nightmare exactly as they had found it. I don't doubt that they were all well-intentioned. The trouble with them was that they never reached the outer world—though perhaps they sometimes enabled somebody to leave the outer world and its problems behind him and enter the quietness of these groups. But insofar as I observed them,

they seemed to have surrounded themselves by exclusive coterie barriers.

It once happened to have a discussion with somebody who had extensive public funding for publishing books to change the course of history. He had no trouble producing the books. And they had the closed circle of circulation that came with public funding and academic connections. His problem was how to get the people out there to read them so that the course of their history might be changed. I couldn't help him. It just was the case that there was something off-putting even about the physical appearance of those books that came from on high to uplift us.

It was once put to me that we should apply for public funding, as Belfast was deluged with it and its dispensers were looking for projects to dispense it to. So we applied—and as expected were refused. The grounds of refusal were interesting. We could not be subsidised because we were commercial—and the reason we were commercial was that we published without public funding. If you had the will to make do without it you were *ipso facto* not suitable to receive it.

The "*nightmare*" has ended, sort of. But I could not see that the influence of these paid philanthropists had anything whatever to do with its ending. It worked itself out within its own terms—which in fact had nothing to do with the "*cult of martyrdom*" or the belief that Irish history justified terrorism.

If the question is put, I do not see how a case can be made against "*terrorism*" as a human response to what was done in Ireland for a century and a half in the aftermath of the Williamite conquest, or in the aftermath of the 1918 Election. But in West Belfast, in the Winter of 1969-70, when the "*nightmare*" was generated, I never heard anybody say: *Let's do some terrorism because Irish history justifies it.* All that was going on then had to do with the particularity of Northern Ireland as an undemocratic constitutional structure within a democratic constitutional state. There was hardly a Republican anti-Partitionist to be found until August 1969. All of that was old hat. It was *passé*. (It was with regard to it that I first heard the word *passé*). Something entirely new was happening, and its occurrence was eagerly awaited.

I was not much of a believer in things happening in affairs of state. I inclined to the view that things that happened were things that were done. The thing might have been done—and that I tried to do during the next twenty years—was nothing new or revolutionary. It

was to discard Northern Ireland and subject the Six Counties to the democratic politics and government of the state. If that had been undertaken in the immediate aftermath of August 1969, I'm sure that a great part of the Catholic population would have gone along with it. The Labour Home Secretary at the time, James Callaghan, saw that Northern Ireland made no constitutional sense. He hinted at including it in the democracy of the state, but dropped it in the face of hostility on the Labour Party Executive.

The sullen acquiescence of the Catholic community under 'the Northern Ireland state', in which it was constitutionally impossible for it to play a part, was shattered by Unionist action in 1969, never to be restored. "*British rights for British citizens*" was closed off as a realisable development by British insistence that Northern Ireland should remain a place apart. And then Dublin, having helped inflame the situation in August 1969, publicly washed its hands of it in 1970, leaving the disrupted Catholic population to do what it could and what it would.

I don't know what standard—what precedent—there is for passing moral judgment on what it did, because I know of no other political situation in the world that is of a kind with the Northern Ireland situation, and I know of no eternal laws for political situations.

My analysis of Northern Ireland was possibly false. I put it to a wide range of people so that the flaw in it might be pointed out to me, but it never was. From the responses of many British politicians, some of them near the top of the hierarchy, I gathered that, although the analysis was accurate, it was beside the point because Britain had a use for Northern Ireland which did not include settling it down as part of the democracy of the British state. That use was not hard to see. It was, by holding the Republic accountable for what was going on in the North, to establish moral hegemony over it, make it feel guilty, and manipulate the guilt for the purpose of eroding the political culture of the South.

Southern intellectuals did not merely wash their hands of the North in the late seventies and eighties. They dehumanised Northerners—both Catholics and Protestants at first, but latterly chiefly the Catholics. That is what Dunne describes in himself and in the crowd in Grafton St. There is no need to find out what makes Northern Catholics behave like that. It is "*Irish history*"—which is therefore something to be overcome.

When Dunne saw that demonstration by sub-humans in Grafton Street, he had

left the Christian Brothers far behind him. He had become a sophisticated creator of history with the Cambridge stamp of approval on him.

He went to Cambridge from UCD in 1972 in order to be finished off as a historian by doing a PhD in the company of Nicholas Mansergh, Maurice Cowling, Herbert Butterfield and Joseph Lee, to name but a few. And there seem to have been a great many other Irish students there at the same time being finished off.

The great work that was in production at Cambridge when Dunne went there was *The Governing Passion* by Alistair Cooke and John Vincent, published in 1974. Dunne professes a thorough dislike for it, though it seems to me that the two-thirds of his own book about 1798 is of a kind with it. He disparages it as "*the ultimate in high-tory nihilism*", with "*its pathological dislike of liberalism, its disdain for 'enthusiasm' and its distaste for democracy*" (p73).

It is a strange judgment, which demonstrates that Dunne never got a grasp of where he was and what it was about—because that *is* liberalism, and the distaste for democracy is of the essence of functional democracy. There is liberalism as ideology and liberalism as fact. Oxbridge at its most remote belongs to the core of liberalism as fact. As for the system of politics we call democracy, it was given its most durable development in the medium of English liberalism—the liberalism of fact—because it was established in easy stages, by divide and rule methods, by politicians who were not ideological democrats. As for "*enthusiasm*", it was always distrusted after 1660, but was never let go out—like the fire in a farmhouse, kept alive under the ashes during the night, and fanned into flame whenever needed.

And "*high-Tory nihilism*" is not a thing to be despised. It reached its highest point in Arthur Balfour, who was not even an agnostic, but who reformed Ireland (in collaboration with William O'Brien, whom he first imprisoned) from the thing that emerged from the Famine to what now exists, with only self-government added.

It is a shame that Tom Dunne, having broken free of the Christian Brothers, and got lots of University education under his belt, was not able to see what England was when he went there for finishing off—or what democracy is. Perhaps some trouble was taken to ensure that he did not see.

*To Be Continued*

Pat Maloney

## Poor Little Belgium!

While Pope Benedict and President McAleese are laying great stress on the 'peace' settlement in the Six Counties, advocating it as a model for conflict resolution in other world conflict zones such as the Middle East, the world appears to be ignoring "poor little Belgium", the EU establishment in Brussels definitely are!

And just at the time Irish EU Commissioner, Charlie McCreevy, is stating that if the Irish people reject the coming Lisbon Treaty, we will be the laughing stock of Europe, the bureaucratic heartland of the Union could itself be coming apart.

For years now, Belgians have been compromising with one another in an effort to keep the country together. They have five Parliaments and a power-sharing arrangement that would baffle the best mathematician.

But now, more than three months after their last General Election and 177 years after the country was invented, it's looking as though the game is up.

In September, 2007, the King who some say is the only thing holding the country together, called off the long and fruitless talks between politicians trying to form a government.

The Northern part of the country speaks a Dutch dialect Flemish while the South Walloon speaks French. But it's not just their languages that divide them. Culturally both communities are closer to their origins as the line through the centre of Belgium dividing the French (Walloons) from the Dutch (Flems) marks the fault line between the Northern Protestant Europeans and the Mediterranean Catholic Europeans.

The Flems with 60% of the 10 million population are in the majority but under the constitution must share power equally with the minority French.

Also, the Prime Minister must be fluent in both languages and the Government leader is invariably a Flem. And the would-be Prime Minister, Flemish Christian Democrat leader Yves Leterme, got elected on a promise of more autonomy for Flanders.

There is a historic basis for the grievances between the two communities: the French were the ruling class and Flemish was banned. The modern day grievances are now mainly economic.

The Flemish have become the country's entrepreneurs, subsidising the Walloons to at least €2,000 a head per year because the source of Walloon wealth, coal and steel, went out of fashion, leaving them with 20% unemployment.

But, despite the prospect of ending up with a country the size of Cork, both parts could divide without too much change because so much power has been devolved to their Parliaments already.

However, the fly in the ointment is Brussels. It's smack bang in the middle of Flanders, full of beautiful Flemish architecture and flowing in Flemish beer—but the majority of its population are French speakers.

The French argue the Flems can have the world's diamond capital, Antwerp, as their capital but that they need Brussels.

The Flems, however, have a majority in many of Brussels' communes—which ring the centre that encompasses the EU quarter and the tourist attractions.

Legally the capital is bilingual with street signs, film sub-titles and even advertisements having to be in both languages. But the communes and many of the regions set their own rules and have been linguistically cleansing for some time now.

There are lots of horror stories about how this is working: French-speaking children in a Flemish hospital being unable to communicate; schools where teachers must pass a language test in Flemish even though the school language is French; and couples trying to adopt in Flanders being rejected because they are not fluent in Flemish.

The King and most others hope that new negotiations will take some of the heat out of the row. They would need to: in March, 2007, 80% of citizens said there would be a Belgium in 10 years time but, by September, 45% of the Flems and 20% of the Walloons said they wanted the country to break up.

Up to 50,000 Irish people died for the sake of 'poor little Belgium' in World War I, surely we have a vested interest in this issue!

These victims are commemorated very volubly these days by many people including our President and Taoiseach. They owe us an explanation as to which

Belgium these brave people actually died for.

It is rather disconcerting to have loved ones who may have died for a country that might soon not exist!.

Pat Maloney

## Multi-Denominational Schools

In an unusual reversal of roles, the Department of Education has asked Educate Together to open a multi-denominational school—at short notice—in a fast-growing part of North County Dublin.

The organisation is the patron of more than 40 schools around the country that guarantee equal access and respect for children and parents of all faiths—or none. More than 95% of the country's 3,300 primary schools are still run on a denominational basis, mostly by the Catholic Church or Church of Ireland.

*Educate Together* has complained in the past that the Department of Education was slow to recognise the growth in demand for this type of education model—with parents usually waiting years for proper funding and buildings.

However, due to a serious shortage of primary school places in the Balbriggan area, the Department asked *Educate Together* earlier this month to open a second school in the town as soon as possible.

The 2006 census showed the population of the town and its environs grew by more than half to above 15,500 in just four years. The existing *Educate Together* school will have more than 200 pupils when it reopens next week.

The Department of Education has also promised to take full responsibility for any temporary accommodation needed by the new school until a permanent building is found and that grants for the school board will be speeded up.

*Educate Together* is already in talks with the department about the possible opening of up to 10 schools in September 2008.

VOX PAT:

**ACTS OF** murder on women "diminishes us as a society", the Bishop of Killaloe, Dr. Willie Walsh, said on December 12, 2007. He was speaking at a memorial service in Ennis to commemorate the 140 women murdered in Ireland since December 1995.