

Church & State

A Cultural Review Of Ireland And The World

On the anniversary of Hiroshima:
Morality And The Nation

R.L. Dabney:
Confederate Theologian And Warrior

Lord Professor Bew's
Animosities In A Vacuum

Desmond Fennell: Second American Revolution

Zimbabwe

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Morality And The Nation

The Hiroshima event usually pops into the news briefly at this time of the year. As a demonstration of the moral influence of brute force it must be judged an outstanding success.

Equally successful was the terror bombing of Dresden and many other German cities and towns a few months earlier.

The Japanese and the Germans have behaved themselves ever since. They have acted morally. That is to say they have acted in accordance with the will of their conqueror.

If in the secular world there is a source of morality other than the will of the conqueror, its existence has yet to be demonstrated. The lesson of Hiroshima and Dresden is that might is right and that the end justifies the means. The ideologists of the conquerors do not suggest that the incineration of hundreds of thousands of non-combatants by area bombing and nuclear bombing was a good thing in itself. They hold that it was a good thing because of the end which it helped to bring about.

That end was not merely the defeat of Japan and Germany. They were defeated already when these things were done. Dresden and Hiroshima were undefended cities. They were open cities because the Germans and the Japanese states no longer had the means of defending them.

They were defenceless in the face of the enemy. But they did not have the opportunity of surrendering to the enemy because the enemy armies were not present in their vicinity. Their populations were exterminated from a distance for the purpose of teaching a moral lesson to the rest of the German and Japanese population.

At the end of the Cold War a small liberal fringe of British liberals began to question the justification of the bombing of Dresden, which lacked a military purpose. The outstanding British historian of the past generation, Andrew Roberts, who writes history in accordance with the actual way of the world, told them sharply that Dresden was not a military, but a moral event. Its purpose was to burn into the souls of Germans, in the moment of their defeat, the fundamental maxim that they must never again do what Britain does not want them to do.

And it worked. The Germans have known their place in world affairs ever since—or their *places*, because they had two conquerors, who barely held back from going to war with each other when Germany had been dealt with.

Nazi Germany was defeated by the Soviet Union. Britain made war on Germany with the intention that others should do the fighting. It withdrew its Army from France in June 1940 and did not return for four years. Its military ventures in every instance led to the expansion of German power. It returned to France in June 1944 only because German power had been undermined by three years of warfare with the Soviet Union, and any further delay in opening the Second Front might have brought the Red Army to Calais.

The population of Dresden was incinerated as part of the wanton area bombing of undefended German cities and towns, and sometimes even villages, by Britain and America in the Spring of 1945. But it was the Red Army that liberated Dresden.

The survivors in Dresden and the North-East of Germany learned the moral lesson they had been taught just as diligently as did the Germans in the West. They complied with the will of the United Nations—which was the name the conquerors were calling themselves.

But the United Nations was a make-believe within which another great War was brewing. And the conqueror with whose will the inhabitants of Saxony, Brandenburg and Mecklenburg complied was the wrong conqueror. They became 'collaborators' with the evil Power that had resisted and destroyed the Nazi regime, and they were disgraced because of it fifty years later.

So what would you have done if you had been a Dresden survivor in the Summer of 1945?

In August 1914 John Redmond's chief ideologue, Tom Kettle, spearheaded, in the London papers, the Crusade against the great evil which made the Great War necessary. He called it Nietzscheanism. The evil philosophy of Nietzsche, he said, had gained control of the German state, and that was why the German state had to be destroyed.

Nietzsche blurted out two great evils: the will to power was the dominating element in history, and the history of morality was itself immoral.

What is the lesson of Hiroshima and Dresden? Moral submission to power!

Why was Hiroshima not a war crime, a crime against humanity, or an act of genocide? Because it was perpetrated by the victor, and there is no legal or moral power in the world capable of finding the victor in a world war guilty of committing crimes or sins in the course of winning the war, or consolidating his dominance in the aftermath of victory.

A decent pretence is made that the victor won because he was right. It is felt that this is a more moral way of presenting things than a truthful statement that he is right because he won.

It is hinted that there is a kind of general morality in the world that operates independently of victory and defeat in war, and that in the long run right and wrong are established by this transcendental morality. But it is more easy to believe in the existence of this moral power if one takes it entirely on trust and does not seek it out. But trusting belief of this kind is surely not reputable in the era of Enlightenment!

There was perhaps a source of morality independent of military power in Europe in the Dark Ages, when Church and State were distinct though interwoven entities, represented by the Pope and the Emperor. But all of that ended with the Reformation enacted by the English State, in which Church and State were made one, and the national state became the source of its own morality, and the nationalist English state became an Empire dominating the world, before becoming a dependent ally of its Puritan offspring, the United States.

The United Nations is not in any sense a restoration of a source of morality independent of military power, which the mediaeval Papacy was in some degree. It is an arrangement made by the victor powers of 1945 to perpetuate their power. That was what it was intended to be. That is what it was until 1990. And that is what it is becoming once more.

From time to time these Powers find it expedient to set up subordinate Courts in which the leaders of weak or defeated states can be tried on criminal charges for doing, on a small scale, what the five Vetoist Powers do as a matter of course whenever they feel like it. Judges are found who will conduct these trials under a pretence of international law, even though they know very well that the Powers who set up the Courts for them, and catch the criminals, have conferred on themselves comprehensive freedom from this law. They are judges on a leash, carrying out orders.

If the UN is not, and is incapable of being, a source of

moral authority independent of military power, and if morality is a construct of the nation state pioneered by Reformationist England, then the possibility of the existence of a morality which is not totalitarian lies in the conflict of nation states.

In the world of nationalism inaugurated by England, the stronger nationalisms seek to destroy or intimidate the weaker, without themselves ceasing to be nationalistic. The internationalism which has often been appealed to in Ireland has usually been nothing more than an attempt to make Ireland submissive to English nationalism.

The Irish nation state was forged in military conflict with England after England had over-ruled the outcome of a democratic election in Ireland, thus giving the lie to the British moral propaganda of the Great War. In 1919 the world was waiting to see how the victor who had made most moral noise during the War would set about constructing the new world order that had been promised. The setting aside of the Irish election result, and the resort to military rule, set the pattern for all that followed in Europe.

There is no uniform morality which rules the world, because there is no global state. A global state is conceivable only as the total dominance of a Great Power which has destroyed all the other other Powers and cowed their populations into passive obedience. And the possibility of that arrangement is not imminent. It seems more remote than it did fifteen years ago.

The philosopher Kant observed two centuries ago that perpetual peace under a world government is an ideal from which reason cannot dissent, but that every attempt to realise it is necessarily premature. This is the paradox, or antinomy, in which we live.

His successor, Fichte, aspired to resolve the antinomies, or leap beyond them:

"All men together constitute a single moral community. It is the moral disposition of each one to diffuse morality outside of himself, as well as he is able...; or, in other words to make all others of the same disposition as himself, since each one necessarily holds his own to be the best; for otherwise it were immoral to retain it. But each one also holds his conflicting opinion to be the best, and for the same reason. Thus there results, as the collective object of the whole moral community, to produce harmony respecting moral objects. This is the final end of the reciprocal activity amongst moral beings" (*Science Of Ethics*).

This is the vision of the capitalist Utopians called Neoccons—the ideologues who came into possession of the immense military and propaganda power of the United States a few years after the counter-vailing power of the Soviet Union had crumbled. But that apparently unstoppable globalism is now stopping. It might have lasted longer if it was more cunning. But it was bound to fail because its vision was Fichtean illusion. The world remains Kantian. Attempts to realise the indisputable ideals of perpetual peace and world government will always be premature.

The transcendental illusion of the United Nations occurred when Gorbachov and Yeltsin lost sight of Russian national interest when they set about destroying what they called Stalinism. They thought they were serving some higher ideal when they did what the West told them to do. They privatised public property, and let rip the 'democracy' of a score of parties, not one of which knew what it was doing, or was representative in the way that enables party government on the basis of a general franchise to be functional in Britain, the USA and France. The result was anarchy, in the sense of chaos, which the West praised as democracy, plummeting life expectancy, and widespread starvation. A halt was not called until Western enterprises began to buy up the most valuable natural resources.

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Hierarchy Speaks

It was only then that the fact sank in that functional capitalism is nationalist at base.

Putin got popular support to shape the open capitalism of the Yeltsin era, which left Russia open to plunder, into a national economy.

Russia has now restored itself as a countervailing force, economically, militarily, and as a Vetoist power on the Security Council. The illusion is over. The UN is once again what it was meant to be!

Talk of Stalinism being restored is nonsense. What Putin has done is assert the national interest of capitalist Russia.

Arthur Griffith would have understood.

And it is about time that Ireland rediscovered its nationalist interest, instead of thinking that, by letting Oxford and Cambridge take over its mind, it was broadening it.

'We Got The Power ...'

"We could not leave them to themselves—they were unfit for self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's was... there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them."

Address to the Methodist Episcopal Church; cited in Olcott, *The Life of William McKinley* (1916), v. 2, p. 110

William McKinley (1843-1901), 25th US President, speaking on the Filipinos in 1899, following the US invasion of the Philippines in 1898.

During the invasion and occupation, US forces killed an estimated 200,000 Filipino civilians (estimate of civilian casualties from US Library of Congress, *The World of 1898: The Spanish-American War*, 1998.

Over two years following the resignation of Bishop Patrick Walsh, Ireland's second largest Catholic diocese got a new bishop on Sunday, 29th June 2008, when Monsignor Noel Treanor consecrated as Bishop of Down & Connor at a special ceremony in St Peter's Cathedral in Belfast.

Down & Connor is the second-largest Catholic diocese on the island of Ireland, after Dublin, and has a Catholic population of 312,056. It includes Belfast and takes in Co Antrim and most of north Co. Down.

Noel Treanor was born on Christmas Day, 1950 in Silverstream, Co. Monaghan.

For two decades he represented the Irish bishops at the EU institutions in Brussels with the European Bishops' Commission, the Episcopal Conference of the European Community (COMECE). He is also a priest of the Clogher diocese.

Monsignor Treanor has become the 32nd Bishop of Down and Connor and replaces Dr Patrick Walsh, who submitted his resignation to the Pope in 2006 as required on reaching the age of 75. Dr. Walsh was born in Cobh, Co. Cork.

Sinn Féin MP Gerry Adams attended the ordination following which he said: "*Bishop Treanor will face many challenges in the time ahead, but he will have the best wishes of the people of the diocese. I congratulate him on his ordination and wish him well.*"

Among the other dignitaries who attended the ceremony were President Mary McAleese and the Apostolic Nuncio, Giuseppe Leanza. Also attending the consecration were Minister for Agriculture Brendan Smith; new Sinn Féin Lord Mayor of Belfast Tom Hartley, Junior Minister in the Northern Executive Gerry Kelly, and the Irish and British Ambassadors to the Vatican, Noel Fahey and Francis Campbell.

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II was represented by the Lord Lieutenant for Belfast, Lady Carswell.

Writing in the *Irish Independent*, John Cooney wrote that during the installation ceremony, Cardinal Sean Brady—

"issued an indirect rebuke to right-wing Catholic groups who campaigned in the Lisbon Treaty referendum against a 'Godless Europe'.

"Calling on Irish Catholics to recall Europe's Christian roots, Cardinal Brady quoted how Pope Benedict on the eve of the Irish poll described the Irish missionary monk, St Columbanus, as 'one of the Fathers of Europe'.

"In a clear warning against Ireland becoming isolated from the rest of Europe, Cardinal Brady stressed that St Malachy, a former bishop of the diocese of Down and Connor, introduced the Cistercians and Augustinian monks as agents of monastic reform into the Irish Church.

"This important development for the life of the Church at that time, Cardinal Brady added, showed that Ireland, as well as sending missionaries to Europe, also received help from Europe in times of need, in the form of new initiatives and new ideas.

"In these post-Lisbon Treaty referendum days, it could be salutary for all of us to reflect on that European help and to consider what help we might accept today." (*Irish Independent*, 30.6.2008).

In his first public address, Bishop Treanor stressed the importance of Ireland's links with Europe.

"I spent almost two decades of my life working in the service of the Church in Europe, more precisely on an emergent interface between Church and that historic, unique and precious project which is the European Union," he said.

"These were happy, enriching and formative years. I saw at first hand how reconciliation between erstwhile enemies is possible and can be achieved." (*Irish Independent*, 30.6.2008).

"Bishop Noel Treanor has expressed disappointment at the outcome of the referendum on the Lisbon Treaty. Asked about the June 12 poll, the new Bishop of Down and Connor said: 'Do I regret it, yes, I do'." (*Irish Catholic*, July 3, 2008).

"He also said that while Ireland had to revisit the Lisbon Treaty, he felt that another referendum would be difficult." (*ibid.*)

"Dr. Treanor described the EU's commitment to dialogue with the Churches as 'a most forward-looking and historic provision, in terms of

indicators for the twenty-first century.

"Here you have an example of a convention made up of representatives from 27 countries who accepted to include an article recognising the specificity of the Churches and religious institutions, and their contribution to society, and saying that the Union will engage with a regular, open and transparent dialogue with these Churches and religious bodies.

"In terms of the present global context, where some would be inclined to privatise religion,' Bishop Treanor says, 'here we see a significant step forward, where the union is prepared to listen to, and take account of, the spiritual and religious dimension.' (*Irish Catholic*, 3.7.2008).

On 30th May 2008, the Irish Bishops published a pastoral reflection on the referendum on the Treaty of Lisbon.

"While acknowledging the Christian humanist values at the heart of the treaty, it is regrettable that there is no explicit recognition of the Christian heritage of Europe in the treaty."

Report

Priest Attacks 'Godless' Treaty And 'Heathen Bureaucrats'

"In a letter to Mass-goers yesterday, Father Des Sweeney, parish priest in Ramelton, Co Donegal, said that by voting 'No' they would have God on their side....

The popular 75-year old, who is known across the north west as a healer, claimed that many European governments were implementing anti-family laws which undermined family values.

"For them, Christianity is outmoded, a thing of the past, to be treated with disdain. The European Charter of Human Rights contains no mention of God or of Europe's Christian roots and ethos.

"They seem to loathe the very idea of God . . . This is the Europe we are being asked to say 'Yes' to, surrender ourselves to," he said.

And, referring to the emphasis on material gain, he asked, "*Is it alright, like Judas, to sell our souls for the 30 pieces of silver?*"

He claimed that if the treaty was passed, the "*so-called*" charter of human rights would, in time, become legally binding as elsewhere, regardless of assurances given.

"This does not seem to matter to our representatives in the Dail. If it did, would they be asking us to hand over more control over our lives to those heathen bureaucrats," he said.

"Europe is becoming totalitarian. Godless. Be on your guard. Vote 'No'..." (Anita Guidera, 2.6.2008 *Irish Independent*).

Catherine Dunlop

Review of

Lisa Jardine: *Going Dutch—How England plundered Holland's Glory*, Harper Collins, 2008

1688, It Is Not!

People commonly think that England was invaded for the last time in 1066. Not so, the most recent invasion was 1688, when the Dutch invaded, according to the academic and journalist Lisa Jardine in a discussion with Melvyn Bragg, on Radio Four, of her new book, *Going Dutch—How England plundered Holland's Glory*. Lured by the sales talk, I bought the book, hoping to complete my education and find out more about 1688. I was very disappointed, because the book is not about that, it's about the association between English and Dutch intellectuals, artists and businessmen in the seventeenth century.

The greatest part of the book describes how the Dutch and the English corresponded and collaborated on scientific and mercantile projects, as well as in art and gardening. Generations of the Higgins (Huygens) family, who were art advisers, musicians and diplomats, came and went between England and Holland. Stuart exiles took refuge in Holland in the 1640s. The Stuarts married in Holland: the mother and the wife of William of Orange were Stuarts. Charles I acquired lots of Dutch paintings. William of Orange broke off his march from Dorset to London in 1688 to visit a famous Dutch-inspired garden! When William took possession of English royal palaces, he sent back some of these paintings to his palaces in Holland. Etc etc.

The question is asked, Did one side profit more than the other from these exchanges? The answer is not clear. The claim contained in the sub-title that England 'plundered' Holland's glory is not substantiated. In her conclusion Lisa Jardine admits the process was "*considerably more subtle and extended than perhaps that word [plundered] implies*". Dutch historians to-day think the English got the better deal; they see "*their diminishing role on the international scene [in the seventeenth century] as directly related to England's rise*". But this has to do with events outside the scope of this book, such as England capturing Dutch colonial settlements and the fact that William III and his wife Mary Stuart "*carried with them into England not just the hopes and aspirations of a generation, but much of their tax revenue and wealth*".

The Dutch army stayed in London for two years, defending William not against the English but against the Jacobites, the supporters of the legitimate King James II. There is naturally no mention in the book of the Irish resistance to William's conquest of the throne; and the word *Jacobite* does not occur in the index. The arrival of William was the result of a political manoeuvre by a part of the English ruling class. To call it an invasion rather stretches the meaning of the word. Nevertheless, in a recent review in the *Observer* of another book, Jardine mentions the Dutch '*invasion*' of England as if it was an established fact.

As for *Going Dutch*, admitting that the English got some of their ideas from other people cannot be bad, and could be taken further. For example, if the friendly association between France and England had continued after the seventeenth century (perish the thought!), the English would admit they got some of their ideas from the French.

And what about getting inspiration from Germany, with the Hanoverian George I ascending the British throne? Except that 'being invaded by the Germans' does not sound as good a joke as 'being invaded by the Dutch'.

If you want to sell dull books on dull topics, make extravagant claims for them on the radio. The public can only blame themselves afterwards, for being so gullible.

Pat Muldowney

Cooneyism became a political matter in the *Hidden History* programme on the killing of the Pearson brothers of Coolacree during the War of Independence. Eoghan Harris attacked the IRA Volunteers, claiming that the Pearsons could have given no offence as they were Cooneyites, Amish-type farmers. In the last issue of *Church & State* we reproduced extracts from an article by Emmanuel Kehoe, in which he doubted that the Cooneyites were pacifist in the way that the Amish and Quakers were. Was he right?

'Amish-type farmers'? Pacifism and the Cooneyites

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace but a sword. The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child. Ye shall be hated by all men for my name's sake, but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10).

Around 1900 the new religious movement was founded by Scotsman William Irvine in Fermanagh. Edward Cooney from Enniskillen was an early adherent and preacher. In an era of social change, questioning and challenge to old ways, the new movement grew and spread in Ireland, Scotland, England, France, Germany, Australia, Canada and the USA.

The movement viewed the religious bureaucracy of established Christian denominations as being destructive of true religion. They experimented with community property or Christian communism. In rejecting formal organisation, authority, clerical orders and church buildings, they also eschewed any formal title or designation for the movement, describing themselves only as Christian, and denoting their form of religious practice as *The Way*.

Names

In practice this led to their being given many different names, such as Cooneyites, Go-Preachers, Tramp Preachers, Two-by-Twos, and many other—often uncomplimentary—titles. Their central belief was that true Christianity was personally acquired by word of mouth from Jesus, and from then on, by person-to-person word-of-mouth transmission to individuals down to the present.

While they accepted the Christian Bible in eclectic fashion, they eschewed any codification or written account of their religious beliefs and doctrine, so it is difficult for any outsider to fully understand their theology.

It is generally understood, though, that the origins of the movement lie in an acceptance of the literal truth of Matthew Ten (Chapter 10 of the Gospel according to Matthew), the most ferocious and violent passage in the New

Testament. Here is an excerpt:

"... go, preach, saying the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Provide neither gold nor silver nor brass in your purses. Go not into the way of the gentiles, but rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to their councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace but a sword. I am come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother and the daughter in law against her mother in law. The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child. And the children shall rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death. Ye shall be hated by all men for my name's sake, but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."

The first two words of this ("*Go, preach*") gave them one of their many names. For practical or legal reasons they were obliged to give themselves a designation more specific than "*Christian*". Susan Pearson's death certificate (16 May 1947) gives her religious affiliation as "*Christian Assemblies of Australia*". "*Christian Conventions*" is another version of this. This name comes from their practice of an annual meeting of the faithful in the home or premises of a member. This is, or was, one of their most important religious events, and the meeting held in Carrick House, Mountmellick, Co. Laois (between Luggacurran and Rathdowney) on 30th June or 1st July 1921 may have been their annual Assembly or Convention. This might explain the absence of William and Sidney Pearson from Coolacree at such a fraught time.

Beliefs

Were the Cooneyites/Christian Assemblies pacifist? In what way, if any, did they resemble Amish or Quakers?

Certainly their founding doctrine (Matthew 10) is anti-pacifist. It is said that their "*workers*" were exempted from military service because of their conscientious objector status; and that this implies that the movement as a whole was pacifist.

But just as the movement was, in practice, obliged to depart from strict adherence to their theology by accepting a formal name or designation ("*Christian Conventions*"), they also, in practice, had a form of membership ("*workers*" or "*preachers*") equivalent to the status of clergy—even though, strictly speaking, their doctrine did not permit any such elevated status. But the point is, clergy of all religious groups were exempt from military service. (These days, Cooneyite "*workers*" are sometimes called bishops.)

Were they similar to Amish or Quakers in any other way? The Amish can trace their descent from the 16th century Anabaptist movement in Germany. Just as the Anabaptists rejected the Lutheran Reformation in the 16th century, the Cooneyites rejected the mainstream Protestant denominations in the 20th century.

The Cooneyites practised adult baptism. In this way they resemble Anabaptists and present-day Baptists. Their eclectic approach to the bible means they are not, strictly speaking, evangelical. Likewise, the 16th century Anabaptists viewed the Lutheran embrace of the literal truth of the bible as a new form of religious authoritarianism—a "*paper Pope*" as they called it.

But there seem to be only a limited number of basic religious ideas which can be put together to give a dynamic to a religious movement. Like Roman Catholicism, Cooneyism differed from mainstream Protestantism by rejecting the notion that faith alone is sufficient for salvation. Catholicism requires also "*good works*" in the form of charitable action in the world; while Cooneyism required good works in the form of active preaching and conversion.

Like Cooneyism, Catholicism acknowledges that Holy Scripture (the Bible essentially) as a source of religious truth, but not the only source. While Catholicism also acknowledges what it calls Tradition, for Cooneyism the person-to-person transmission of religious truth by word of mouth was central.

Harris

In the RTE documentary, Eoghan Harris described the Cooneyites, and by implication the Pearsons, as "... *Really a husbandry people ... quiet evenings*

spent in meditation and reflection". In other words they wouldn't hurt a fly so could never have shot Mick Heaney at the IRA roadblock. Is there any basis for this?

The religious extremism of the 16th century Anabaptists (precursors of the Amish) resulted in horrific fighting when they were opposed by the forces of the Protestant and Catholic German princes. In reaction to this most bloody and violent religious episode, a spirit of pacifism developed among the survivors, a spirit which has endured to the present among the Amish, Mennonite and Hutterite groupings.

Matthew 10-inspired zealotry and extremism characterised the early 20th century Cooneyite movement, making present-day Free Presbyterians look like New Age Buddhists in comparison.

The following accounts from the Fermanagh newspaper *The Impartial Reporter and Farmers' Journal* of 2nd June 1904 and 3rd September 1908, are given in Doug and Helen Parker's history of Cooneyism:

"[Cooneyite] Preachers were disliked because of their exclusive sectarianism and bigotry, and reports of the large demonstrations at Newtownards that took place when Edward Cooney preached there in 1904 provided evidence that a local clergyman conducted meetings to oppose the sect's activities, and that soon after an estimated crowd of three thousand people gathered, some to hear Cooney, others to disrupt his meetings with pipes and drums. A public baptismal ceremony that Cooney conducted in the same district was attended by a large crowd, some of whom scoffed at and antagonised the converts almost to the point of a fight, but the police intervened and kept the peace. Mourners and sectarians engaged in a scuffle at a church door and the lid of a coffin was knocked off when the sectarians attempted to bear the coffin away from the church for their own committal."

What comes across from these and many similar accounts of early 20th century Cooneyism is a picture of extremist religious intolerance and zealotry, and an attitude to physical violence which was much the same as other religious denominations.

And whatever about Cooneyism generally, the notion that the Pearsons in particular were pacifist is far-fetched.

References

More information can be found in: Doug & Helen Parker, *The Secret Sect: the Nameless House Sect and Annual Conventions, the Cooneyites, also known as Two-by-Two Preachers, Die*

Namenlosen, Les Anonymes, the Way, Macarthur Press, Sydney, Australia, 1982; Jaenen, C. J., *The Apostles' Doctrine and Fellowship: A documentary history of the early church and restorationist movements* (Ottawa: Legas Publishing, 2003), IX, 14,

The Contemporary [Irish] Restoration Movement, pp. 517-535; Roberts, Patricia (1990), *The Life and Ministry of Edward Cooney 1867-1960* (Wm Trimble Ltd, Enniskillen ISBN 0951010948).

Pat Maloney

Christian Brothers Step Back

In June, over 200 years of direct involvement by the Christian Brothers in Irish education ended with the handing over of its 96 schools to a lay trust.

The Christian Brother Trustees received the Decree of Approval from the Irish Episcopal Conference for the establishment of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Foundation, a limited company, to carry forward the mission of Catholic education within the network of Christian Brother Schools in the Republic.

The 59 second level and 39 primary schools have 35,000 students and their educational ethos is now the responsibility of the Edmond Rice Schools Trust (ERST), named after the order's founder who set up his first school for boys in 1802.

Brother Kevin Mullan of the Christian Brothers Trustees said the hand-over was a symbolic gesture causing reflection on the tradition and achievements of more than 200 years of the order's involvement in education.

The transfer of responsibilities is part of a growing trend among the various religious orders to step back from day-to-day management of schools, because of falling numbers of religious as well as changing focus in their missions.

Sean Haughey TD, Minister of State at the Department of Education, said the efforts of all orders to establish Trusts securing the future of their schools are consistent with their commitment and contribution to education over a long period.

While the Christian Brothers and other orders have been the subject of negative publicity in recent years, as reports of abuse of pupils by former members emerged, their historic role as educators is hugely significant.

"Irish society is greatly indebted to the Brothers for their dedication and commitment to learning. In many cases, they provided an academic education to disadvantaged boys who would not otherwise have received it," Mr Haughey said.

Representatives of the schools under their control in Cork said questions still

hung over property ownership of the school as the buildings will belong to the ERST while the land and playing fields will remain with the Christian Brothers who will lease back the fields.

Tony McCarthy, deputy principal of Cork's longest standing Christian Brothers affiliated school, Christian Brothers College (CBC), said they were concerned at the unknown changes that may lie ahead.

He said in a statement from the school:

"We are not happy with the level of communication from the Christian Brothers to the staff of CBC in relation to a number of changes. While some concerns have been allayed—for example the guaranteeing of the school playing fields to remain for our use—these communications have been verbal and not written.

"A number of concerns remain to be resolved, and it would be inappropriate at this stage to say any more until more detailed consultation takes place."

Principal of North Monastery, Paddy Mulcahy, said all change can be difficult and he hoped the concerns at present would be allayed by the Trust in the coming months.

"We hope that the facilities of the schools, the buildings and the playing fields, continue to be available on the same basis as they were under the Christian Brothers and that the same ethos of 'education first' remains—but this hasn't been guaranteed yet.

"The Trust has promised a seamless transfer in terms of employment but we are concerned about the ownership of the schools which haven't been addressed to the satisfaction of anybody," he said.

Responding to the concerns, Brother Edmund Garvey, Director of Communications for the Christian Brothers Province Centre, said the new trust would be in dialogue with all of the schools and their concerns.

"This is a major change, and the Christian Brothers have been working

flat out to resolve all the misgivings in the midst of change, and the new directors from ERST who will take over will do the same," he said.

The ERST will take over the running of the schools from the beginning of the next school year in September, 2008.

Members and Directors have been appointed to the new Trust which will replace and continue from the Trust which up to this point has been conducted and administered by the Christian Brother Trustees. A company has been registered in the names of the Members and Directors and they are already meeting in preparation for their taking on the Trusteeship at the beginning of the coming academic year.

The Members and Directors of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust in the Republic come with a wide range of experience, from a variety of professional backgrounds. Chief Executive of the Trust is Mr. Gerry Bennett. Chairperson of the Members is Mr. Justice Peter Kelly, of the High Court, while the Chairperson of the Directors is Mr. Pat Diggins. Helen Ó Murchú is Vice-Chairperson.

The other members and directors are Dr. Danny O'Hare, founding President of Dublin City University; Pat Cox, Progressive Democrat co-founder and former MEP and European Union President; Dr. Fiachra Long; Prof. Eunice McCarthy; Patricia McCrossan; Bro Michael Murray; Carmel Naughton; Pat O'Neill, William Pat Hallahan, Catherine McDonagh; Bro Mark McDonnell and Gerard Rowley.

The formal launch of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust in Northern Ireland will take place next October.

Stephen Richards

Review: *Robert Lewis Dabney: A Southern Presbyterian Life* by Sean Michael Lucas, P&R Publishing, Philipsburg, New Jersey 2005

Dabney: A Confederate Theologian And Warrior

Divides In American Presbyterianism

In nineteenth century America, what was called *Old School Presbyterianism* (to be distinguished from *Old Side Presbyterianism*) was a predominantly Southern phenomenon, but with an influential Northern outpost at Princeton Theological Seminary. This latter fact was ironic because the first President of the College of New Jersey at Princeton was the great Jonathan Edwards, who died of a smallpox inoculation shortly after taking up his post in 1758. Some of the theological tendencies to which the Old School men took exception could be traced back to Edwards's successors, and possibly to the more speculative passages in the writings of Edwards himself, but *New School* was really code for post-Enlightenment rationalistic principles. Princeton Theological Seminary was founded in 1812 by Archibald Alexander, a Virginian of Scotch-Irish origin, as an intellectual and theological bulwark for the Westminster Standards of 1647. It fulfilled this role until 1929 when it was in effect taken over by forces of liberalism.

In 1837 things came to a head with the expulsion of four Northern presbyteries over alleged doctrinal deviations. The Old School/New School

divide wasn't intrinsically a North/South divide as there were a small number of New School Southerners; but the theological links between the Old School adherents in North and South were then jeopardized by conflicting Civil War allegiances. The Old School Southern Presbyterians broke away from their Northern counterparts in 1861 to form the PCUS [Presbyterian Church, US], as opposed to the PCUSA. These two denominations didn't come together again until 1983. By that date both had been heavily permeated by modernist tendencies, as a response to which yet another Presbyterian Church had been founded in 1973, the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). The PCA is apparently the fastest-growing Protestant denomination in America, and is faithful to many of the emphases of the Old School, as exemplified by the major figures in the South in the nineteenth century such as James Henley Thornwell, Benjamin Morgan Palmer, Thomas Ephraim Peck, C.R. Vaughan, and Dabney.

Against this background I'd like to consider the life and campaigns of Robert Lewis Dabney (to plagiarise the title of Dabney's biography of Stonewall Jackson). I would like to say something

Nick Folley

Did the IRA target Protestants in the War of Independence?

In a dispute in the *Irish Examiner*, Brendan Cafferty used sources selectively to prove that it did. The following reply failed to find publication

Sectarian Allegations

Brendan Cafferty is being disingenouos in accusing Jack Lane of 'blaming the victims for their own fate' (*Irish Examiner* 4-2-08) and 'focusing solely on one quote'. Jack showed simply that Brendan had

quoted selectively from *The Witness* in order to back up his claim that the old IRA had conducted a sectarian war against Protestants. On reading the rest of *The Witness* article, it becomes clear that we are talking specifically about Protestants who were Unionists. If there were other sources that backed Brendan's claim, he was free to quote them. There are many arguments against the theory that the old IRA was sectarian—their shooting of Catholics who helped the British authorities; their campaign against the mainly Catholic RIC; their own challenge to the Catholic Church's excommunication orders; the number of Protestants both in the ranks of the IRA and Sinn Fein government bodies; the politically neutral or sympathetic Protestant families who

were not interefered with—and even protected against opportunists by the IRA. Ironically the very source Brendan quotes only reinforces this view. *The Witness* article states that the Protestants were targetted for their politcal sympathies, for being Unionists whose allegiance lay with the Crown. It laments the fact that so many Protestants found themselves in this situation on account of their politics, but nevertheless confirms that the motives were political and not sectarian. Brendan demands to know why Jack can't "admit that at the time some awful things were done to Protestants in our name?" Perhaps Jack could admit it if it were true. A more pertinent question is why some people keep trying to stir the sectarian pot in the face of so much opposing evidence. (7.02.08)

too about the wider significance of Dabney in terms of his critique of the direction that *postbellum* American society was moving in. We'll perhaps see that from his ultra-conservative standpoint he identifies some of the same problems discussed by Thomas Frank in their full-blown state in *What's The Matter With Kansas*, reviewed by me a couple of issues ago.

As always, I don't lay claim to any original research. My main source is the biography by Lucas, who is one of the new breed of conservative Reformed Church historians in America. I have only glanced through Dabney's biography of Jackson, and am not at all familiar with his *Defense Of Virginia, And Through Her Of The South*, which is his most sustained political work. Unfortunately it didn't manage to get published until the Civil War was over, but it subsequently became a sacred text for unreconstructed Southerners. Of limited usefulness perhaps is the *Life and Letters*, by Thomas Cary Johnson, now out of print published by 'Banner of Truth'. Of more use would be Dabney's *Discussions, Evangelical And Theological*, also formerly published by Banner, but this would represent only a sample of his total output. I think that Sprinkle Publications have set their mind to publishing Dabney in a more thoroughgoing way. Like Dabney himself, the people at Sprinkle seem unreconciled to the outcome of what they would call The War Between the States [the American Civil War].

Dabney, An Anachronism?

So where does one begin with Dabney? We could consider him as the judicious scholar, severe disciplinarian, patient teacher, and humble man of God that he undoubtedly was. Then there's the ideologue, the passionate, intemperate, and at times petulant controversialist in all matters of church, state and society, expressing a vision of a Southern pastoral idyll comparable to that of De Valera with his comely maidens. His photo shows a craggy, straggly-bearded patriarch with a set jaw and a piercing gaze. He could take his place on Mount Rushmore as the example of American plain living and rectitude. Finally, there is the dark matter to consider: here was an unabashed apologist for slavery, a racist, whose social values were hierarchical to the point of being feudal. Even in the Tory England of 1898, the year of Dabney's death, he would have seemed an anachronism. How much more so today! Can it be that we're separated from him by such a short space of time? John F. Kennedy who inaugurated the modern American era was born less than twenty

years after Dabney's death.

And, as well as being a Pastor and Professor, Dabney managed to spend significant periods of his life as a farmer and a soldier, all these professions being acceptable to an well-bred citizen of a conservative republic. Several Irish Presbyterian ministers were involved to a greater or lesser degree in the activities leading up to the Rising of 1798 but as far as I know none of them actually took the field, unlike Dabney, who served as a staff officer with Stonewall Jackson. Most Ulster Presbyterians found it easy enough to adapt to the new regime after 1800, and even to flourish in it, but Dabney refused to adapt or accommodate himself in any way. This contrasts again with more local recent examples of so-called Ulster intransigence, and in particular the man who, after a lifetime spent parading his principles and vowing he would ne'er consent, consented. That's politics I suppose.

Life Story

I will let Douglas Floyd Kelly start off the story. This is from Kelly's essay on Dabney in *Reformed Theology In America* (1997):

"Dabney was born March 5, 1820, on South Anna River, Louisa County, Virginia, the fourth of six children. His parents, Charles and Elizabeth Dabney, were typical Virginia country gentry. Charles was Colonel of the county militia, as well as a magistrate and member of the county court. He owned a tobacco and grain plantation, two mills, and several {about twenty or thirty} slaves, and was an elder in the Presbyterian Church. The older Dabneys had been brought up during times of revival in Virginia (the latter years of the 'Second Great Awakening') and maintained a strict but warmly evangelical household. In this Calvinist home not only were the Bible and the Westminster Shorter Catechism taught, but the children 'caught' the principles of conservative, decentralized republican forms of government from frequent conversations between their parents and visitors. The Virginia of Washington, Madison, Jefferson, Henry and Marshall had never ceased to be politically minded and intensely committed to the liberties guaranteed (to the property-holding classes) by constitutional, representative, civil government."

But Dabney was only thirteen when his father died, so his schooling was interspersed with hard labour on the 550 acre family farm. In 1836 he enrolled at Hampden-Sydney College Virginia but had to leave without completing his course as he was needed at home. Kelly

writes:

"For about two years {Dabney} though a slaveholder, worked with his hands quarrying stone, rebuilt one of the family mills, managed the fields, and in addition opened and taught a neighbourhood school—all of this at age 18."

The generosity of an uncle enabled him to study at the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, from where he graduated in 1842, and, after a further two years on the family farm he entered Union Seminary at Hampden-Sydney in November 1844, with a view to the Presbyterian ministry. Union Seminary was like a smaller Southern version of Princeton, Old School to its fingertips.

He was licensed by West Hanover Presbytery, called to be pastor of Tinkling Spring congregation in Augusta County, a Scotch-Irish backwater, and fell in love with and married Lavinia Morrison, a pretty 18-year-old minister's daughter, all in quick succession from 1846 to 1848. He was to spend around six years at this church before accepting an invitation back to Union Seminary to the Chair of Ecclesiastical History and Polity. He was to be based there from 1853 to 1886 apart from the period he served as chaplain and then a Major with the Confederate forces. According to Lucas, *"Dabney's ultimate goal was to achieve a position of prominence within his fast-growing denomination, to be a 'gentleman theologian' in a denomination that prized gentility and theology."* This would be a good point to pause to consider further this particular blend of qualities.

Social Status

It certainly seems strange for a Calvinist (although Dabney preferred the Institutes of Francis Turretin to those of Calvin as a teaching base) to be preoccupied with questions of social status derived from breeding. Such preoccupations sit ill with the Reformed emphasis on the natural man's total alienation from the life of God. *"Surely man in his best estate is altogether vanity"* wrote the Psalmist. *"Where then is boasting?"* asks Paul and replies, *"It is excluded"*. Paul writes elsewhere that if anybody had anything to boast about he had more, because of his Jewish birth, privileges and education. Yet he had come to regard those things as *"dung"* (as the Authorised Version puts it) for the sake of Christ.

It was not quite so with Dabney:

"He wholeheartedly embraced the Southern ideal of gentility, the 'Virginia gentleman', which prodded him toward sociability, learning and piety as the chief marks of the upper class" (Lucas).

This code was important in the selection of candidates for the ministry.

The following paragraph from Lucas is worth quoting in full:

"In addition, Presbyterian ministers, in order to serve the professional classes, generally had to come from the higher classes. Dabney claimed that the quality of Northern ministers had 'deteriorated' because 'so many persons of lower breeding and mercenary views' had been admitted. By contrast, in the South, Presbyterian ministers 'must be gentlemen in bearing and principle'. While this necessity did not shut the door on those in the 'lower classes', it did mean that such men labored under a disadvantage and those received into the ministry would be of 'innate nobility', raising 'themselves by an invincible energy to the grade they deserve'. By demonstrating self-discipline and energy in self-improvement, those few ministers who ascended from lower classes demonstrated that they belonged with and could minister to their social superiors."

In fairness to Dabney it should be said that breeding counted for more with him than money or the kind of social position which was coveted in England. He held to the ideal of the independent yeoman farmer, secure in his hierarchical world.

This seems a far cry from Paul's words in I Corinthians 1:26, where he says that not many of the Corinthian converts were of noble birth, but that didn't matter. Yet Dabney was on to something nevertheless. Not all ministers can be gentlemen in the rarefied Southern sense, but a minister who can't behave like a gentleman loses credibility with his flock.

Whatever implications Dabney's honour code had for his denominational outlook, its implications for his political stance as a Southerner and Virginian patriot were far more devastating. His life could be divided up into two nearly equal segments, *antebellum* and *postbellum*.

The Civil War represented not just a political challenge to his cherished old world order, and one for which he had little appetite, but also a personal crisis for Dabney which he would have preferred to avoid. The position of a minister when it came to a shooting war was potentially ignominious. It would seem that Scott's novel *Ivanhoe* was a key text in defining honour. The hero addresses Rebecca in these terms:

"Thou wouldst quench the pure light of chivalry, which alone distinguishes the noble from the base, the gentle knight from the churl and the savage; which rates our life far, far beneath the

pitch of our honour, raises us victorious over pain, toil and suffering, and teaches us to fear no evil but disgrace."

Civil War

In the years from 1856 to 1861 the "*free soil*" controversy was raging. Not content with trying to preserve the *status quo*, the Southern leaders were campaigning, suicidally, for the right to carry their slaveholding practices into the expanding national territories in the west. While Dabney saw that the election of Lincoln in 1860 was a serious setback for the viability of the Southern way of life, he didn't see it in itself as cause for secession, which was a last resort. So the secession of South Carolina, "*the little impudent vixen*", infuriated him:

"I regard the conduct of South Carolina as unjustifiable towards the United States at large, and towards her Southern sisters, as treacherous, insolent and mischievous. She has, in my view, worsted the common cause, forfeited the righteous strength of our position, and aggravated our difficulties of position a hundredfold."

In this regard Dabney was much less bellicose than his colleague Thornwell. During this period also he was in correspondence with Charles Hodge of Princeton, the doyen of Old School intellectuals, to try to work through their ideological differences. But then Fort Sumter fell, and Lincoln set about raising an army to crush the rebellion. The situation was too far gone to be retrieved and Dabney immediately joined the Secession forces and started his long propaganda war against the hypocritical Yankee tyrants.

Initially he served as a chaplain to the Regiment of northern Virginia, proclaiming that he could never serve as a combatant. He also returned to his teaching duties for a time. But all the while the fear of dishonour was eating away at him, and when Jackson, to whom he was related by marriage, offered him the post of Chief of Staff in the Army of Northern Virginia in the Spring of 1862 he accepted. "*Our pastor is not afraid of Yankee bullets*", it was reported, "*and I tell you he preaches like the Devil*". But after five months he had to stand down owing to camp fever, and never resumed active service. There are conflicting accounts of his performance, which cast some doubt on the truth of Jackson's *encomium* (as reported by Dabney) that he was "*the most efficient officer on my staff*".

Southern Culture

Dabney never really forgave himself for having failed to endure to the bitter

end and this possibly energized him all the more in his determination to see the cause of the South vindicated posthumously by literary activity. At the same time the fall of the Confederacy filled him with gloom and foreboding. Like many others of the ruling class he contemplated emigration to Brazil, but decided his place was at home, where he could try to salvage from the wreckage some of the distinctives of Southern *antebellum* culture. Among these were Old School orthodoxy, which he saw imperilled by Northern "*broad church*" tendencies; racial separation, which had become a contentious matter in the new South; and the agrarian conservative character of the South and of Virginia in particular, which was in danger of being reshaped disastrously by Northern capitalist adventurers. His speech at the 1870 General Assembly of the PCUS in Louisville Kentucky contained the following striking passage:

"I do not profess to be as good as some people; I hear brethren saying it is time to forgive. Mr. Chairman, I do not forgive. What! Forgive these people, who have invaded our country, burned our cities, destroyed our homes, slain our young men, and spread desolation and ruin over our land! No, I do not forgive them. But you say, 'They have changed their feelings toward us, are kind.' And why should they not be kind? Have we done anything to make them feel unkind to us? Have we ever harmed or wronged them? They are amiable and peaceful, are they? And is not the gorged tiger amiable and peaceful? When he has filled himself with the calf he has devoured, he lies down in a kind, good humor; but wait till he has digested his meal, and will he not be fierce again? ...Do you believe that the same old tiger nature is not in them? Just wrest from them anything they have taken from us and see."

Dabney was speaking to the motion of reunion with the Northern Church—which he believed was properly up for consideration only if it repented thoroughly of its recent action and expunged from the record any resolutions that the Southerners might deem to be offensive. Reunion on any other terms would be the kiss of death. In fairness to Dabney some of his theological concerns were legitimate, but behind them were his twin fears that the South would be Yankeeized; and that the black man would have the whip hand, to use the language of Enoch Powell. A racially-mixed church with Negro ministers and elders would raise the unholy spectre of well-born white women being subject to church discipline administered by black men.

As Lucas puts it, by this stage Dabney was "a Virginian first, a Southerner second, and an American maybe". He had only once been in the North proper, and was only to visit once more, in 1880, on his way to New York to board ship for Europe. But he also was feeling increasingly isolated in the South of the Reconstruction era, a time when so many of his contemporaries, as he saw it, were falling over themselves to make themselves agreeable to the new regime. Within the safe haven of Union Seminary too it seemed as if he was becoming an anachronism. He wrote to his longtime friend Moses Hoge after his trip to Europe in these terms:

"Few men of sixty years ever came to England with fewer acquaintances. Having lived all my life away from cities... and being only known, so far as known at all, as an advocate of the losing and unpopular side of a cause fast becoming antiquated, I had the slimmest possible clues of social connection with anybody of Europe. Of those few, most failed me."

Move To Texas

Shortly afterwards, in 1882, his health failed him too as he went down with a "severe ague". This led him to reconsider his future and after some discreet canvassing he was elected a couple of years later to the Chair of Moral and Mental Philosophy at the new University of Texas at Austin. Union Seminary didn't make any strenuous efforts to hold on to him. There must have been an element of gesture politics in this, arising from his disappointment at his marginalization even among his own people. The hill country of Texas was not the obvious location for an elderly theologian from the Old South; and, besides, Dabney had made clear his objections to state-run educational institutions. These objections apparently didn't apply in Texas, as Dabney explained in an 1884 article for the *Southwestern Presbyterian*. To quote Lucas:

"Dabney claimed that simply because the University of Texas was a state institution did not mean that it was a 'godless or anti-Christian one.' Rather, the university shared the same basis as the state of Texas, that is a theistic one. The state bill of rights demanded that elected officials 'acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Being'. In the same way the state university was grounded on a theistic basis, and was required to respect all Christian denominations and render to all 'common service'. And because the university was grounded on a theistic basis Dabney felt perfectly comfortable teaching there. The professors held as

their official duty that 'we can assert no particular ecclesiastical or theological system in teaching literature and science.' Unofficially, the professors 'claim their personal rights as heads of families and members of Christian society, to support the several forms of evangelical Christianity which they personally believe in.' This, in turn, gave the professors a wide, though unofficial, personal influence for good. Hence, friends of Christianity as well as defenders of the separation of church and state had nothing to worry about with the university or Dabney's involvement in it."

So that was all right then. It was however deeply inconsistent with Dabney's position a dozen years previously in his controversy with William Henry Ruffner, a minister from Lexington, Virginia. Ruffner was looked on by Dabney as a bit of a quisling because he had helped to facilitate the setting up of a whole new public school system in Virginia, as insisted upon by radical Republicans, and which Dabney believed to encapsulate "the pagan, Spartan theory, which makes the State the parent". And, insofar as the new schools taught a common denominator type of Protestantism, they would violate the consciences of Jews and Roman Catholics, as well as being (presumably) a bit light on the Westminster Shorter Catechism. The only alternative to denominational schooling was totally secular education, which would itself be contrary to Dabney's whole philosophy of education: "any training which attempts to be non-Christian is therefore anti-Christian".

More of this in a future article I hope.

In the meantime Dabney was making the best of his new life in Texas. He became frustrated though when his plans for a new Presbyterian Seminary in Austin appeared to be stymied. As well as that, he was having problems in getting some of his collected writings published in the form he wanted, and he developed severe prostatic problems, not helped by botched surgery, and also problems with his sight which led to his eventual blindness in 1890. Increasingly he pined for home, instructing his sons on no account to leave his bones in Texas soil. Indeed his feelings about Texans developed into something approximating to Tony Blair's about the Welsh:

"I feel a great repugnance to a residence anywhere in Texas. It is a cursed low down state, its politics loathsome, its social morals repulsive. It will lift a great burden from my spirits, could I leave the state, never to return."

But he didn't manage to leave Texas alive. His last years were spent in a vain attempt to prevent the removal of Union Seminary from Hampden-Sydney to Richmond, while he was distressed to note the manner in which he had been effectively written out of the new history of the Seminary.

He died quite suddenly at the start of January, 1898, and was buried four days later, in his Confederate uniform, in a plot at Union Seminary, Hampden-Sydney, beside the three of his sons who had died in infancy.

I would like to be able to say something further in the next issue about Dabney's views on secession, education, race and modernity, as well as his general philosophical outlook.

Report

Forthcoming book from the
Aubane Historical Society

Coolacrease: A Shocking Story

At the end of the Irish War of Independence, two brothers were shot in Coolacrease, Co. Offaly, and their house was burned.

The people who carried out the shootings were not Black and Tans, but IRA; and the victims were not Irish rebels or uninvolved civilians. They were loyalist Protestants who had chosen to take up arms against the forces of the democratically elected Irish government. The IRA command ordered their execution.

So what is shocking about the deaths of these two men, in comparison with the hundreds of other deaths in the war waged by the British Imperial Government against the Irish democracy?

These events were practically unknown until 2007 when the Irish national broadcasting agency RTÉ produced a television documentary which portrayed the executions of the Pearson brothers as a sectarian anti-Protestant atrocity in furtherance of a land grab, as part of an ethnic cleansing drive by the Irish Republican movement against an ethnic minority in Ireland.

RTÉ claimed that their case was based on official evidence in documents of the Irish Land Commission.

And now comes the really shocking part.

RTÉ could not produce the documents which they claimed proved their claims, and the Land Commission denies that the programme ever examined the records of the division of the Coolacrease farm. The case presented by RTÉ is nothing but spurious atrocity propaganda, a travesty of what really happened.

The documentary record is presented in this book, which tells the true story of these tragic events.

This is a shocking story of low standards, wilful untruths and cheap propaganda.

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Barbers In Cork, 1764
"No Religion"
Nomination Of Bishops
Nano Nagle
Popish Prince?
Methodists
Estate Dispute
Siege Of Jerusalem, 1099
Israel Bans Bishops

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BARBERS IN CORK were in trouble in March, 1764 when nineteen of their number were brought before the courts for "exercising the functions of their trade on the Lord's Day" and were ordered to pay a crown fine for each offence.

One of them was found guilty of shaving three persons at a half-penny each for which he was fined three crowns. However, they were then excused from paying the fines upon promising not to offend again in a similar fashion—definitely a close shave for the barbers!

"**No Religion**" are the largest "faith" group in the Republic after Catholics—but few of them seem to be aware of it. They are, in short, those who ticked the "No Religion" box in the 2006 census form.

As many as 186,300 did so, meaning there are more people of no religion in the Republic than there are Church of Ireland members (125,600), Presbyterians (23,500), Orthodox Christians (20,800) and Methodists (12,200) combined.

The census showed there was an increase in the number of such people of 34.6 per cent, or 48,000, on 2002. A further 70,300 people did not state their religion in the 2006 census, bringing the total for those in the Republic with "no religion" and who did not state their religion to 256,600 in 2006.

In the North, the situation is not dissimilar. In the 1991 census, 59,234 people there stated they had "no religion"—3.7 per cent of the population. In that same year, 114,827—7.3 per cent—did not state their religion.

This meant that 174,061, or 11 per cent, of the Northern population described themselves as having "no religion" or did not state their religion. By the time of the 2001 census that figure had increased significantly. The numbers of those with "no religion" and those who did not state their religion stood at 233,853, or 13.88 per cent of the population.

Nano Nagle

"...the Irish woman who founded the Presentation Order of nuns in 1777, is to be the subject of a feature film documentary. It will be produced by Dublin-based Julie le Brocqy, who co-produced the outspoken contemporary Afghan drama, *Osama*, which won the Golden Globe award for best foreign-language film in 2004" (*Irish Times*, 23.5.2008).

Born in Co Cork in 1718, Ms Nagle came from a landed family who sent her and her sister Anne to France for an education, which was forbidden in Ireland under the Penal Laws. Returning home, she clandestinely set up a number of hedge schools to educate the needy.

In 1775 she entered a novitiate and became a nun, Sr Mary of St John of God. She went on to found a convent and the order of the Presentation Sisters. She died in 1784.

"There is now a campaign to have her beatified, so this film will be timely," Ms. le Brocqy told *The Irish Times* in Cannes. "Nano Nagle exemplifies the ideal, often recognised but seldom fulfilled, that one person can make a change.

"In this film we aspire to show how Nano, a young Catholic woman in 18th-century Ireland, ignored all the obstacles [placed] in her way by her gender and religion to provide hope to a people destitute of all aspirations, reduced to extreme poverty and entirely disenfranchised. Her courage is an inspiration in a world that still has so many needs."

Ms. le Brocqy is now actively seeking out a director for the documentary, to be titled *Nano Nagle: The Lady with the Lantern*, which she will produce. "I want to get a director who will take a creative approach", she said.

Bishops

"The right of nomination to Irish sees was granted by the Holy See to the House of Stuart in the person of James II and was first exercised in 1687.

When James III, the Old Pretender, was given the right of nomination, S C *Propaganda Fide* kept lists of prospective candidates and it would appear that an exchange of information and discussion took place between the Sacred Congregation and the King. Following the death of James II in 1701, it was immediately clear that the Holy See was prepared to give that privilege to James III. While James III was given the right of nomination *Propaganda* had lists of prospective candidates and submitted them to the King and from them a nomination was made" (*Bishop John Keys O'Doherty Of Derry 1889-1907* by Bernard J. Canning, 2008).

Popish Prince?

"A Protestant country can never have stable times under a popish Prince, declared Bishop Richard Willis in 1715, 'any more than a flock of sheep can have quiet when a wolf is their shepherd."

Methodists

May 24th is significant for Methodists and is known as Aldersgate Day, marking the events of 24th May 1738, when John Wesley was converted, essentially launching the Methodist movement.

Wesley was born in 1703, the 15th of 19 children. He travelled to America in 1735 to try to convert the Indians and regulate the religious life of the colonists. However, it was an unsuccessful trip and he returned to England in 1738 depressed and beaten.

Searching for something more from his religion, he attended a meeting in Aldersgate Street, London, in which he heard a reading of Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans, and penned the now famous lines "I felt my heart strangely warmed".

A few weeks later Wesley preached a sermon on the doctrine of personal salvation by faith, which was followed by another, on God's grace "free in all, and free for all". He made the first of 21 visits to Ireland in 1747 and visited the Cork area several times.

The Methodist church in Kinsale is thought to be the only one in Ireland founded by John's brother, Charles Wesley.

Estate Dispute

A Catholic priest was arrested and brought before a civil court in Cork on June 4 arising out of a long-running legal wrangle over the will of a parishioner

who left half of her estate to the parish and the other half to the priest.

Representatives of the estate of the deceased were looking for land certificates related to the property at the Old Head of Kinsale from Fr James Davern of St John's Terrace, Old Youghal Road, St Luke's, Cork.

Barrister Miriam O'Regan, instructed by Michael Powell, solicitor, representative of the estate of the late Julia Finn, confirmed to Judge Patrick J. Moran at Cork Circuit Court that Fr Davern had given them the necessary legal documents.

"We have no desire to jail Fr Davern now that we have got these land certificates," said Ms O'Regan yesterday.

On 27th May 2008, Judge Moran issued a warrant for the arrest of Fr. Davern who was later arrested and brought before the court later that day.

The judge released him and told him the land certificates would have to be given to the other side in the dispute over the administration of the will.

The will was written by the late Julia Finn of Old Head of Kinsale, Co. Cork, who died in January 1987 and she left half of her estate to the parish of Ballinspittle and half to Fr Davern.

Ms O'Regan said:

"Costs have been incurred by Mr Powell associated with chasing Fr Davern. We have had to chase him for a number of things in default of previous orders. We would ask for costs to come from his half of the estate of Julia Finn to be administered through the court. The people of Ballinspittle would get one half of the estate, Fr Davern would get the other half."

Michael McGrath, barrister for Fr/Davern, said he could not resist the application for costs against Fr. Davern. Judge Moran said:

"It seems to me that a lot of difficulties were created for Mr Powell by the behaviour of Fr Davern. These matters have been going on for an enormous period of time. Mr Powell has to be compensated for his endeavours. I think the person who caused the problem should pay the costs.

"I think they should be deducted from the part of the estate bequeathed to Fr Davern."

The Siege of Jerusalem began in June 1099.

The First Crusade had begun three years earlier with the dual goals of conquering the sacred city of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and freeing the Eastern Christians from Islamic rule but

worldly aims were never far removed: the nobles hoped to capture land and loot; the Italian cities looked to expand trade to the Middle East

By 7th June 1099, the Crusaders had reached Jerusalem and began a siege of the walled city, which lasted for six weeks as the inhabitants refused to surrender. During that time, both sides were exhausted and there was a chronic shortage of food and water.

Once the siege ended, almost every inhabitant of Jerusalem was slaughtered, Muslims, Jews, and even a few Christians were all massacred indiscriminately.

According to Raymond of Aguilers "*men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins*".

One chronicle states the Jewish defenders sought refuge in a synagogue, but it was "*burned over their heads*", killing everyone inside. The Crusaders circled the flaming building while singing "*Christ, We Adore Thee!*"

In all, nine Crusades were launched between 1095 and 1291. The most pathetic was the Children's Crusade of 1212, thousands of children set out for the Holy Land, only to be sold as slaves or to die of hunger or disease. The gains made lasted for less than 200 years, but the Crusade was a major turning point in the expansion of Western power.

The Brown/Bush Crusade continues!

Israel Bans Bishops

An Israeli cabinet minister apologised yesterday to the leaders of Ireland's four main churches, who are on a visit to the region, after they were barred from visiting the Western Wall because they were wearing crosses.

"When we arrived [at the wall] there was some hesitation about letting us in, especially with crosses," Cardinal Seán Brady told *The Irish Times*. "We had to get to a meeting at the foreign ministry and so we decided to move on." (*Irish Times*, 2.5.2008).

The incident took place when Cardinal Brady and the three other church leaders—Church of Ireland Archbishop, Alan Harper and Presbyterian and Methodist moderators, John Finlay and Roy Cooper—decided to pay an unscheduled visit to the Western Wall having just finished a visit to the Al Aqsa mosque.

The security officers at the entrance to the wall, which is Judaism's holiest site, wanted the church leaders to remove their crosses and asked them to wait while they consulted superiors.

Israel's foreign ministry said that social welfare minister Isaac Herzog, who met the church leaders yesterday

afternoon, had apologised for the incident. "*The minister also invited them to visit the wall whenever they want*", said foreign ministry spokesman Arye Mekel. "*We believe this misunderstanding is now behind us.*"

Cardinal Brady confirmed that Mr Herzog, whose grandfather served as the first chief rabbi of Ireland, had apologised for the incident.

"We accepted and we regret any inconvenience we may have caused", he said.

"We realise that this is a place of great sensitivity and at a sensitive time," he added. Israelis were yesterday marking Holocaust Remembrance Day when they commemorate the murder of six million Jews by the Nazis.

The Western Wall rabbi, Shmuel Rabinowitz, said the leaders had been asked to remove their crosses "*but they refused*".

"I think it is important that they visit the Western Wall, but they should have covered up the crosses to respect the place, just like Jews wouldn't wear their ritual prayer shawls when entering a Christian holy place."

Stephen Lynas, the Presbyterian Church press officer accompanying the church leaders, said he didn't think they would have been "*too worried about removing their crosses*". Mr Lynas said the church leaders had not encountered any resistance when they wore their crosses at the main commemoration ceremony on Wednesday evening at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial site.

Report

Extract from Richard Dawkins'
The God Delusion

Blind Loyalty

The Israeli psychologist George Tamarin presented to more than a thousand Israeli schoolchildren, aged between eight and fourteen, the account of the Battle of Jericho in the Book of Joshua:

"Joshua said to the people, 'Shout; for the LORD has given you the city. And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction...But all silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are sacred to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD.' ... Then they utterly destroyed all in the city, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep and asses, with the edge of the sword...And they burned the city with fire, and all within it; only the silver

and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.'

Tamarin then asked the children a simple moral question: 'Do you think Joshua and the Israelites acted rightly or not?' They had to choose between A (total approval), B (partial approval) and C (total disapproval). The results were polarized: 66 per cent gave total approval and 26 per cent total disapproval, with rather fewer (8 per cent) in the middle with partial approval. Here are three typical answers from the total approval (A) group:

'In my opinion Joshua and the Sons of Israel acted well, and here are the reasons: God promised them this land, and gave them permission to conquer. If they would not have acted in this manner or killed anyone, then there would be the danger that the Sons of Israel would have assimilated among the Goyim.'

'In my opinion Joshua was right when he did it, one reason being that God commanded him to exterminate the people so that the tribes of Israel will not be able to assimilate amongst them and learn their bad ways.'

'Joshua did good because the people who inhabited the land were of a different religion, and when Joshua killed them he wiped their religion from the earth.'

The justification for the genocidal massacre by Joshua is religious in every case. Even those in category C, who gave total disapproval, did so, in some cases, for backhanded religious reasons. One girl, for example, disapproved of Joshua's capturing Jericho because, in order to do so, he had to enter it:

'I think it is bad, since the Arabs are impure and if one enters an impure land one will also become impure and share their curse.'

Two others who totally disapproved did so because Joshua destroyed everything, including animals and property, instead of keeping some as spoil for the Israelites:

'I think Joshua did not act well, as they could have spared the animals for themselves.'

'I think Joshua did not act well, as he could have left the property of Jericho; if he had not destroyed the property it would have belonged to the Israelites.'

...Tamarin ran a fascinating control group in his experiment. A different group of 168 Israeli children were given the same text from the book of Joshua, but with Joshua's own name replaced by 'General Lin' and 'Israel' replaced by 'a Chinese kingdom 3,000 years ago'. Now the experiment gave

opposite results. Only 7 per cent approved of General Lin's behaviour, and 75 per cent disapproved. In other words, when their loyalty to Judaism was removed from the calculation, the majority of the children agreed with the moral judgements that most modern humans would share. Joshua's action was a deed of barbaric genocide. But it all looks different from a religious point of view. And the difference starts early in life." [http://](http://strugglesforexistence.com/?p=article_p&id=13)

strugglesforexistence.com/?p=article_p&id=13 <http://strugglesforexistence.com/?p=article_p&id=13>

Dawkins, having given the result of Tamarin's research, concludes "It was religion that made the difference between children condemning genocide and condoning it". But surely it was Israeli nationalism which was the reason for the dual standards?

[We are indebted to **Niall Cusack** for this report]

Brendan Clifford

Animosities In A Vacuum

The Lord On The Protestant/Catholic Divide

Oxford University was appealed to by Raymond Crotty (founder of the Irish Sovereignty Movement) to take Ireland in hand intellectually, because the Irish were unable to think for themselves. It has now published a volume on Ireland as part of its *Oxford History Of Modern Europe*. But, alas, it farmed out the work of writing it to a Stickie academic, who was a political adviser to David Trimble during the years when Trimble was leading the Ulster Unionist Party to disaster, and who has now joined his leader in the House of Lords.

Lord Professor Bew's book is called *Ireland: The Politics Of Enmity 1789-2006*. The Preface tells us that—

"animosity is the theme of this book. The book is about the conflict between the Protestant British—both on the British "mainland" and the Catholic Irish".

"At the heart of this relationship [between the Protestant British and the Catholic Irish] is the problem of the management of enmity" (p viii).

Does this enmity which, we are told, constitutes Irish history, have an origin and a cause? I cannot find one in the book.

It is ambiguously stated to be between two terms or designations on each side. If only one term was allowed on each side, which would it be: British versus Irish, or Protestant versus Catholic? Does one term in each pair have priority over the other, or are they not real pairs at all, but integral entities: ProtestantBritish and CatholicIrish?

If each is a single coherent entity, not divisible into the two terms used to describe it, I cannot see how the word "sectarian" can reasonably be used in describing the conflict. But it is used extensively by Lord Professor Bew. Its use suggests that the two terms are

separable and describe component parts of each side of the conflict, and that the conflict might be conducted in a way that was not sectarian. (I take it that *sectarian* describes something that is specifically religious.)

The book does not say what Lord Professor Bew is. That is strange (and even stranger is the fact that it does not have a Bibliography). But I seem to recall that 'Political Science' was his thing. And, even if Politics is not a subject capable of being reduced to a science, one would expect academics in that line of business to at least go through the motions of defining their terms.

It seems to me that the religious term must have priority in the causing of the enmity. Britain, as far as I recall, came into being when the Stuarts became the Kings of England and Ireland as well as of Scotland. The Stuarts were accepted by the Irish as their authentic Kings. Jacobite culture, in which most of the population of Ireland lived for over 200 years, was the culture of the Stuart monarchy of the Three Kingdoms. In Ireland after 1692 it took the form of a lament for the the Stuarts overthrown by English sectarians.

The British state which had meaning for the Irish was got rid of by Protestant England (and was replaced by a state which, being German, was without British meaning). And it was got rid of for specifically Protestant reasons—as must be obvious to anybody who looks at what was said at the time, and not merely at political apologetics written long after the event.

Perhaps it is a proof of inveterate Irish backwardness that the British state proper—the Stuart state of the Three Kingdoms—was acceptable to the Irish because of the genealogy of the Stuarts. But backwardness is usually an element in the unconditional loyalty which is a

necessary ballast in durable states.

The state which connected Ireland up with ancient British loyalties was overthrown by fundamentalist Protestantism in England—or by a gentry manipulating Protestant fundamentalist sentiment. And the new state set about exterminating Catholicism in Ireland by means of Penal Laws.

Lord Professor Bew's book begins a century later, when the Penal Laws were being eased but were far from being repealed. The politics of the situation with which he begins has to do with the repeal of the Penal Law system. He provides no summary of the state of affairs which is being acted upon—by reformers wanting to de-sectarianise public life in Ireland, and by conservatives defending the system, but driven to do so by methods which were destabilising. (The mass mobilisation of Protestant militants in support of the institution that is ludicrously known as Grattan's Parliament was not going to leave things as they were before 1789.)

Lord Professor Bew is much given to the use of the qualifying words "moderate" and "extreme" as if they were substantive nouns. I suppose the ultimate 'moderate' is the "ordinary decent citizen" who was often appealed to in the North during the 1970s and 1980s but who never responded to the appeal because their distinguishing characteristic was that they did not interfere in what did not concern them, and hardly anything in public life concerns them. They accept whatever comes along—whatever is brought along by others who are not so moderate—and concentrate on making a living, and perhaps pursuing a hobby. It is vain to appeal to them to bring about a solution because what distinguishes them is that they are inactive in public affairs—and if they were active they would be part of the problem.

Lord Professor Bew thinks there was a substantial stratum of non-agricultural unskilled labour that "was excluded not only from political life but from the rising standard of living enjoyed by other classes"—in a bygone era when he was a strict Marxist he would have said all this in two words, "a lumpenproletariat". And:

"In the context of inflamed sectarian passions, this sector constituted an immense reservoir of opposition to unionism and indifference to moderation" (p488).

Moderation is the adjective *moderate* made into an abstract noun. It is therefore something—if it is a thing—which it is very easy to be indifferent to in the context of inflamed sectarian passion.

If moderation is not what moderates are doing very vigorously, it is had to see how in a live situation it can evoke anything but indifference. And the thing about moderates is that they do not assert themselves forcibly.

But, assuming that Lord Professor Bew has some idea of moderates as active citizens—and not mere shadows of an abstract noun—then Denys Scully must be described as a moderate. And Scully in 1812 published an account of the Penal Laws still in force after a quarter century of reform. And what could be more moderate than to make people acquainted with the law? Yet that is not how it was seen by the lawful authorities of the time.

Since there is no Bibliography, and footnotes are not Indexed, and there is no indexed reference to Scully's book, or to Penal Laws, I cannot say for certain that neither is even mentioned. But it must be close to it.

The first major History of Ireland published after the Union was written by Dennis Taaffe. Taaffe was a Catholic priest who gave up the priesthood and declared himself a Protestant around 1790 for the purpose of demonstrating that denomination should not be a matter of hostility among Christians. The Government was anxious to keep up the enmity of religious denominations. The "management of enmity" was certainly the case in Ireland, but not in the way the Lord Professor suggests. During the forceful re-assertion of Protestant Ascendancy in the mid-1790s Taaffe reverted to Catholicism to demonstrate that it was not ambition that had caused him to change.

Around the time of the Union he was commissioned by the Bishop of Cork—a moderate—to write a History of Ireland and was provided with an income for that purpose. It was published in 1810. There were at least two editions. If the Irish were pre-occupied with history, it would never have been let out of print. It influenced a generation and it is a pity it did not influence many more. It is not even mentioned in this Oxford *History*.

How might the word *sectarian* apply to the Taaffe case? Was it sectarian of Taaffe to revert to Catholicism under Protestant persecution?

James Connolly did something similar over a century later, and the Lord Professor carries on about it. He says that "*Connolly, the Marxist, made his peace with the Church*" (p379).

I don't know if he did or not. Thirty years ago I said he made a cultural gesture, and soon after that he wasn't there any more to say what it meant—he was strapped in a chair and shot.

There are things which must not be

said about Connolly—things he himself proclaimed as loudly as he could but which authority has prohibited from being repeated. From September 1914 until his death he supported Germany in the War. In the *Workers' Republic*, which he relaunched in 1915, he explained at length why he did so. In 1898 he had declared his affinity with the nationalist socialism of Pilsudski in Poland, and he did so again in 1915. Pilsudski went to war with the Entente in 1914 in alliance with Germany, and the restoration of the Polish state began under German auspices. And Connolly went to war with Britain in 1916 as a declared ally of Germany. He had explained at length why he supported Germany on socialist grounds. He published report of the mainstream German Social Democrats who supported the German war effort, but did not support the would-be revolutionaries who condemned the Government—before going on in 1918-19 to show what a dead loss they were as revolutionaries. And he carried German philosophy in the *Workers' Republic*, including even praise of Nietzsche. But none of this must be said—and the Lord Professor obediently does not even hint at it. (Is that because of the Stickey party line, or the UUP party line?)

Certain events in 1914 demonstrated that it was still far from being the case that religion had become a matter of indifference in the conduct of the state.

An illegal army was raised and armed in 1913-14 for the purpose of preventing the implementation of an Act of Parliament. It was bonded by a Covenant, in the manner of the mid-17th century when Britain was intent on becoming a Protestant theocracy. The Government delayed the enactment of the Home Rule Bill in the face of this threat from a Covenanted Army that was backed by almost half of the representation of Britain in Parliament. Then in 1915 the leaders of the Covenanted rebellion were brought into the Government.

A Volunteer Army to support the Home Rule Act was raised in response to the Covenanted UVF. The body of people in Ireland that supported Home Rule was made up of Catholics for the most part—as of course Ireland was. But I never heard that the Irish Volunteers were pledged to some Catholic equivalent of the Covenant. And it is certain that they were supported by many Protestants and that Protestant gentry played a prominent part in bringing in arms for them.

Then came the war on Germany and raising of mass armies to fight it. The Covenanted rebellion against the Home

Rule Bill was enrolled in the new British Army as a distinct division with its own officers—the Ulster Division. A large part of the Home Rule Volunteers also enlisted in the British Army but were refused the kind of arrangement made for the Covenanters. It is said that this was because of a rooted prejudice of Kitchener, who became War Minister in August 1914. His view was that the Irish, or the Catholics, or the Catholic Irish, were inherently and fundamentally disloyal to England regardless of how loyal they might seem, or pretend, to be on particular occasions. But Kitchener was not eccentric in holding this view. It was the view of the most durable part of the English governing stratum—the part which had supported the Covenanters in 1913-14, that took control of the state in the war on Germany, and that won the war and the post-War election while both the Liberals and the Home Rulers fell apart.

One might say that Kitchener's assumptions about the Irish were sectarian, in the sense that the assumptions behind the greatness achieved by the English state over the centuries were sectarian. English rule in Ireland in the late 19th century might be described as a kind of alleviated sectarianism. However George Moore, the Irish Catholic gentleman who founded the English working class novel, predicted that if England ever ceased to be Protestant it would cease to be England. And in 1914-15 England re-discovered itself as fundamentally Protestant. And it was the English state which over the centuries had made politics out of religion in Ireland. That is why I considered that what Connolly did with regard to religion in 1916 was of a kind with what Taaffe did in the mid-1790s. It was a cultural action having to do with the particularities of the here and now. And remember that the Pope was on Connolly's side in the overwhelming event of those times. If he did not quite support Germany in the Great War, he did his best to have the War called off before Germany could be destroyed. (The outstanding Italian supporter of the British war on Germany was Mussolini.)

Lord Professor Bew in his diligent but discriminating search for sectarianism in Ireland misses in the elephant in the room, the British state. It is too big for him to see. It forms the horizons within which he sees. But there is a smaller elephant which he cannot have failed to see but which he does not mention.

He has three pages about the apparitions at Knock:

"The outbreak of the land war in

Mayo was accompanied by a dramatic eruption of Catholic religious passions; these passions were not autonomous but intimately linked to the political crisis. On 21 August 1879... a vision appeared on the church gable at Knock" (p314); and "intensive and combined religious, national, and agrarian passions had been unleashed" (p316).

Academic historians are meticulous in the investigation of detail and in the phrasing of their account of it. So I have been told. So here we have authoritative confirmation that what some people saw at Knock was there to be seen: "*a vision appeared on the church gable*". I grew up in a rural community where some people, chiefly the small urban element, went on pilgrimages to Knock, while most wouldn't have dreamt of doing so. But my understanding was that neither the believers nor the sceptics took the "*vision*" seen by the children as having actually been there on the gable. I understood that, like Lourdes, it was an 'apparition', an appearance that was present to the minds of a few, but was not there as a picture on a wall for anybody to see. I must have misunderstood. Anyhow I will not dispute the Lord Professor's authoritative statement that it was there on the wall.

Rural Ireland in my youth was rich in superstitions which were widely respected, even though few people believed in them earnestly. At an early age I made a point of affronting them, whether they were Christian or Pagan, and found that they were held in a medium point between scepticism and earnest belief.

I knew a small farmer, of industrious habits, who complied with the required minimum of religious practice and no more, and whose head contained a wealth of Irish music transmitted to him orally. In the middle of one of his fields was what we called a *Fairy Fort*. There were three of these Forts within half a mile of where I lived. They were spaces enclosed by circular walls of earth. Some had double walls. The superstition was that, if they were removed, the farmer's cattle would start to die. They were left severely alone. In Summer they were delightful places, thick with foxgloves and bluebells, and I often spent time in them reading.

Well this industrious and reasonably sceptical farmer decided to remove his Fort, which was awkwardly placed in the middle of a not very big field. He set to work, carted a few butt-loads of soil from the wall, and then thought the better of it, and he left it there with a nibble taken out of it. His reasoning was, at least in part, that the mind was a

strange thing and was quite capable, under the influence of an idea taken in when it was forming, of causing him despite himself to bring about the bad luck that was supposed to follow the removal of the Fort.

I left the area in the late 1950s. When I saw it again after a quarter of a century, not a single one of the Forts remained. As far as I could gather this was a result of Vatican 2 combined with the arrival of the J C B. Vatican 2 abolished Irish Saints wholesale as pagan hangovers, and a J C B with driver could be hired from a distant town where the culture relating to Forts was unknown.

Back in the mid-fifties I read some of the Catholic weeklies, which had a stronger intellectual content than any present-day publications, and dealt with much more than religion. One idea I got from them was that, if the world was apprehended by means of organised doctrine in which reason and belief were interwoven, the mind would be less of a prey to superstition. A dash of superstition in it would inoculate against superstition. Now, fifty years later, with organised doctrine collapsed, I would say that view of things has been borne out. I suppose there were astrological charts in the papers then as now, but I do not recall anybody ever reading them. And I do not know that there is any thought content in astrology which engages the mind in an understanding of the world as the organised doctrine did.

So much for Knock and the frame of mind with which, in my experience, it was considered by most people.

There was another religious phenomenon in Ireland twenty years before Knock—an astonishing, overwhelming event with ongoing consequences—the Ulster Revival of 1859, which the Lord Professor does not even mention.

Protestant Ulster was one thing before 1859 and was something quite different after. 1859 was a watershed. The Ulster which gave rise to the United Irish movement began to be eroded politically by the Act of Union, which in fact many United Irishmen supported. Theological disputes, some with political implications, persisted for a couple of generations. The Academical Institution, set up 200 years ago to be the Ulster University, failed to become so, but its establishment broke the intimate Ulster connection with Glasgow University. The failure of Inst, combined with the break with Glasgow, left Ulster without the influential centre of intellectual life that Glasgow had been in the 18th century. The rift between the old liberal culture and the new evangelical enthusiasm played some part in the aborting of

Inst. It then continued in a wider sphere in the dispute between the Revs. Cook and Montgomery over whether Christianity was necessarily Trinitarian. But all dispute was rendered obsolete by the shifting of ground in the great popular upsurge of enthusiasm in 1859, which was beyond all denominational control.

Church of Ireland clergymen in the South, who were themselves fundamentalist in their understanding of Christianity, were astonished and bewildered by it. Some of them went to look at it at close quarters. They found it incomprehensible, and could only explain it as mass hysteria. But that was no explanation. The great mass of people who participated in the Revival did not become wayward in social and economic life. They were the people of the disciplined and purposeful industrial revolution of the North East, and the "hysteria" of the Revival became their basic culture.

When I first went to Belfast it took me a while to realise that the operative centre of intellectual life was not the Queen's University, or the aborted University of Inst: it lay across the road from Inst in the Evangelical bookshop.

When we began to publish historical material about Protestant Ulster we offered it to the bookshop. But the people running it knew instantly that they did not want it. *That Ulster* was not their Ulster. Modern Ulster began in 1859, and their only interest before that was in the prophets who prepared the way for 1859.

I passed the bookshop every day. It is only around the corner from Athol Street. One day the *Collected Works Of Spurgeon* appeared in the window, and I understood. Spurgeon was the amazing orator of the final outburst of Christianity in the English mainstream just before the collapse of English Christianity in the late 19th century. I knew of him because I had traced that collapse, and because Samuel Butler wrote a poem about his brother-in-law. Spurgeon was forgotten in London, where his preaching to vast congregations at the Elephant & Castle had aroused fleeting enthusiasm, but there was a market for his *Collected Works* in Belfast, where a comparable enthusiasm generated by the people themselves was a stable medium in which normal life was lived.

The outstanding political fact about Ireland in the era of the Home Rule conflict is the apolitical character of Protestant Ulster. And it was still apolitical in the 1970s. Political activity of any kind, other than Covenanting, was problematical for it. Through Covenanting in 1914-15, it established

a place for itself as an attachment to Britain and the Empire, and that was enough for it. It was given a semblance of a state in 1921. It did not ask for it, but it agreed to run it. Its secular imagination had exhausted itself through intense vicarious participation in the French Revolution in the 1790s, climaxing in the reign of Robespierre, and it never recuperated thereafter. (I tried to give an idea of this in *Belfast In The French Revolution*.)

It operated the semblance of a state which Britain conferred on it without any understanding of the effect it necessarily had on 40% of the population, and it responded to suggestions of reform to alleviate feelings of the 40% with uncomprehending hostility. It had its perfect world, and it instinctively felt that any change would be the work of the serpent. Paisley was not a sectarian aberration, but was its representative public figure.

It shows how far the Lord Professor is from being a historian that he doesn't even mention 1859. His critical faculties (so to speak) are all directed at the other community—the political one.

With regard to the Famine he criticises O'Connell and Young Ireland for persisting with national politics, instead of giving up that nonsense and presenting themselves as suppliants for British alms by adopting some mode that would appeal to British charitable sentiment. But the O'Connell Tribute was kept up, and *"the blame game"* was played, and English philanthropy responded with *"compassion fatigue"*.

A number of pages are spent in rebutting *"the genocide thesis"*. One ground of rebuttal is that—

"there were definite limits to the state's role. The problem of Irish society was that somehow it lacked the springs of self-activity... The English in general could not quite fathom how the disordered political and social relations within a society might leave it unable to unite to fight a human disaster" (p211).

It is often unclear whether the Lord Professor is summarising the views of others or expressing a view of his own. I assume this is deliberate.

That Ireland *"lacked the springs of self-activity"* is obvious. It should be the primary business of a historian of the century and three-quarters following the Williamite conquest to explain how that had come about. I could find no explanation but the systematic and sustained application of English power to the destruction of Irish society. And, if those who did it were later to unable

to fathom it, that was a case of purposeful amnesia. Nietzsche would have explained it as an expression of a healthy will-to-power.

While rejecting *"the genocide thesis"*, the Lord Professor, apparently in his own voice, says that *"there is evidence from the summer of 1847 onwards of heartlessness"* (p212). I suppose *heartlessness* is the characteristic of a strong heart. At any rate the rulers of the Empire were during the following generations the prudent overseers of many other famines in the cause of progress around the world.

There would be, for an authentic historian of human affairs in the era of the British Empire, a crushing refutation of *"the genocide thesis"* that was not merely juggling with words. Genocide is a crime now, but the extermination of peoples was not a crime then. The *Oxford Dictionary* lists the first use of the word in 1944. A century before, the extermination of peoples in the cause of Progress was proceeding merrily. And two generations after the Irish Famine a leading member of the British Liberal Party (Dilke) boasted, in a book that enjoyed mass circulation (*Greater Britain*), that the Anglo-Saxons were the greatest exterminating force in history. So why be so coy, or squeamish, when it comes to the English handling of the potato blight in Ireland which made it into a Famine?

Report

The Odd Couple: Bush And Hitler

"I BELIEVE that God wants me to be president." **George W. Bush**

"I would like to thank Providence and the Almighty for choosing me of all people to be allowed to wage this battle for Germany", **Hitler** - Berlin March, 1936

"God is not on the side of any nation, yet we know He is on the side of justice. Our finest moments [as a nation] have come when we faithfully served the cause of justice for our own citizens, and for the people of other lands.: **George W. Bush**

"If we pursue this way, if we are decent, industrious, and honest, if we so loyally and truly fulfill our duty, then it is my conviction that in the future as in the past the Lord God will always help us": **Adolf Hitler**, at the Harvest Thanksgiving Festival on the Buckeburg held on 3 Oct. 1937

"...freedom and fear, justice and cruelty have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them." **George W. Bush**

"Never in these long years have we offered any other prayer but this: Lord, grant to our people peace at home, and grant and preserve to them peace from the foreign foe!" : **Hitler** - Nuremberg Sept. 13, 1936.

The Second American Revolution and the Sense Problem in the West

Summary of Part 1: Three revolutions which occurred in the twentieth century—the Russian, the German and the Second American—rejected essential rules of European (alias western) civilisation and replaced them with new rules. The new rules were Communist, Nazi or (in the American case) fundamentalist-liberal. In the Russian and German systems, which were overthrown, the rules were enforced by the state and preached by an organised Party. In the American system, which still survives and in which we live, the fundamentalist-liberal rules of correct behaviour are supported by democratic states and by business corporations in their joint interest. They are preached by an informally constituted liberal party—a sort of secular 'state church'—which for convenience we may call 'the Correctorate'. The preaching spaces allotted to this doctrinal party are mainly the mass media, but also the humanities faculties of the universities. Each national state has its own sub-correctorate. The net result, in terms of rules to live by, is that a collection of non-European rules, combined with some surviving European rules, has become the reigning and widely accepted system of do's, don'ts and do-as-you-likes of North America and much of Europe, Ireland centrally included.

"There were whispered arguments between our parents while we watched TV—arguments about changing the rules, we gathered, that applied to all of us, the dads and moms as well as the kids..."

Naomi Wolf in *Promiscuities* (1997) on San Francisco in 1970

A new civilisation can replace an older one on the same ground; history shows instances of that. But this new collection of values and rules is not—or at least, not so far—a case of that. It does not constitute a new civilisation because it lacks the *sine qua non* of a civilisation: it does not make sense, thereby ensuring the system's longevity. And for that reason, what it does constitute—a wealthy, senseless, state-liberal system, an experiment like its Soviet counterpart not guided by human instinct, reason and experience—is life-thwarting, and will, if it runs its course to the end, prove disastrous.

The absence of sense is immediately evident at the level of the rules. Indeed, by the simple fact that these do not present a grounded hierarchy covering all of life they *cannot* make sense as a framework for living. For a start, they lack a supreme value (lawgiver, virtue or venerated moral inheritance) from which subordinate values and their attendant rules might be derived in descending order of importance to cover all of life. Thus *ipso facto* the rules lack both the validating and the rational grounding which such derivation could provide.

Floating therefore unanchored, thrown together pell-mell over the past half-century, the new rules comprise qualitatively undifferentiated do's and don'ts for parts of life and virtual do-as-you-likes for other parts. Among the do's

and don'ts, the latter predominate. They are taught much as if the things *not* to do when driving a car were to be imparted without distinguishing in order of importance between failing to glance regularly at the rear-view mirror, passing on the inside, driving on the wrong side of the road, and starting in second gear; that is to say, in a senseless manner, useless to the would-be driver.

The new rules to live by

Take a random array of don'ts as taught and administered by the Correctorate. No intelligible ranking of incorrectness is indicated as between don't kill civilians with non-aerial bombs, don't be fat or speak badly of Jews or urge that a law should reflect Christian morality; don't be smelly or invade another country without the authority of the United Nations or smoke in an enclosed public space or say that homosexuality is a perversion or 'deny the Holocaust'; don't torture prisoners, pollute a river, ban pornography, prevent a woman having an abortion or restrict what adults read, view, say, write or think; and don't, if a man, hit your wife or kiss an unwilling female colleague in the office.

Leave aside the contradictions in that sample. Because the consumers do not have available a grounded exposition by the Correctorate of which of these incorrectnesses is gravely, less gravely or only somewhat incorrect, they must

perforce try to gauge this from the Correctorate's reactions or non-reactions to incorrectnesses as they occur. And the teaching thus delivered is bafflingly dual.

On the one hand, it is to the effect that all behaviours or thoughts forbidden by the Correctorate are, for a variety of *ad hoc*—and therefore unconnected and question-begging—reasons, very grave. On the other hand, the same teaching indicates—read the newspapers—that the gravity of many incorrectnesses is greater, lesser or cancelled, depending on who commits them and why; or if there are victims, on what nation, creed or party they belong to. Inevitably, the conclusion drawn by the consumers is also dual. It is that all the Correctorate's don't rules are of more or less equal importance, and are in practice not really rules.

Much the same would appear if we were to look at a bunch of the do's. In passing, for the plight of young mothers is special, note the particular array of unranked obligations that falls on them if their behaviour is to be correct. Widely broadcast do's of equal imperativeness exhort them to meticulous body care, paid employment, personal assertiveness, vigilant child-rearing in person or by delegation, diligent participation in the consumerist good life, and successfully orgasmic sexual intercourse.

The virtual do-as-you-likes which operate alongside the do's and don'ts are 'virtual' in the sense that the positive rules they contain are so minimal as to leave caprice or desire substantially in command. They deal with areas of human behaviour which western civilisation, as other civilisations, subjected to comprehensive positive rules. In the Correctorate's teaching, virtual do-as-you-likes operate for art in all its forms, as for dress, dancing, social manners, propriety of speech, modes of personal address, and relations with the supernatural insofar as these are not declared absurd.

In all human communities, for the most serious of reasons including collective survival, the use of the human reproductive organs has been subjected to strict and intelligibly grounded rules. Note, by contrast, the Correctorate's rule: provided that minors and adults use their reproductive organs separately, that if more than one user is involved there is mutual consent, and that a condom is employed if infection seems possible, do as you like.

Reactions to the senselessness

It is not simply that this chaos of rules can be seen on examination not to make sense as a framework for living. It is also *experienced as senselessness* by

us contemporary westerners who are required to subscribe to it. For the most part, we experience it as senselessness unreflectively, in that depth of our being where countless generations of human beings before us have trained us by heredity to assess—in a combined act of reason, feeling and intuition—any presentation purporting to be a framework for living. And encountering this senselessness that the West's ruling powers and licensed correctorates are proposing to us as a life, when our minds and hearts are seeking sense, we experience it as offence and take offence.

We find, that is to say, that consciousness of this life we are involved in—this collective life designed and mainly lived by white westerners—presents offence to us. Nothing more natural, then, than that we should want, as individuals, to annihilate consciousness and, collectively, not to reproduce the community of white westerners that offers and suffers this life.

Sensitive young people, on the threshold of life, are particularly attentive to the framework of rules presented to them. Little wonder then that many of these, over the past half-century, have found and practised various methods of recurrently annihilating consciousness. Recurrently, for such periods as their work or study allows, they do so through drugs or drunkenness or reckless sex, through motorised speed or disco dancing or mass raves or rock concerts; or, ubiquitously, by means of personal stereos plugging ears and removing minds. Or else, increasingly, as we have seen in Ireland during these last forty years, they opt for annihilating consciousness permanently; if female, often irresolutely and unsuccessfully, if male, usually with full resolution and success.

But it is mainly for mature consumers in the prime of life—for recurrent or habitual suspensions of their ordinary consciousness—that tons of mood-altering and hallucinatory drugs from Afghanistan, Columbia and other producer countries reach the West monthly. These serve, along with alcohol and self-immersion in mind-numbing work for weeks or months on end, when the consumers' acquired ability to bury the pain proves insufficient. And there is one method of annihilating consciousness which is practised exclusively by mature adults, usually men. So regularly does it occur that we have recognised it as a malady characteristic of our times and given it the specific name, *rage*. 'Unmotivated' it is often termed, but wrongly so.

Senselessness thwarting reproduction

When senselessness is apprehended

in the shared collective life, motivation to reproduce that life flags. In order to maintain population stability, a society's women must bear an average of about 2.1 children per lifetime. Europe's overall fertility rate is around 1.4 (Ireland's 1.85). The rate for the USA lies just under the replacement level, but well beneath it if immigrant Hispanic and native African-American fertility are left out. While high immigration enables the American population to grow, in Western Europe it is only through immigration that the population has been remaining stable. Those immigrant groups whose adherence to their own cultures makes them resistant to consumerist indoctrination have much higher birth rates than the indigenous Europeans (in Britain, the birth rate of the Black and Asian immigrant minorities is fifteen times that of the indigenous).

On current trends in the larger European countries, sharp declines of total population are expected in the next twenty-five years. The present demographic situation in the West recalls two widely separated episodes. In the last phase of the western Roman Empire, while the birth rate and vigour of the Roman and romanised core declined, immigration, largely Germanic, kept the system functioning. In the latter decades of the Soviet Union before its collapse, there was an alarmingly low natality among the white or European population in Russia and Ukraine, as opposed to the Asian. The latter, living mainly in the Central Asian federal republics, had remained to a considerable degree culturally shielded from the communist socio-ethical experiment. But perhaps the most common instance of senselessness producing a collective will not to reproduce has been the so-called 'primitive tribe' in the American and other continents after a disruptive intrusion by Europeans had robbed its collective life of meaning. For any human community, small or large, it simply does not make sense to reproduce a collective life whose proffered framework for living fails to do that.

Consumerism's ersatz sense

Most of the time, most westerners manage to bury the pain. On top of the training they have inherited from the generations before them in assessing for sense the life presented to them, another skin-deep training has been superimposed. From tender years onwards, the consumerist economy, and its accompanying teaching, condition them to accept an *ersatz* sense in place of the real sense they crave for.

This substitute sense is provided, fundamentally, by the continuously increasing flow of money to states and

individuals which the consumerist economy supplies. The persuasive force of this flow is actualised by the many gratifying things which the increasing money itself, and the constantly inventive technology it finances, enable states and consumers to do. Among the many powers thus conferred on consumers are the ability to use cellular phones for many things besides phoning, to visit many distant places, and to live longer lives than their ancestors.

While such benefits, in the eyes of most people, give material sense to the life on offer, a central message of the Correctorate's teaching furnishes it, for some people, with a semblance of moral sense. This message, constantly repeated, has to do with the unrivalled moral excellence of life in the contemporary West. It tells us that the Correctorate's overthrow of various restrictions, oppressions and cruelties which characterised European civilisation makes this present life a freer, more just and kinder life than the life that preceded it—and than all the lives previously lived, or now being lived, by humanity.

The net result is that most consumers, most of the time, believe in the surface of their minds that this present life of the western world is the good life sought by mankind throughout the ages. 'Stress', everyone recognises, stress of body and soul, regularly accompanies the living of this life—as it certainly accompanies the maintenance of that belief. But stress with recurrent depression, most westerners resignedly accept, is an inevitable condition of living a life which despite all—despite even its moments of clear, shocking vision—is a good life.

That is the situation. And it is likely that, for as long as the money flow to governments and consumers continues to increase, and the teaching that this is a liberated, more just and kinder life continues to have force for some, the West's senseless post-European system will continue to function. Dating its launch from that momentous rule change of 1945, it has still some years to go before it matches the life span of its more conservatively post-western Russian counterpart. And with luck it could last a while longer than that.

The limit of its life span is set by the very transient nature of the two factors which, by supplying its *ersatz* sense, enable it to exist. Ultimately, for one reason or another, the continuous increase of spending money which provides both its main *ersatz* sense and its social glue will cease. And its vaunted liberation from previous oppressive rules and practice will become for the few who have heeded that boast merely the way things are. Nothing will then remain to make the system's senseless life seem a good life or to prevent the direct and

continuous impact of its senselessness on the consciousness of westerners, young and old. Inevitably, then, the chaos of its values and rules will explode into a violent social chaos without many precedents in history.

In conclusion

The fact that this chaos looms as an inevitable outcome of the present condition of the West is the final light thrown on that condition by this recognition of the Second American Revolution and its context, and this tracing of its nature and result within the West. For historians the most valuable element of this exercise is likely to be the recognition of the revolution's context: the fact that it was one of three more or less simultaneous efforts by Europeans to found, in place of European civilisation, a more accommodating civilisation: one whose rules would enable states and people *to do more things and bigger things, righteously*, than did European civilisation.

These three efforts viewed together, each of them supported by millions of people, indicate a strong conviction among twentieth-century Europeans, in Europe and overseas, that the civilisation which their ancestors created, and which enabled them to dominate and lead the world, had ended its usefulness—had had its day. Clearly, by believing that, they made it a fact: a fact for historians of the twentieth century to record, if they are doing their job right.

As to the fact that the American effort to create a new civilisation has, like the German and Russian efforts, failed in its purpose, this is not so much a matter for historians as for thoughtful westerners who have the future welfare of the West at heart. It challenges them to think and imagine, constructively, how that hitherto unsuccessful effort might be made to succeed.

Desmond Fennell's latest book

About Being Normal in Abnormal Circumstances

was published by
Athol Books last year.

It can be ordered through the
Athol Books website,

www.atholbooks.org

or write to:

Athol Books
PO Box 339
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Communism and Christianity

A few issues ago Conor Lynch wrote an impressionistic article on Marxism and Christianity. The French Communist Party dealt with this question in its usual thorough fashion and was a cause of debate for a number of decades in French society. Recently I came across a book with a collection of speeches on this very subject from the leaders of the French CP from the 1930s to the 1980s: Maurice Thorez, Waldek Rochet and Georges Marchais.

The speeches are of interest as much as for what is said as for the rigorous manner in which the ideas are expressed.

Maurice Thorez

Probably the most famous speech on this subject was given by Maurice Thorez in April 1936. Thorez outlined for the first time the policy of "*la main tendue*" or "*the extended hand*" to Christian workers. The relationship between Christians and Communists did not require either to abandon their principles. On this basis Thorez made the following offer:

"We extend the hand to the Catholic worker, employee, artisan and peasant. We, who are secularist, because you are our brother and you are affected by the same concerns".

Thorez went on to make two propositions:

1. Communists are secularists and materialists.
2. There exists an objective economic and social solidarity between the Catholic workers and communists".

So, although Christians and Communists have diametrically opposite philosophical views of the world, cooperation is possible on the basis of the economic conditions faced by Christian and Communist workers. The style of Thorez is to begin by staking out points of difference before seeking areas of common ground. Accordingly he begins by affirming communist values:

"We communists are the disciples of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. We are Marxist-Leninists, convinced partisans of dialectical materialism, the theory of the avant-garde of the revolutionary proletariat.

"We are the inheritors and continue the tradition of the revolutionary thought of French materialism of the 18th century, the Great Encyclopedists, themselves the spiritual sons of that

other French philosopher Descartes whose memory we celebrated recently".

But, notwithstanding the above, Thorez quotes from Lenin to the effect that the war on religion is merely an anarchist's phrase and that anti-clericalism has been used by the bourgeoisie to divide the workers. Thorez believed that religion has played at different times a progressive and reactionary role in the history of mankind. He also considered the possibility that the spirit that moves Christians for paradise in the next life is similar to that which inspires communists for a better life in this world. In the following passage he elaborates imaginatively on this theme:

"Is it possible to evoke without emotion the centuries in which the spires from our magnificent cathedrals have risen to the sky, these pure gems of popular art, which from their old stones—living for those who know how to understand them—protest against the idea that the Middle Ages were a dark period in our history.

"I often compare the builders of cathedrals inspired by an ardent faith which 'moved mountains' and led to great achievements, with the builders of the new socialist state, the Stakhanovites, the heroes of work, who raised from the virgin soil of the Soviet Union giant factories, whole cities as well as great monuments which affirm the great flair and enthusiasm of communism."

Thorez distinguishes between the materialism of communists and other types of materialism. He quotes from Engels's pamphlet "*Ludwig Feuerbach and the end of classical German philosophy*":

"By materialism the philistine means gluttony, intoxication, the joys of the flesh, the search for luxuries, cupidity, avarice, the pursuit of profits and speculation on the stock exchange. In short, all the sordid vices that he himself is a slave to in secret."

Thorez believed, on the other hand that:

"Communism, by contrast, is a noble and pure ideal, a source of tireless and generous enthusiasm, which inspires its adherents with dedication and a spirit of sacrifice..."

"True morality, as well as a true policy, brings together men so that by

their efforts they work for the happiness of all."

Georges Marchais

Forty years later in June 1976 Georges Marchais developed some of Thorez's ideas on the cultural antecedents of communism:

"In the schools of our Party, we teach communists that Marxism was not born from nothing, but that it began from a long line from Democritus and Aristotle, from Descartes and Diderot, from Babeuf and Hegel. More and more Christian thinkers consider that Marxism was an important development in human thought. Who would dare look at our history from the perspective of a property owner excluding part of our heritage from our people! The Greats of the world commanded castles and cathedrals, but it was the ancestors of today's workers who built them. Jeanne the peasant (Joan of Arc—JM) believed in heaven, but she was for all French who proclaim a popular attachment to what became the nation. Pasteur was a Christian, Joliot-Curie was a communist and both of them belong to the pantheon of French science. Materialists and Christians have worked together in our country for great things. Who would dare assume the one group the good French and the other the bad? Together they made France. And together they found themselves side by side in the resistance to the Hitlerite invasion. And it is not by chance that the communist poet, Aragon, celebrated the union of the rose and the reseda, the union of the one that believed and the other which did not... Aragon who also said: 'In my poems the Virgin and the Saints have their place, and I am not less for it than what I am'."

Like Thorez, Marchais distances communist materialism from what nowadays might be called "*consumerism*":

"Our conceptions have nothing to do with this sordid materialism which, according to Marx, drowns everything 'in the icy waters of selfish calculation'."

Interestingly, the French Communist Party appeared to have a similar attitude to the Church to pornography. Although Marchais denies that communists are puritans, he denounces pornography for "*exalting everything that debases, lowers and degrades the human being*". He refers to a letter that appeared in *l'Humanité* from a reader who overheard some children in front of a cinema advertising a pornographic film. One of the children said: "*It is not true. God doesn't exist. If he did he would not*

allow such things". Marchais reproduced the following extract from the letter:

"It is not the rejection of God which shocks me. What is revolting is that the rejection includes distress, insecurity and anxiety at an age where a child seeks role models and values which help him to develop. It is also the image of a couple—his parents—which finds itself altered. This is profoundly immoral."

But if communists share some values with Christians, the key basis for an alliance is economic. As Marchais says:

"It is precisely because we are materialists that we attribute a determinant importance to the position of men in society, to their material situation and to the moral consequence of that situation. It is precisely these elements which we consider decisive in uniting them or dividing them rather than ideology."

An anti-clerical bourgeois has less in common with a communist worker than a Catholic worker. Referring to Eugene Duhring, Marchais quotes Engels's pamphlet "*Anti-Duhring*":

"He is more Bismarkian than Bismark. He wishes to launch the policemen of the future in pursuit of religion."

Waldeck Rochet

Waldeck Rochet in his speech of March 1966 expressed similar sentiments:

"The common effort for a better life does not imply a philosophical convergence, but a respect for the convictions of each. Believing and non-believing workers have the same class interests and the same need for socialism. And because they have the same passion to preserve life they can and must unite."

Of the three leaders Waldeck Rochet appears to be the least interested in the cultural aspect of Catholicism and the most interested in affirming communist values. But his speeches are none the less interesting for that. In his speech of December 1944 he gives quite a good summary of dialectical and philosophical materialism:

"In the first place the dialectical method of knowledge envisages each phenomenon in relation to phenomena which accompany and condition it. No phenomenon can be understood in isolation from its environmental conditions.

"Secondly, the dialectical method considers phenomena, not in a static state, but from the point of view of their birth, development, and death, for in nature where all is incessant

movement, always something is born, develops and disintegrates and dies.

"Thirdly the dialectic method sees in phenomena the development of hardly noticeable quantitative changes which lead to sudden dramatic qualitative changes resulting from the accumulation of quantitative changes.

"Finally, the dialectic method lays bare the struggle of opposites between what is born and what dies, the struggle between what is new and what is old and is the basis of qualitative changes and development in general."

Rochet then sets down the characteristics of philosophical materialism:

"1. Marxist philosophical materialism begins with the principle that the world is material by nature and that the multiple phenomena of the universe are different aspects of nature in movement.

"2. Marxist philosophical materialism starts from the principle that matter, nature, being is an objective reality existing independently of consciousness; that matter is the source of sensations, representations and consciousness; and that thought cannot be separated from matter and is the product of it or more precisely the product of the brain which is the organ of thought.

"3. A fundamental principle of Marxist philosophical materialism is that the world and its laws are perfectly knowable, that our knowledge of the laws of nature verified by practice and experience is valid knowledge.

"In summary communists are in philosophy materialists in their conception of the world, which does not have recourse to the idea of God. They think that the development of science gives to the world an explanation, if not sufficient, at least rational, which approaches the closest to the truth."

In his 1944 speech Rochet affirms the principle of separation of Church and State. He quotes approvingly from Article 124 of the Soviet Constitution:

"So as to assure citizens the freedom of conscience the Church in the USSR is separated from the State and the school from the Church. The freedom to practice religion and the freedom to conduct anti-religious propaganda are recognised for all citizens."

Rochet elaborates by saying:

"We have never demanded and do not demand of Catholics to abandon their beliefs and accept communist doctrine as a condition of working together. Of course, there must be reciprocity. We ask Catholics not to demand that we abandon our conceptions."

Rochet repeats the point made by Thorez regarding both the progressive and reactionary role that the Church has played in the history of mankind, but also refers to the recent struggle when many priests fought along side the resistance while most of the bishops supported Pétain.

Regarding the relationship between religion and politics Rochet makes the following interesting point:

"In the course of history the dominant classes have often appropriated the idea of God to fashion it in their own image and for their profit, but in certain circumstances the poor and oppressed have also appropriated the idea of a Christian God so as to justify their aspirations."

In a speech from 1966 Rochet applied the same principles to Islam as he applied to Christianity. He was of the opinion that Islam played a positive role in the Algerian war of liberation against the "*French colonial yoke*". It gave the Algerians "*an extra reason to struggle, a stimulant in battle and a consolation in reverses*".

Nevertheless Rochet believed that there was a reactionary element within the Algerian bourgeoisie which was using Islam to prevent the march of socialism in Algeria. On the question of the religious form that national liberation movements take Rochet concludes that the class interest served is crucial. Accordingly:

"We have to get to the bottom of things. We must search for that which constitutes the determining element."

Marchais's View

Many of the themes already discussed above were covered in a searching interview with Georges Marchais by the Catholic newspaper *La Croix* in November 1970. *La Croix* asked Marchais about the Marxist view that "*Religion was the opium of the people*". Marchais replied in the following terms:

"The meaning of the phrase for Marx and for us is that religion belongs to the sphere of philosophical idealism that overall it represents a false consciousness which obscures the real world and that it tends to divert man from acting in the real world."

However, Marchais went on to say:

"Today more and more numerous Christians do not live their faith as an individual and passive escape in the search for consolation in the 'hereafter', but as a justification for their struggles against a society that they rightly judge has injustices."

La Croix also questioned Marchais on the condition of the Churches in the communist bloc. Marchais seemed to concede that the situation was less than perfect:

"The policy followed in these socialist countries in relation to the Church is a function of the national and historical conditions which prevailed in these countries at the moment when they become socialist..."

"Take for example Russia and Hungary. The Church was a large feudal landowner. Then it led the struggle against the new popular regimes...."

"But above all we have explained many times that our Party has its own policy and programme which is based on conditions in France today. We have absolutely no intention of following a 'model' for the good reason that there are no 'models'. Without doubt we will draw the lessons of experience from the countries that are socialist: both their successes and their errors."

When these overtures were made by the French Communist Party many people felt that they were part of an electoral ploy, but I see no reason to doubt the Party's sincerity on this matter. *Church & State* magazine has never succumbed to anti-clericalism even when its resistance to Catholic social power was at its most uncompromising. I take this to be because of its communist influence.

Attitudes To Religion

Since my late teens I have accepted the communist view of the world, but as a consequence I have never felt the need to denigrate Christianity, still less convert Christians to atheism.

If ever I thought that it was necessary to abandon God in order to have broadly progressive ideas, it could only have been for a brief moment. In my experience I have occasionally been in sympathy with the political views of Christians and have often found those of atheists repugnant (e.g. Christopher Hitchens).

There is a scene in Joseph Heller's *Catch 22* in which the main character is trying to chat up a woman who he thinks is an atheist. He starts by saying that God couldn't exist in this awful world of suffering (This is a line of argument which, incidentally, I've never found particularly convincing. As the Jewish expression goes: "*where is it written that life has to be fair?*"). The character continues by arguing that if God were any good there would be no pain. But the woman objects that pain is there to tell us that there is something wrong with the body. To which the main character asks why He couldn't have used a fucking doorbell!

As the conversation progresses the woman becomes upset and finally blurts out that the God that she doesn't believe in is not like that at all, but is a caring and loving God. The woman is meant to be ridiculous, but nevertheless I have more sympathy with her than the man.

I consider that religion is a metaphor that has some valid insights. Oscar Wilde, for example, said that he had no difficulty in believing in the miracles of Jesus Christ; that the charm of Christ's personality could bring peace to souls in anguish; that when he spoke on the hillside the multitude forgot their thirst and hunger; and that on another occasion the power of his presence made the water people drank taste like wine.

And, when death lays its icy hand on the shoulder, even communists will have to face their own St. Peter and account for themselves before passing the gates. A few months ago Nuala O'Faolain announced that she had cancer and was about to die. In an interview with Marian Finucane the listener was left to conclude that her life was meaningless. And in the *Sunday Independent* a poem was dedicated to her entitled "*What's the Point?*". It might be thought that the poem was a denunciation, but in the decadent culture of the *Sunday Independent* it read more like a tribute.

Perhaps in a more Christian time she would have been condemned for the sin of despair. And there will not be too much communist sympathy for a life that was "*pointless*". But in the end I believe her last days of anguish were concluded with the peace granted by oblivion.



What follows are extracts from the economic sections of the MDC programme for government. What this amounts to is *Privatise, Privatise, Privatise*—obviously just what the 'West' wants. The nature of these Opposition policies help to explain the neurotic attacks launched against President Mugabe by the globalist media over most of a decade. Zimbabwe clearly still has something of a social economy, with a strong State sector. Lately broadsheet commentary on Zimbabwe has sunk to a new low, with gems like *Cooking And Cleaning For The Comrades—Then They Are Raped*, a feature in the *Irish Times*, on 8th July 2008 which suggested that members of the Opposition were being turned into sex slaves. The lurid nature of the story put us in mind of Andrew Meldrum's *Guardian* piece in 2002, in which he claimed supporters of the Government beheaded a member of the Opposition's wife in front of their daughters—a claim which was later totally discredited. Even the puny SDLP has joined in the fun, with its John Dallat MLA writing: "*Who will save the people of Zimbabwe from an African holocaust* (Irish News 8.7.2008): clearly there is only one answer to this rhetorical question!

Tsvangirai's Election Programme

Zimbabwe has one or two world-class mineral deposits in platinum, chrome and asbestos and many small and medium-sized deposits—up to 5,000 gold mines, for example. An enabling environment is required to encourage miners to develop these resources. Industry experts believe that the correct policies could see a number of new mines being developed, resulting in a significant growth in national export volumes.

The MDC believes that government's role is to facilitate and foster foreign and domestic investment in productive sectors in order to increase jobs and income. Investment in extractive industries like mining is not as dependent on investor whims as it is resource-based and long term. For this reason, it is believed that, once the political issues in the crisis are addressed, the mining industry will recover rapidly from the present slump in output and could play a major role in the process of economic stabilization and recovery.

The MDC does not believe that government should be involved in running businesses and it will restore title in full to all companies. It does, however, believe that businesses should pay taxes to the government.

The MDC government will continue to operate the Mining Commissioner's Office but would overhaul it along the lines recently adopted for Mozambique. This will require the Commissioner to inspect all mining operations to ensure that they comply with the law and are recording true values and paying appropriate taxes. All other mining agencies will be privatized, except for the Mining Affairs Board, which will be responsible for safety, the environment and standards, and which will have wide representation: farmers, local and central government, the Chamber of Mines (the employers' organization) and trade unions. It will also comprise technical experts as members of staff who are able to assess situations correctly and react appropriately.

For large-scale mining ventures, security

of assets, dividend remittability and a predictable policy environment are critically important. For this reason the Marange diamond field will be brought under proper control and restored to the company that has legal rights to the resources. This is essential because the present situation threatens Zimbabwe's membership of the Kimberley Process and consequently the sale of legal diamonds through normal channels into the world market.

Private enterprise in general, and industry in particular, will be the engine of economic growth in a new Zimbabwe. Accordingly, the major focus of policy is to create an economic and socio-political environment that entrenches a vibrant mixed-market economy in the country, provides existing businesses with the confidence to maintain and expand their enterprises, and encourages foreign direct investment.

The MDC government will remove price controls and reverse the coercive indigenization proposals recently adopted. A full investigation into all major transactions involving alleged patronage and corruption in any form will be undertaken and, if substantiated, reversed.

Consistent with the establishment of a market economy, private entrepreneurs will make decisions regarding investment, production and pricing with the objective of making a sound return on their investment. The major role of government will be to aid and encourage the private sector by providing incentives and the required supporting infrastructural facilities.

The establishment of a vibrant enterprise economy will be underpinned by an unwavering commitment to:

The safety and security of individual and corporate property rights.

Opening industry to foreign direct investment and the unfettered repatriation of dividends.

The repeal of all statutes that inhibit the establishment and maintenance of a socio-economic environment conducive to the sustained growth and development of the

industrial sector.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

In international trade, government will pursue a policy that will foster fair trade on a competitive basis in global markets, free trade within the SADC region, and full co-operation with any existing and future pan-African trade institutions.

The World Trade Organization

The MDC government will maintain Zimbabwe's membership of the WTO and participate constructively in all its deliberations on world trade arrangements. In particular government will support efforts to reduce subsidies to agriculture in the developed states the establishment of a more open world trade system for agricultural products. At the same time the government will seek to strengthen WTO regulations against unfair trade practices such as dumping and non-tariff barriers to trade.

Of the many priorities the new MDC government will face, restoring normal supplies of liquid fuels and ensuring supplies of electricity will be among the most urgent. In addition to addressing these immediate problems, there are structural issues in the energy sector which the MDC will also begin tackling from the start. Much of the technical work for reform of the liquid fuels and electricity sectors has been done, but structural reform is stalled because the present government does not wish to relinquish control. The costs to the economy of this stance, especially over the past two years, have been enormous.

The MDC's approach will be to give the private sector a greater role, thereby tapping the financial and other resources that local and international energy companies have to offer, but doing so within the framework of professional regulation which protects consumer interests and promotes national energy goals.

LIQUID FUELS

An MDC government will immediately establish a consortium of oil companies to undertake the procurement of liquid fuels on a transparent, best-practice basis. This will be followed by the negotiation of temporary regulatory arrangements (including an automatic price formula), pending the refocusing of NOCZIM into a statutory regulator whose responsibility will be to supervise the activities of the private sector in the procurement, pricing and distribution of liquid fuels.

The Beira to Harare Pipeline

This is presently owned by a consortium of interests and is being used to charge above normally accepted tariffs for pipelines of this type. While the private sector will be left to correct this anomaly, it will be supported in its efforts by the MDC government, using its diplomatic and economic influence. In the longer term, and in consultation with other land-locked countries in the region, consideration will be given to enhancing the capacity of this pipeline to facilitate deliveries for onward shipment to other countries in the region.

The exact nature of the immediate actions in respect of the unbundling and privatization of the electricity sector will depend on the state of the industry at the time. An Electricity Consumer Consultative Council will be formed to provide a forum for public participation—a channel to provide the rationale for any increases in tariffs that may be necessary to restore the economic viability of the utility, and to give consumers a medium through which they can air issues and concerns.

...
A new Electricity Act and Rural Electrification Fund Act will be finalized and submitted to Parliament as soon as possible. These Acts will provide for orderly privatesector participation in the energy sector, will give the legal basis for ZERC and will establish a mechanism for accelerating rural electrification by leveraging privatesector resources to complement the rural electrification levy that is already in place.

...
The MDC government will repeal repressive legislation that restricts access to information, and encourage investment in a variety of media services. It will not own any newspapers, and it will open the airwaves to competition. It will encourage community media, and international journalists will be welcome.

...
The MDC will retain the Posts and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ) as a regulatory authority to deal with opening up private sector participation in postal and telecommunication services.

...
It is accepted that a post office is an important institution in the daily lives of the people and that this remains an important system for the provision of certain services. To this end the Zimpost will be taken over by a new board reporting to Parliament. However, POTRAZ will make sure that the atmosphere is conducive for private-sector participation in this sector in order to decentralize postal services to all corners of the country.

...
The MDC government will open up investment in the mobile phone networks. Through POTRAZ, private-sector participation will be encouraged in this critical sector to enhance cheap and reliable networks with nationwide coverage that ensure that each person can communicate. The MDC will encourage cell phone companies to share distribution facilities.

...
While an MDC government will support a publicly funded fixed telephone company, POTRAZ will ensure that private-sector participation will also be encouraged in order to provide low-cost telephone services and to widen the options available to the public.

The Public Broadcaster

An MDC government will make sure that the airwaves are freed and liberalized. It will ensure the creation of a non-partisan public broadcaster that serves the interests of the people and provides a nationwide

service. It will reflect the diversity and broad aspirations of the Zimbabwean people.

The MDC government will completely review the operations of the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation and decide future policy towards the electronic media. It will

look into:

The full privatization of the electronic media...

[We are indebted to Joe Keenan for this report]

David Morrison

There has to be democracy in Zimbabwe, says Brown (but not in Palestine – or Saudi Arabia)

"I hope that the African Union and its leaders will make it absolutely clear to Mr Mugabe that there has to be democracy, that there has to be change and a new government has got to be brought in. ... The so-called elections will not be recognised." (Daily Telegraph, 30 June 2008 [1])

Those are the words of Prime Minister Brown, after Robert Mugabe was sworn in again as President of Zimbabwe, following his win in the runoff election on 27 June 2008, from which his opponent, Morgan Tsvangirai, withdrew.

Brown's denunciation of Robert Mugabe's re-election as illegitimate has been echoed by every other political leader in Europe and America. There has been no dissent. Their common theme is that democracy must be restored in Zimbabwe and all kinds of intervention, up to and including military intervention, are being discussed to bring about this essential objective.

Palestine – democracy overthrown

When you hear these people talk about restoring democracy in Zimbabwe, remember that the US organised the overthrow of a democratically elected government in Palestine in June 2007 and that the EU leaders, who now denounce Robert Mugabe's re-election as illegitimate, supported the overthrow of that democratically elected government by the US.

That government was the product of elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) in January 2006, elections that were universally accepted as having been free and fair. That government was led by Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas, a party that won 44.5% of the "national list" vote and 74 out of the 132 seats in the PLC elections. That government was an all-party "national unity" government, which was duly endorsed by the PLC in accordance with the Palestinian constitution. Nevertheless, these defenders of democracy in Zimbabwe supported the overthrow of that government.

Furthermore, these defenders of democracy in Zimbabwe now recognise as the legitimate government of Palestine an entity led by Salam Fayyad, whose party won 2.4% of the vote and 2 seats in the PLC elections. He has wisely

never sought the endorsement of the PLC for his "government", since he wouldn't get it.

In terms of democratic legitimacy, Robert Mugabe is streets ahead of Salam Fayyad, since he got over 40% of the vote in the initial presidential election, which may not have been as free and fair as the PLC elections, but had some claim to democratic validity.

Friends need not be democratic

Salam Fayyad has an advantage over Robert Mugabe: he is very popular in Washington (or he was until he wrote a letter to EU leaders recently urging it not to "upgrade" its relations with Israel, because "Israel continues to systematically violate Palestinian human rights and flaunt its international obligations" [2]).

In the eyes of the US/EU, Robert Mugabe's crime is not that his re-election was of dubious legitimacy, but that he isn't one of their friends. If he were, his lack of democratic credentials would be disregarded.

After all, some of the West's best friends have no democratic credentials at all, for instance, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. When Prime Minister Brown made a day trip to Jedda recently to plead with OPEC to produce more oil, he didn't mention the fact that the Saudi head of state hadn't been democratically elected. Clearly, the principle that "there has to be democracy", which the Prime Minister insists must be applied in Zimbabwe, doesn't have to apply to friends, particularly those with lots of oil and deep pockets with which to purchase British arms.

The US/EU has a flexible approach to democracy in other states – roughly speaking, the rule is that allies need not have democratic institutions, but enemies must have, otherwise they lay themselves open to criticism at least and invasion at worst.

Problems arise when elections in otherwise friendly places unexpectedly

give victory to a party that isn't an ally of the US/EU. This happened in Palestine in January 2006, and a way had to be found to negate the outcome. The US managed it in June 2007 after eighteen months of concerted effort, which is detailed by David Rose in his article, *The Gaza Bombshell*, in the April 2008 issue of *Vanity Fair* [3].

(A problem of a similar kind has recently arisen in Ireland, where the electorate decisively rejected the Lisbon Treaty in a referendum. One might think that this would have caused the Treaty, in its present form, to be shelved, since it has to be ratified by all 27 members of the EU before it comes into force. But the reaction of most EU political leaders has been to demand that ratification proceed in other states and to tell Ireland that it has a problem which it must resolve, in other words, a way must be found to negate the outcome of the first referendum, by having a second, and if necessary a third, and so on, until the correct result is obtained.)

Double standards on intervention

Intervention of some kind in Zimbabwe to bring about Robert Mugabe's removal from power is demanded on all sides. From every point of view, the situation in Palestine is immeasurably worse than in Zimbabwe, and it has lasted a great deal longer.

And the situation is not improving. Over 400 Palestinians were killed in the first six months of this year, 106 in five days from 27 February to 3 March [4]. In a report issued on 6 March 2008, a group of NGOs including Trócaire, CAFOD, Oxfam, Amnesty International and Christian Aid declared that "the situation for 1.5 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip is worse now than it has ever been since the start of the Israeli military occupation in 1967" [5].

Robert Mugabe may be guilty of many things, but he is not guilty of taking over a swathe of neighbouring territory by force and colonising it, and holding on to the territory for more than 40 years against the wishes of the people who live there. Nor is he guilty of violating over 30 Security Council resolutions, most of them arising from that occupation.

But there are no calls for intervention in Palestine to put an end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Not now, and rarely at any time during the past 40 years of Israeli occupation. It could be argued that double standards are being applied.

Nelson Mandela "speaks out"

There has been a great deal of irritation in Britain that South Africa has failed to bring Robert Mugabe to heel. President Thabo Mbeki is blamed

for this because he has steadfastly (and sensibly) refused to denounce Mugabe in public. But there has even been some veiled criticism of ex-President Nelson Mandela for failing to "speak out" on this matter.

On his recent visit to Britain as part of his 90th birthday celebrations, he did "speak out". Here is the full text of what he said (at a dinner in Hyde Park on 26 June 2008):

"Friends, thank you for joining us here this evening, and your support for our causes.

"It is a great privilege having been able to travel here in our 90th year and be in the presence of so many good friends.

"Thank you for the continuing support in the fight against the terrible scourge of HIV and AIDS. You understand that it is in your hands to make a difference.

"The world remains beset by so much human suffering, poverty and deprivation. It is in your hands to make of our world a better one for all, especially the poor, vulnerable and marginalised.

"We look back at much human progress, but we sadly note so much failing as well. In our time we spoke out on the situation in Palestine and Israel, and that conflict continues unabated. We warned against the invasion of Iraq, and observe the terrible suffering in that country.

"We watch with sadness the continuing tragedy in Darfur.

"Nearer to home we had seen the outbreak of violence against fellow Africans in our own country and the tragic failure of leadership in our neighbouring Zimbabwe.

"It is within this context that we should also see the plight of those affected by HIV and AIDS.

"It is now in the hands of your generations to help rid the world of such suffering.

"I thank you." [6]

There, he also "spoke out" on Palestine and Iraq. That portion of his remarks was underreported in Britain.

www.david-morrison.org.uk
(3 July 2008)

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Conor Lynch

John Mandeville, a martyr of the Land War, has been 'Disappeared' out of Irish consciousness, to be replaced by a 'false memory' about Irish roots

The Land War In Cork

"Remember Mitchelstown"

In the July 2008 issue of the *Irish Political Review* Jack Lane gave an account of the Trevor/Bowen School put on at the end of May by the Mitchelstown Literary Society. He describes Martin Mansergh TD's complete failure in public to defend his view that Elizabeth Bowen was not a British spy in Ireland during the Second World War. Fintan O'Toole of the *Irish Times* was billed to speak on William Trevor. With no notice he failed to turn up. He was uncontactable and did not apologise.

This had also been the case with his fellow *Irish Times* luminary, Eileen Battersby, the previous year. When she was eventually reached some time later by the organisers, all they got for their troubles was a heap of abuse. Next year Roy Foster is due to do a turn. We will see if he shows. As Jack said, people like the organisers of the Mitchelston

Literary Society must realise that they are without the Pale, and will be treated like shit by the big shots within it.

But why the Trevor/Bowen School at all? Fair enough, William Trevor was born and raised in Mitchelstown. But then he emigrated. His work has had little impact on the region he came from. He took on the role of Honorary President of the Mitchelstown Literary Society. But I believe he has now given this up. And what about Elizabeth Bowen?

So far as I can piece together the story, the Literary Society was as ignorant about her as was almost everyone else in Cork or the surrounding counties. The Society was in search of an iconic figure in literature and Bowen was suggested to them by someone in Dublin. Never mind that she was effectively an English writer, and proud

of it. Never mind that her longest stay in the area was in the family Big House near Doneraile during the War—and that only for the purposes of spying for the British.

Mitchelstown is part of Cork. The accent is pure Cork even though it is on the County's Northern borders. But is equally at the centre of Avondhu, including parts of Tipperary and Limerick. The local newspaper is *The Avondhu*. And Avondhu is the GAA division in Cork hurling and football. There is a wealth of literature which has inspired and been inspired by this area. Thomas Davis, Charles Kickham, Canon Sheehan . . . This place was at the heart of the land struggle, and only a blind man could pass through Mitchelstown without knowing that this was the land of William O'Brien and John Mandeville.

For there, guarding the entrance to the Town Square, is the magnificent statue of Mandeville. He was a nephew of the famous Fenian, John O'Mahony. Nearby are memorials at the spots where three Land League members were shot dead by the RIC.

Land War

On 11th December 1886, William O'Brien and John Mandeville led a rent strike by the tenants on the 25,000 acre estate of the Countess of Kingston around Mitchelstown, though neither was a tenant. O'Brien was a Member of Parliament and Mandeville was a free farmer with 100 acres. He was also Chairman of the Mitchelstown Board of Guardians and a Director of the Mitchelstown Light Railway. Proposed evictions were resisted, with the two leaders saying they were prepared to burn the Big House down around the Countess' head.

On the 31st October 1887 both men were taken to jail to serve two and three month sentences. During their trial a peaceful protest was held in the town, attended by John Dillon MP, the Mayors of Cork and Clonmel, and several English MPs. The meeting was attacked by police with batons and swords. Then the police opened fire from their barracks killing three: a Mr. Casey, Michael Landrigan and John Shinnick. The latter two were deliberately targeted for having previously refused to help the police. Several bystanders were wounded. Eyewitness accounts of this will be printed in the next issue of this magazine.

Mandeville was so badly treated in prison that he died shortly after his release. An inquest jury found that his bad treatment was the cause of his death. His wife Mary wrote a diary of the period

following his arrest. This is reprinted here:

Mary Mandeville's Story

Soon after I parted from my husband at Middleton, he & Mr. O'Brien were placed in a brougham & driven to Cork guarded by hussars. On their arrival there, they were not placed in the regular prison cells that night, but what are called probationary cells, & got bread & milk for their supper. The next day (November 1st) the Dr. ordered John a flannel as he had forgotten his own in the hurry of starting for Middleton on the previous day. That night the deputy governor & a party of warders entered John's cell & removed his clothes which were under him in bed and left a prison suit which had been made expressly for him, as they were none large enough to fit him. He contented himself on this occasion with a verbal protest, as he told Mr. O'Brien he intended doing, though he was resolved neither to associate with criminals nor to clean out his cell, both of which resolutions he subsequently carried out. John did not sleep that night, in the disturbance at Middleton, he pushed back from Mr. O'Brien, a detective who always follows Captain Plunkett, the man jumped upon John's foot, bursting the boot and breaking his toe, which pained him much in Cork, but doubly so at Tullamore owing to the frost. John never told the Dr. when in prison of his toe; nor did he blame the man, saying to me that he looked upon it, just as he would, upon a blow received in a boxing match. I only mention it to show how patient John naturally was & that he never complained except when as, he himself thought, he was being savagely ill-treated.

About three o'clock pm the deputy governor returned to his cell & desired him to get up adding 'we have brought you back your own clothes Mr. Mandeville'. He put them on & was brought on the corridor where he met Mr. O'Brien it was bitterly cold & dark, they each got a mug of tea & some white bread. John told me devoted tea-drinker as he was (he took it four times a day) it was so horrible he could not swallow it neither could he eat his bread. They were then placed in a brougham & driven to the railway station where there was a special train in readiness to convey them to Tullamore, they & their guard of police under the command of a D. Inspector got into a first class carriage Mr. O'Brien and John being in the centre. The cold was so intense that his teeth

were chattering & felt it the more severely, as he had not been allowed to bring his flannels with him from Cork. The blinds were drawn down in the carriage, but O'Brien said they were being taken to Tullamore which was one of the worst prisons in Ireland John replied he thought it very probable, as there they would be entirely among strangers, totally indifferent to them, & to what might befall them while in prison.

On their arrival at Tullamore, they were driven from the station to the jail & it cheered my husband greatly to see there a district inspector whom he had known at Mitchelstown & who had always had permission to shoot & fish at Clonkilla; he at once spoke to John in a very friendly manner. On entering their cells the Doctor came to inspect them & said 'You need not be afraid, we are very kind to our prisoners at Tullamore.' John laughed & replied, 'Then you are greatly wronged for you have got the D-S bad name here.'

The next day he told the governor, that he objected, as he was only a political prisoner, & not a criminal, to associate with convicts, to clean out his cell, or to wear prison clothes; to this the latter made no response; but he & Mr. O'Brien were allowed to exercise together.

On November 4 Captain Fetherstonhaugh went to Dublin and returned next day on November 5th John was reported to him by the chief warden for refusing to wear prison dress & was sentenced to twenty-four hours bread & water; the allowance of bread being one lb of brown bread in 24 hours, the supply of cold water as John always laughingly remarked unlimited. The result of this treatment on John & Mr. O'Brien was that they both got an attack of diarrhoea; the latter was so weak that he fainted in his cell & had subsequently to be removed to hospital.

I cannot conceive how any doctor could allow this cold diet in severe winter weather, unless the object was, permanently to destroy his health. John was confined in a flagged cell & whether it was this or the damp air of Tullamore that caused it but his throat became very sore & he was placed under medical care. While under treatment he was sent for by the governor on November 14th & sentenced to three days' bread & water for again refusing to don prison garb. His surprise and indignation was great, he was so totally unfit for it and he expressed this feeling to the governor who replied 'What can I do, Mr. Mandeville the doctor has certified you as fit for punishment'. 'I was so disgusted

with the Dr,' continued John, that I said to the governor, 'Is it that fellow, why his greatest enemy could not desire worse than that he should take one of his own prescriptions; the result would be that the next thing we should hear of would be a coroner's inquest on his body.' At this Captain Featherstonhaugh smiled, & John was removed to his own cell to undergo the sentence; I quote here his own description of his sufferings in a letter written but never forwarded to Mr. Hallifax until after his death. 'After being fourteen hours on punishment dietary I got a violent attack of diarrhoea, I complained to the doctor that day. Yet as some prison test unnecessary to mention, did not satisfy him I was kept on punishment for thirty hours longer; on this occasion I remained twenty-four hours without taking any food, as the dry bread hurt my throat, & I feared to use water to moisten the food, knowing from former experience its effects . . . ' 'However I got so very ill & weak & the prison physician's test having been satisfied I was allowed off all punishment on the evening of the third day and put under medical treatment.'

In speaking to me in that perfect confidence which existed between us John gave me a pathetic description of his own sufferings during those weary hours. A fellow political prisoner who was engaged in sack-making (A Tang prisoner John called him) gave him a rope which he tied round his waist; & as the pangs of hunger grew worse, he tightened the rope. The plank bed is removed from a prisoner's cell, when he is on bread & water so that hard as it is he cannot rest upon it, but John became so weak & exhausted that he threw himself down on the flagged floor and his mind wandered; he fancied he was a boy once more lying in the heather on the side of Sliebhnamon Mountain, he heard music & thought he was assisting at the crucifixion & then that faded away & there were voices in the air around him & he thought I was lying dead beside him 'I can never suffer more than I did then Mary', continued John, 'always feeling with my hand for your cold face, heart-broken with grief, never able to touch you, though I knew you were close beside me & then suddenly I regained consciousness & knowing what had happened to me, I knelt down & I prayed to God that he would rather let me die than go mad.' John complained bitterly to me that though Dr.Moorhead (JP for the King's County) called attention to how seriously ill he was, Dr.Ridley seemed anxious to prove how much punishment he could make him stand. At last he perceived he could bear no more. (My husband thought himself he was dying & said that at last the doctor seemed very frightened at his condition)

and took him off punishment diet 'but he was such a curious man' continued John, 'I never could understand him, though he was so uneasy about my health, that after this he visited me twice a day for some time, ordered medicine for my diarrhoea & a gargle for my throat which was very painful; he never made the slightest change in my food, except substituting white bread for brown & though knowing the exhausted state I was in & the disease from which I suffered he never ordered me as much as a cup of milk. The first day after this that I went out to exercise I was so weak that when I had taken a couple of rounds of the ring, I asked permission to retire to my cell; & for fully a week I spent the greater part of the time lying on the plank bed too exhausted to move'. One little incident in connection with this punishment I think does equal credit to both friends. Canon McAlroy told Mr. OBrien who was in hospital that John was on bread & water; the former immediately refused to take the hospital fare & returned to the ordinary prison food saying whenever John was punished he would do the same. The result was that he became quite ill & John on hearing it implored of Canon McAlroy the governor and warders never to let Mr. OBrien know. Consequently the latter was completely ignorant as to his prison treatment. John remarked to me 'What was the use of two of us suffering; I know for my part I would as willingly do OBrien's punishment for him as I would yours if you were in prison with me. It was a great comfort to me to feel that neither you, my poor mother, or OBrien knew what I was enduring, though I never complained, no official at Tullamore can ever say I whined; they always told me I was the jolliest prisoner who entered that jail. I never objected to food or otherwise always saying one dish of prison food was as good as another; except when I felt my future health has been wantonly injured (there is no doubt, they made a dead set on me at Tullamore) not for my own sake, a man can die but once, but for your sake knowing that to you & my own family my life was of consequence.'

November 24th. The most miserable day, I have ever spent so filled with indignation anxiety on John's behalf. On Tuesday night seven warders entered his cell, while he was asleep, seized him, tore off his clothes & left him in a state of perfect nudity. A convict suit of blue was then thrust into his cell. John asked the governor who was standing by if he expected to live without clothes until as 'You have clothes,' he replied pointing to the prison garb, John said he would never put them on; they then left his cell. Dr.Moorhead who visited the prison

during the day found John with nothing on but a sheet & quilt, his feet bare on a flagged floor walking up & down in a frightfully excited state I cannot bear to think of his sufferings; the cold & frost is so intense here, that though I have a fire in my bedroom day & night I cannot sleep, what must it be in a gloomy prison cell? I know too that John will be very anxious about me, lest I may fret so I have written to Canon McAlroy* & Mr. Egan begging of them to tell John, that he is not to think of me, but to do exactly what he thinks best but that as far as I am concerned I hoped he would never either put on the garb of a convict or associate with thieves.

November 25th. It seems on yesterday, the governor & the warders came up to John's cell & removing with brute force the sheet and quilt, left him with nothing on but a towel tied round his waist—even this they threatened to remove in ten minutes. Decency compelled him to put on the prison clothes, as he could not remain absolutely naked.

November 27th. The result of the worry & anxiety is that I was ill all yesterday. Mr. Egan wrote such a kind note expressing his own & his wife's sympathy & saying 'notwithstanding the fearful barbarities to which Mr. Mandeville has been subjected, he bears up well'. Heard from Carrick Mrs. Mandeville most indignant at John's treatment, Dick says his Grandmother repeats what would I not give to have been there, with a blackthorn for my poor boy to defend himself.

November 29th. John refuses to clean out his cell or associate with criminals; for the former offense he has again been sentenced to 24 hours bread & water though suffering from rheumatism of which he complained to the prison doctor who did not prescribe for him. He is also confined to his cell, which Dr.Moorhead says is close, stuffy and offensive-smelling, and in his reports he remarks 'A continuance of such treatment would break down the constitution of the strongest man & would probably develop fever of the most malignant type. In Mr.Mandeville's case such a state of things calls for immediate remedy.' Mr.Harding and Mr.Connolly both visited the prisoners; the former found John swinging his stool round his head; exercising just as he told me he would.

*It is but right to state here that Canon McAlroy never conveyed a letter from my husband to me, or from me to him.Extracts from John's letter

TO BE CONTINUED

VOX

Dr. Donal McKeown 2007
Bishop John Murphy 1817
New Radio Station
EU & Lourdes Pilgrimage
Clann Credo

PAT

**Dr. Donal McKeown,
Auxiliary Bishop**

"A 'Stop Donal' campaign is taking place in the Catholic diocese of Down and Connor, in a bid to ensure Auxiliary Bishop, Dr Donal McKeown, does not succeed Dr Patrick Walsh, who has reached the mandatory retirement age of 75 and has submitted his letter of resignation to Rome." (*Irish Times*, 10.4.2007).

4 commentators in the Diocese indicated that some priests were actively opposing Bishop McKeown as the man believed most likely to succeed Bishop Walsh, because they perceived him as "too soft" on the issue of integrated education, which they oppose.

Priests locally have referred to this opposition as a "Stop Donal" campaign.

Bishop McKeown, 57, has wide experience of second-level education in Ulster, having been a teacher from 1978 until he became president at St Malachy's College in Belfast in 1995. He retained that post until he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of the diocese in 2001. Many seen him as front-runner to succeed Bishop Walsh.

Bishop John Murphy of Cork was seen as something of a killjoy in Cork on 9th June 1817 when he issued a decree of excommunication against the "flagrant abuses and gross immorality" by those who turned up at the traditional sites for the Pattern Days.

These were places associated with saints to where the faithful used to go to pray and seek cures for various illnesses but the new bishop felt that the old 'saints and scholars' ideal was being tarnished by those who went over the top, especially on Saint John's Day and the feast of Saint Finbarr when dancing and enjoyment took precedence.

John Murphy was consecrated as Bishop of Cork and Ross in 1815. He was a promoter of the arts and the Gaelic language, which he learned at the age of

40. He built up a massive library of 70,000 volumes, which unfortunately was divided up and sold by Sotheby's of London following his death. He helped found the Cork Savings Bank in 1817. He died on April 1, 1847.

His brother, James Murphy established the distillery which today trades as Irish Distillers plc. and monopolises the whiskey trade, even though it is in French ownership: Pernod Ricard.

A new Radio Station which aims to give a "message of hope" hit the airwaves in Cork in April, 2008.

LifeFM is the first Christian radio station in Cork. It broadcasts 24 hours a day on 93.1 FM, with Christian rock and traditional music as well as talk shows, all run by volunteers.

Anna Daly, who helps run the station, said: "We're getting very good feedback. We have a very Cork feel, with lots of special contributors from locals and a mix of local artists' music. We want to give a message of hope. There's a lot of negativity with the economy, but there's always hope. We want to give young people a positive message."

EU & Lourdes: President McAleese joined 1,400 members of the Defence Forces at the 50th anniversary celebration of the European Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes.

The military group travelled to France for four days from May 22 to May 25, and included members of the Defence Forces, Civil Defence, Organisation of Ex Servicemen and Women, the Irish United National Veterans Association and their families.

The military pilgrimage was initiated in 1958 as a post World War II healing process by the French and German Governments and has involved the Irish Defence Forces since its inception.

The Vatican today condemned the Church of England's decision to allow women to become bishops.

The Church of England's governing body voted yesterday to allow women to become bishops.

A statement by Cardinal Walter Kasper, head of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, said it was a "further obstacle to reconciliation between the Catholic Church and the Church of England".

It added that it will have consequences on future dialogue between the two churches (8.7.2008).

Clann Credo, the country's leading provider of social finance, has announced the appointment of a Cork-based representative, Jim Boyle, to enhance its services to community and voluntary organisations and charities in the Munster area.

The organisation held its 2008 'Common Cents' Conference in Cork city on 10th May 2008.

Clann Credo provides repayable finance to groups that may have difficulty accessing funding from mainstream financial institutions.

Projects are assessed on their ability to provide a social as well as financial dividend.

"We would like to hear from community organisations, not-for-profits and social enterprises that may have difficulty in accessing finance to expand or develop their services," said Mr Jim Boyle.

"In order to help projects where there is a social return through these difficult times, Clann Credo is offering loan finance at interest rates and terms not available commercially," he added.

In addition to loans for specific projects, Clann Credo also facilitates organisations that require bridging loans linked to funding applications to other bodies and agencies.

Projects can be as simple as a job-creation venture in an area of low employment or as ambitious as social housing for a community.

The aim is to encourage communities towards self-sufficiency and produce a social dividend, added Mr Boyle.

Clann Credo, provided start-up and seed funding to more than 130 groups countrywide and currently has reserves of €11 million, and celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2006.
