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Irish Times'
Watergate Moment

Labour Comment:
GAA &
West Britain
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Iraq And Irish Warmongering

The Irish State is not an innocent bystander in the disaster which has overtaken Iraq. And its involvement is not limited to fuelling the war planes on their way to subject the people of Iraq to "shock and awe". Ireland happened to hold the chairmanship of the United Nations Security Council at the moment when the state of Afghanistan had been destroyed and the world was wondering what was to be done next. Everybody knew that Iraq was next on the American agenda. The British Foreign Secretary was dismissing the suggestion that Iraq had any responsibility for the attack on the World Trade Center and was therefore on the "War on Terror" agenda. But Brian Cowen piped up and said, Yes, an invasion of Iraq would be in order without any further UN authorisation. (This was in October 2001.)

It can of course be argued that what Brian Cowen said during his brief moment of international authority had absolutely no influence on the course of events. He was doing his bit for Ireland by performing a service to the United States at a time when it needed somebody to speak up for it, and what happened would have happened anyway.

But that is something that cannot be known. All that can be known is the actual course of events. And Cowen's statement was part of the actual course of events leading to the invasion of Iraq. Cowen held the ring for war on Iraq at the moment when few people in the world believed that such a grossly irresponsible action would really be taken. It should be said that Cowen's position was not endorsed by the Irish people—one of the biggest demonstrations ever was held in Dublin against the war. There was also a substantial turn-out in Belfast. But, as Portillo said recently, the future of democracies is safe, as it has been shown that Governments can go to war in defiance of the wishes of their electorates. He instanced Spain, Italy and Ireland. It is doubtful whether there



was a majority for the war in England but, being a well-established democracy, the electorate knows that it is not entitled to determine foreign policy.

Britain eventually came into line with American wishes. Foreign

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Entente Cordiale ?

The centenary of the 1904 *Entente Cordiale* between England and France is being celebrated this month. We are told it is being celebrated even in France and we are shown lots of happy French citizens waving Union Jacks in gratitude to the English Queen for visiting them—two hundred years after the French disposed of their own royals for good. They look grateful—but grateful for what we cannot imagine. In the century of the *Entente Cordiale* one thing is certain—when France has been friendly and acted in concert with Britain it has suffered badly (as in the two Anglo-French wars against Germany); when it has become estranged from John Bull (as during the deGaulle era) it has prospered. And the recent Ameranglian *debacle* in Iraq—which France warned against—should have emphasized the point fully to the French public that friendship with England is a dangerous business to be avoided at all costs.

But in England, or in that part of Ireland that will be forever England, the *Irish Times*, the *Entente Cordiale* is being portrayed as being simply to do with the lasting friendship of England and France. The *Irish Times* editorial of 10th April, *Entente Cordiale*, said:

"Convenience and pragmatism were the guiding principles of the *Entente Cordiale* between France and Britain, the 100th anniversary of which was marked this week by Queen Elizabeth's state visit to France. They remain the predominant inspiration for the Franco-British relationship in

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Labour Comment, edited by **Pat Maloney:**
'Mortas Cinnagh'

Office caution was over-ruled by the charismatic Prime Minister—charisma being a kind of free-ranging personal conviction which knows neither law nor authority. But in this instance Britain did not start the warmongering. Ireland did. It was Ireland that rushed in to assure the USA that it was not isolated. Credit where credit is due.

Apologists for the invasion plead that it was not an imperialist conquest—as if that was a point in its favour. An imperialist conquest would have sought to keep Iraq governable from the start—to maintain the established socio-political order of the state, slotting itself into the leadership of the previous administration. This is what Britain did in its first conquest, which began in November 1914. The real trouble began for Mesopotamia when Britain—bewildered by its own Great War propaganda—aborted the new Imperial regime which it had been establishing in place of the Ottoman regime and embarked on the pseudo-democratic and pseudo-nationalist project of what is now called “nation-building”, and setting up a new territorial concoction called Iraq in place of Mesopotamia.

The nation of Iraq, conceived by Britain over eighty years ago, had reality only as a State—as a very strong State which was capable of over-ruling the incompatible social elements inhabiting the region.

incompatible when the nationalist structure of Iraq was imposed on them by British power. They had not been incompatible under the Ottoman regime. Under the Ottomans they had lived harmoniously together, each doing its own thing, without a thought of nationalism. But when Britain decided on a pseudo-nationalist, pseudo-democratic development of the Middle East they were no longer allowed to do their own thing. They had to be forged into an Iraqi people—a thing which of their own volition they had no conception of. And everybody knows how forging is done—with fire, hammer and anvil.

Under the long Ba’ath regime of Saddam Hussein the forging began to achieve its object. An independent Iraqi administration was established, with elements drawn into it from all the component parts of Iraq.

And then Britain and America decided to destroy all that had been achieved through so much pain.

They (and Ireland too of course with its inaudible voice) have their history of Saddam’s crimes—the million people dead under his dictatorship—most of them dying in action that Ireland thoroughly approved of—suppression of the powerful Communist movement and the war by means of which the pan-Islamic revolution in Iran was contained.

Iraq saved Kuwait. Kuwait—a make-

believe State—showed its gratitude by encroaching on its oil-fields. Iraq made its feelings known to the United States. The US Ambassador informed Saddam that it would not be taken amiss if he engaged in direct action against Kuwait. When the Iraqi army crossed the frontier the Government and Army of Kuwait went on a long holiday abroad, and a bright young thing of the al-Sabah aristocracy sold the world an invented story of the Iraqis killing prematurely born babies in their incubators. The US, instigated by Britain, did a *volte-face*, and declared that the Iraqi incursion into Kuwait was a heinous offence against the basic principle of the international order of the era of the United Nations—the sacredness of national borders. The Iraqi Government was outraged by the diplomatic deception which led it to move into Kuwait. Ameranglia then acted in a way that was calculated to make it virtually impossible for Iraq to retreat from Kuwait without catastrophic loss of face by the regime. (The US commander General Swartzkopf, later said that “*the nightmare scenario*” was that Iraq would nevertheless withdraw).

Then we had the United Nations war on Iraq, begun with what was officially described at the time as “*the most violent twenty-four hours in the history of the world*”.

The retreating Iraqi Army was systematically slaughtered by Ameranglian air-power for a couple of days, and one began to hear stories that pilots became so sickened with what they were doing that mutiny was threatened.

Then the people of Iraq were called upon to rise in rebellion. And they rose. But what rose was the “*fundamentalist*” underlay which had been passively resisting the secular nationalism of the regime. Seeing what they had stirred up, America and Britain called off their support and gave the Iraqi Government free rein to deal with the insurrection. And that was the third major component of the million of his own people killed under Saddam.

For the next dozen years Iraq was shredded by UN sanctions and by unceasing bombing, and yet the regime managed to reconstitute the infrastructure destroyed in 1991, restore water and electricity supplies, make food available by rationing, and restore a semblance of civilised life.

And then, on the flimsy pretext that

Those social elements became

Iraq had acquired weapons of mass destruction during the twelve years of sanctions and inspections, and was in alliance with its deadly enemy, Islamic "fundamentalism", Ameranglia launched an invasion, inaugurated by an assassination attempt which only killed the wrong people, and by 24 hours of "shock and awe".

The invasion was advertised as a "liberation". But the forces within Iraq which might have responded with enthusiasm to the invasion as a liberation were the "Islamic fundamentalist" forces which had come out in 1991, but, remembering what had happened then, decided to stay at home this time.

In order to create for television the appearance of being welcomed in by the populace, the invading commanders deliberately encouraged looting—and members of the British Cabinet praised the looters.

The invasion was not welcomed, but it was endured passively by a populace that was waiting to see what would happen next.

The Americans brought in a Government of Iraq in its baggage train, led by Chabati whose adviser was Eoghan Harris. It built a huge Embassy complex, which was to be the real Government of Iraq (as the British Embassy was the real Government of Egypt for many decades.) And it awarded itself contracts for rebuilding what it had just destroyed, to be paid for by Iraqi oil.

And that is how, in the course of a year, the forces in Iraq which had been suppressed by the Ba'ath regime, and were therefore awaiting liberation, were finally stirred into action. And again, as in 1991, they were declared to be rebels, and their suppression began afresh.

A couple of months ago the Ameranglian story was that a Shia / Sunni civil war was brewing and the Occupying forces were averting it. Then, suddenly, in early April, one heard on one of the better British television news programmes about an "unholy alliance" that had been formed. Instead of fighting each other as the invading democrats had advertised, the Shia and Sunni had made an 'unholy alliance' against their liberators.

Let us now move to RTÉ's Prime Time of 14th April 2004. Nothing as crass as this would be broadcast by British Television, whose senior broadcasters are rather ashamed of what their Government has done to Iraq. But the Celtic Tiggers are new to the game—

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THE CLONBANIN COLUMN

"SEAN Moylan and Paddy O'Brien took up position by the switch of the western mine, and Moylan said to O'Brien: "You fire the first shot. When I am switching the mine I will tell you to fire.

"Into view from the Mallow direction came three lorries of troops. As arranged the first two passed over the eastern mine and when the leading lorry reached the west mine Sean Moylan threw the switch and shouted "Fire" to Paddy O'Brien" (*Rebel Cork's Fighting Story by Pat Lynch-Anvil Press, Tralee*)

IVOR CALLELY, T.D., Minister for State lost his place on Fianna Fail's national executive following a vote of the parliamentary party. In another upset, Senator Mary White topped the poll of party T.D.s, Senators and MEPs, who select five of the 98 members of the national executive.

Regarding Senator White's selection, one TD said: "She gets up the leadership's nose, so people are enjoying the reaction to her election."

The results were a resounding vote against the Ahern camp. John Cregan, T.D., an open critic of Ahern, came second. Two supporters of Brian Cowan, took the third and fourth positions, Michael Finneran and Senator Ger Feeney. The final seat went to Senator Michael Kitt from Galway.

"But the defeat of Senator Timmy Dooley, a creature of Bertie's as well as his eyes and ears in the parliamentary party, will have come as a slap in the face for the party leader. The other loser was Senator Paschal Mooney from Leitrim, Dooley's best mate in the Senate." (The Phoenix, 12.3.2004).

"THE group had a major success in South Africa with the launch two years ago of a completely new Zulu language paper, the *Isolezee*. This had an initial daily circulation of 34,000 copies but in the second half of last year circulation had grown 87% to 55,000—quite an exceptional achievement and a major contributor to last year's growth in this division." Independent News & Media PLC (The Phoenix, April 9, 2004).

"IT IS estimated that there have been about 250,000 bogus non-resident accounts with perhaps 80,000 couples, or households, involved. While many were

held by self-employed people, many too have been opened by PAYE taxpayers and by public servants, including senior civil servants, a group particularly nervous of disclosure because of the level of shame involved.

"The image of non-resident accounts as a rural phenomenon primarily is wrong'. Typically, a person who sought to hide away a sum will have ended up paying four times that amount in back tax, interest and penalties. For many, this was their retirement nest egg. No pension provision has been made." (Suzanne Kelly, President of Institute of Taxation, talking to Kyran Fitzgerald-Irish Examiner-6.12.2003.).

"IN spite of this great mix of peoples, Latvians have managed to hold on to their language and their culture. No doubt, this has been helped by the simple rule they have introduced in relation to voting in elections. Only Latvian citizens can vote, and to be a citizen a person must pass a test in the Latvian language, and in history." (*The Sacred Heart Messenger*, April, 2004). God, they must be a backward crowd in Latvia, some of the Leinster House politicians could soon bring them back to the future. Language and History, what a waste in the new Global world!

LETTER TO the Irish Independent (11.2.2004), from Denis Hurley, University of Limerick:

"Sir — Recently on RTE Radio 1's new current affairs quiz show Under The Whip, Lord Mayor of Dublin Royston Brady was asked to name the 10 countries that will be joining the EU and he could only name two. This is a man who wants to be elected to the European Parliament. Am I the only one who sees a problem here?"

ANOTHER PASSPORT FOR OLD IRELAND!

"He only has his passport three months but Mark McNulty showed the pluck of the Irish last night when he celebrated his Champions Tour debut by winning the Outback Steakhouse Pro-Am in Tampa, Florida.

"The Zimbabwean native, who was granted Irish citizenship just before Christmas, finished one shot ahead of Larry Nelson to pocket the \$240,000 first prize." (Irish Independent, 23.2.2004).

HOW CAN YOU BUY KILLARNEY?

"JACK LYNCH'S 1973 Fianna Fail government impressed upon London that it could not yet afford to take on responsibility for the North, then British Prime Minister Ted Heath told US Senator Ted Kennedy in Washington, according to newly

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Prime Time On Faluja Killings:

“*Faluja. The cemetery of the Americans*’, so chanted Iraqis yesterday after the horrific killing of four American civilian contractors.

“Dragged from their cars in the fiercely tribal town west of Baghdad their bodies were kicked, hacked, mutilated, burned and then decapitated. Dancing and cheering, local people beat the smouldering bodies with metal bars, stamped on their heads and cut off their limbs. It was testament to the crazed hatred of America that is dominating Iraq.

“In a moment we talk to a high profile Iraqi. First though this report from Donagh {Darragh?} Diamond

“Viewers should be aware that this report contains some extremely disturbing images.

[Diamond’s Report:] The savage killing of four civilian security men in Iraq and the horrendous mutilation of their corpses yesterday has sent a wave of revulsion around the world. The security contractors working for the Coalition Provisional Authority were slaughtered in the area of Iraq known as the Sunni Triangle from which Saddam Hussein drew most of his support. The men were driving through the town when their vehicles came under attack from grenades and automatic weapons. As their four-wheeled drive vehicles were stopped and set ablaze by the attacks, some eye witness reports indicated that two of the men escaped or were dragged alive from the burning jeeps, but were doused in petrol and set alight. The mob then set upon the charred remains, beating them with sticks and crowbars. And in a deeply disturbing display of triumphalism the mutilated men’s bodies were then dragged through the streets accompanied by cheering crowds. Iraqi residents of Faluja were quoted as saying that the attack showed the depth of their hatred of the Americans, and violence has become common here. The town was the site of the killing of 13 demonstrators by US Marines last year, and the downing of three American helicopters which left 25 US Service personnel dead. But its hard to imagine any wrong done to the people of Faluja that could possibly justify yesterday’s horrific mutilation of what were only minutes earlier living, breathing human beings. As the debate rages in the US over whether to broadcast untreated footage of the killings the question of whether or not these attacks and their reporting might represent a seminal moment in the conflict is also being raised. And if a US President keen to use his tough stance on terrorism in the forthcoming elections may have to contend with other

untreated images of his war on Iraq being branded into the minds of his electorate.

[Miriam O’Callaghan:] That was a report from Donagh Diamond. I am now joined from London by Sabah al-Mukhtar, who is an Iraqi lawyer. Sabah al-Mukhtar, can anything justify the killings yesterday in Faluja?

Sabah al-Mukhtar (President, Arab League of Lawyers, London): Well, there are two things. First of all its a horrendous scene to be seen. However we must understand that a week ago the Americans killed fifteen people, fifteen civilians in Faluja. And a year ago Rumsfeld was talking about shock and awe. And the shock and awe wasn’t directed at only four or five or six soldiers. It was——

——Miriam O’Callaghan: Let me just come back in there for one moment, Sabah al-Mukhtar. Sorry for cutting across you. I mean it’s sounding to me like you aren’t condemning what happened yesterday.

Sabah al-Mukhtar: Well certainly I’m not condemning it. It’s a resistance movement. It shouldn’t have taken the form it has taken. But use of force by the Americans, by any occupying force, must be met by force if people had the——

——Mariam O’Callaghan: Sabah al-Mukhtar, how can you call it resistance when you get four civilians mutilated, decapitated, burned, beaten with bars, hung from bridges. I mean that just grotesquely irresponsible of you, isn’t it?

Sabah al-Mukhtar: Of course it is grotesque pictures to see. But probably you would have forgotten the 10,000 civilians who were scorched to death, you have forgotten the thousands of people who were mutilated, all they were called collateral damage, they were not intended victims. We seem to forget all these things. This world we’re living in is not a very nice world. Whether you kill four and mutilate them or you kill fifty and mutilate them, or tens of thousands of people. This is the world we are living in. But at the end of the day this is an occupying force——

Miriam O’Callaghan [talking across him]: Do you understand how those pictures—— do you understand how those pictures will be seen in the West, in particular in America?

Sabah al-Mukhtar: Oh, absolutely. First of all the Iraqis have been demonised. Anyway they are not being treated as human beings, anyway, by anybody, not certainly the Americans.

Miriam O’Callaghan: But that wasn’t human behaviour yesterday.

Sabah al-Mukhtar: Well certainly over a

whole year of behaviour which was not human, it was sub-human, by superior powers, by the civilised world, it’s to be met by this horrendous event, and suddenly this becomes the only thing that is happening. It’s really pushing it a bit too far.

Miriam O’Callaghan: I mean what is the game plan? Are Iraqis hoping like yesterday will be the Mogadishu for this war in Iraq and that it will force the Americans to retreat. Is that what people are hoping for?

Sabah al-Mukhtar: Well I think certainly some of the people who are taking these actions would be looking at this incident. This is where all the actions of the Occupied Territories people, because you don’t have the weapons, you don’t have the Apache helicopters, you don’t have the rockets. You don’t have the Humvees. So of course what you end up with is using brute force, which reduces men to lesser than criminals, just as much as men who are in the——

——Miriam O’Callaghan: OK——

——Sabah al-Mukhtar: and in the weapons are behaving inhumanly.

Miriam O’Callaghan: Sabah al-Mukhtar, thank you very much for joining us tonight.

Prime Time April 14

Post Office Sabotage

Some subscribers will have received their March copy of the *Irish Political Review* very late due to interference by *An Post*. A batch posted in Cork, stamped at the rate determined by the Post Office, and correctly addressed, turned up at our Belfast address weeks later with the stamps defaced and the addresses obscured and a notice that the postage was underpaid.

Normal procedure of presenting a letter to the addressee with a demand for payment of the amount underpaid could not be followed because the postage was not underpaid. For the same reason, the letters could not be returned to the sender—who was obviously known to *An Post* since these letters were confiscated in bulk at the point of origin. So they were mutilated and sent abroad.

We have become accustomed over the years to petty interference by the Postal authorities both in the Republic and Belfast. After this latest sabotage, it may be necessary to post subscriptions from London. And readers are advised that it would be best for the time being to correspond only with our London address—where, at least, Imperial standards still apply.

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AUBANE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Aubane, Millstreet, Co. Cork.

"He who cannot call on three thousand years is living from hand to mouth."
(Goethe)

PRO Jack Lane: jacklaneaubane@hotmail.com

19 April 2004
Mr. Paddy Smith,
'Opinion' Editor
The Irish Times
Dublin

Dear Mr. Smith,

RIGHT OF REPLY

As Editor of the "Opinion" Column of the Irish Times you will be aware of the serious allegations made against me by Senator Martin Mansergh in his "Opinion" article on 3rd April.

In view of the non-publication of my letter to rebut these allegations by the Letters Editor I hope you will agree that I am entitled to a reply to Senator Mansergh in your Section of the paper that gives me an equal opportunity to defend myself.

I would be grateful therefore if you will agree to publish the attached article as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,
JACK LANE

The Irish Times' Watergate Moment – the crime and the cover-up. Conspiracies and spies, real and imagined

While doing some research for the Aubane Historical Society in the PRO at Kew in early January last year I accidentally came across the above document. I was stunned. I am not predisposed to conspiracy theories but here was clear evidence of a conspiracy being planned by some powerful people. The kind of people who were in a position to put their plans into effect. The British Ambassador was reporting to Whitehall that Major McDowell on behalf of the Irish Times was arranging to have the paper directed from Downing St. and abusing his editor in foul mouthed, racist terms.

I wrote to Irish Times Editor Geraldine Kennedy on January 10th 2003 with a copy of the letter and asked her the following questions:

"Do you accept this is a genuine document?"

"If you do, can you say if these arrangements are still in place and, if not, when were they rescinded?"

I made the following point:

"I am sure you will understand that readers of your newspaper, as of any newspaper, are entitled to know by whom, and in whose interest, the newspaper is run."

In her reply Ms Kennedy went into denial, extolled the virtues of the Irish Times Trust and queried the 'veracity' of the document.

I replied, in part, as follows:

"You are not able to tell me when the arrangements made by Major McDowell with No. 10 Downing St. were rescinded so I can hardly accept your assurance that they are no longer in place. Moreover, your reference to the Irish Times Trust being in charge of the paper would confirm that the arrangements remained in place. It is

~~SECRET & PERSONAL~~



BRITISH EMBASSY,
DUBLIN.

2 October, 1969

Dear Sir,

Your letter of September 26th - Major McDowell and No. 10 Downing Street.

2. I had McDowell to lunch today. It is all about something he mentioned to me before, but now he is hotter under the collar about it.

3. McDowell is one of the five (Protestant) owners of the Irish Times, and he and his associates are increasingly concerned about the line the paper is taking under its present (Protestant, Belfast-born) Editor, Gageby, whom he described as a very fine journalist, an excellent man, but on Northern questions a renegade or white nigger. And apart from Gageby's editorial influence, there is difficulty lower down, whereby sometimes unauthorized items appear and authorized items are left out.

4. So far (except for last item) nothing new. But McDowell went on to say that he now felt that a certain degree of guidance, in respect of which lines were helpful and which unhelpful, might be acceptable to himself and one or two of his friends on the Board; this was what he had had in mind in telephoning to No.10.

5. Oddly enough I had had McDowell in mind in certain conversations I had in London a fortnight ago. His present approach requires rather careful handling and I shall discuss it in London next week. I am writing this letter merely in case you wish to brief No. 10 and to assure them that we will do what we can to exploit this opening. I am destroying the correspondence.

A.G. Gilchrist
A.G. GILCHRIST

W.K.K. White, Esq.,
Western European Department,
Foreign & Commonwealth Office,
LONDON S.W.1.

~~SECRET & PERSONAL~~

well known that the Irish Times Trust was a unique institution of its kind in that it was designed and set up to ensure that the Trust, and therefore its paper, was under the control of a single individual, Major McDowell. I understand that he remains President for life of the Trust. The Trust ensures that his writ runs and as he originated the arrangements with Downing St. it is just not credible that he used his own Trust to undo his own efforts. *Au contraire*, I would say.”

It then transpired that the Ambassador’s letter had been released three years earlier, in January 2000. Furthermore the Irish Times had reported on January 3rd 2000 (“*McDowell Prepared To Act As ‘Link’*” by Rachel Donnelly) on other letters and documents released at the time involving the same Whitehall official, W. K. K. White, the British Ambassador and Major McDowell. But the Irish Times deliberately ignored the “*renegade....white nigger*” letter even though this letter was clearly available to anyone who perused the file at Kew. Instead the Irish Times painted McDowell as simply being interested in the betterment of relations between the two governments after the outbreak of ‘*The troubles*’ in 1969. Instead of giving a fair summary of the documents then made available the paper gave a most misleading account and gave the distinct impression to any researcher that there was nothing of any great consequence in them.

The well known investigative skills of the *Irish Times* and its high moral tone had suddenly stopped short when it came to investigating a matter that concerned its own vested interests and the exposure of its carefully cultivated veneer of impartiality.

Ms Kennedy was given an opportunity by me to rectify this earlier cover-up but instead she endorsed the action of her predecessor despite her previous reputation as a particularly fearless investigative journalist.

I sent the document to a number of journalists, newspapers and magazines for their information and comments. Only one, the *Irish Political Review*, saw fit to publish it in full and to discuss the implications of it for Irish democracy (January 2003).

The Sunday Independent briefly reported on it in some editions (26/1/03) but did not consider the full implications

and concentrated instead on the sensational aspect of it, the ‘*white nigger*’ comment by McDowell about Gageby.

The *Irish Times* responded in public for the first and last time on the following day with an anonymously written piece by an “*Irish Times reporter*”. It quoted McDowell as claiming he never used this language but significantly the attempt to subvert the Editor and the paper was not denied. This provoked Ronan Fanning to ask the then British Ambassador the likelihood of people in his position telling lies in confidential correspondence with friends and colleagues in Whitehall and he responded with an emphatic ‘*Nil.*’ (*Sunday Independent*, 2/2/03)

The Irish Times did not respond again and effectively shut down further discussion on the matter showing the same contempt for its readers, and staff, as the proprietor has for its former editor.

One of the ironies of McDowell’s racist remark for me was that I had been denounced as a racist by the Irish Times some time previously because I suggested, in an aside, in one of our publications that Elizabeth Bowen was really an English writer and that she had spied here during World War II. I had established this fact by publishing some of her secret reports to Churchill that had survived destruction.

According to other letters released at the same time, Major McDowell was described as acceptable “...*in Whitehall terms through his service in the Judge Advocates Department*” which I understand is involved in the overseeing/running of court martial and is a rather sensitive area of the Whitehall world. This appears to have been (is?) something like his day job for the British establishment.

In his published diary, Cecil King, the former Daily Mirror proprietor said, quite matter of factly, that McDowell was in M.I.5. (*See entry for 23/1/1972 on page 172 of his 1970-74 Diary*)

So, on the basis of these pieces of evidence gleaned about McDowell we can reasonably assume, unless proven otherwise, that a British Army Major, with links in M.I.5, with racist attitudes towards Irish people, conspired with a foreign government to run an Irish newspaper; that he was clearly successful as the *Irish Times* went from strength to strength under him and helped see off its main rival, the *Irish Press*. ‘*Natives*’ who went ‘*colonial*’ in a reverse of the process

undergone by Mr. Gageby were eventually found to do the necessary to ensure McDowell’s vision triumphed. He would no doubt have a less polite name for them in his private moments and possibly the same contempt as he had for Gageby ‘*going native.*’

But nobody in the media seemed that interested in all, or any, of this—least of all *The Irish Times* despite the unending thirst of this same paper for any allegation and rumour made against others such as those we see on parade before various official Tribunals every day. Yet what Major McDowell conspired to achieve is at least as significant (I would say infinitely more significant) as the wheelings and dealings of some business entrepreneurs. Apparently, betraying the public’s trust does not rank high up on the Irish Times’ scale of editorial interest.

And so the matter seemed to rest.

However, along came Senator Martin Mansergh to write regularly for the *Irish Times*. He began by praising the Major and his Trust and compared the *Irish Times* with *Le Monde* (20/9/03)—the paper that prides itself on being run by and for its staff and readers with an enshrined right of reply. I wrote to Senator Mansergh and asked him to explain himself but he quickly dropped all reference to *Le Monde* when replying and instead went on at unnecessary length to assert that Elizabeth Bowen was not a spy. He might as well try to assert that black is white.

Recently Senator Mansergh returned to the subject. On April 3rd this year he charged in his *Irish Times* column that I and others regarded *him* as a spy and were indulging in conspiracy theories about him—with no evidence whatever provided by him to back this up. (Bearing in mind that he is writing in a paper that was set on its present course by an M15 agent in conspiracy with Whitehall and given that he refuses, despite all the evidence, to recognise a *real* spy, Elizabeth Bowen).

Major McDowell was now portrayed by Senator Mansergh as an out of touch remnant of the Protestant Ascendancy pathetically fighting the future as represented by Mr Gageby, but also incongruously being magnanimous in running the *Irish Times* to prevent it being influenced by rich businessmen against the Irish government.

What does Mr. Mansergh take his readers for? In writing thus Senator

An Cor Tuatail

Cú mé 'mo súi

Cá mé 'mo súi ó 'éiríís an ghealaic aréir,
'Cur tine síos san scéit 's dá pasú go gáar;
Cá bunadó an coí 'na lúí is cá mise liom féin;
Cá na coilíís aís gláoic 's cá an tír 'na scoolaó ac mé.

Δ δεαίτ n-anam véas to béal, to mála 's to gúra,
Do súil gorm glé fár éreís mé aiceas is suairc';
Le cumá na bóir ní léir doim an bealaic a síul,
'S a ára mo éleib, cá na sléibce eadair mé 's tú.

Deirid luic léinn gur cloice an galar an grá;
Cár adháis mé é go raib sé i ndéir mo éróf 'séis a éráó;
Acú ró-géar - farsaor nár deaírais mé é
'S go scuireann sí arrainis is céad go géar fíro ceairt-lár mo éróf.

Casaó bean sí doim éios aís laís béal an áth'
'S u'fhairis mé uí an scaoilceas glas ar bíc grá;
Dúirt sí ós íseal i mbriátraib soineanta sáin' -
Nuair a céir sé pán éróf cá scaoilceas aís é go bráic.

I am awake

I am awake since moonrise last night
Restlessly tending and extending the fire;
The household is asleep and I am alone;
The cockerels are calling and the whole country is asleep except me.

O seventeen delights, your mouth, your brow and your cheek,
Your clear blue eye that took away my peace and tranquility;
Alas because of you my way is not clear
O love of my bosom, the mountains are between you and me.

Learned people say that love is an incurable disease;
I never believed this until it had entered my heart in torment;
A most deadly affliction - Alas! that I did not avoid it!
It sends a hundred spasms through the centre of my heart.

I met a fairy woman at the hollow of Béal an Átha,
And I asked her was there any release from love;
She whispered in gentle, quiet words -
"When it goes to the heart, there is no relief to the end of time."

The theme of this charming poem is the common one of love as disease or fever. It is in the Ulster dialect, so Béal an Átha is probably not Ballina, Co. Mayo.

Mansergh cultivates either a delusional or cynical naivety. In effect, he suggests that the fact that a newspaper is being run by its proprietor in the interest of a former colonial power is of no import. In fact the peculiarities of the 'Trust' set up by the Major ensured a continued interest by the Major's MI5 colleagues.

I wrote a short letter to the *Irish Times* immediately* to reject Senator Mansergh's absurd allegations but no reply was published. I asked Senator Mansergh to help me 'clear' his name by having my letter published. I have heard nothing from either. Neither will allow me the opportunity of doing what I can to help Mr. Mansergh's reputation. What a curious situation. Could you take either of them seriously any more?

Of course, in the final analysis it is not Senator Mansergh's responsibility to decide what is published in the *Irish Times*. That is the Editor's job (not the proprietor's or MI5's). However, if Senator Mansergh compares *Le Monde* with the *Irish Times* it is presumably with a view to associating them in terms of journalistic ethics. That being the case, he should publicly make known a duty of the *Irish Times* to allow a right of response to an individual such as me criticised by him in his column.

As for the *Irish Times* itself, it has a

duty to its employees, and more fundamentally to its readers and to the wider public to re-establish trust by properly and publicly investigating the clear inference that its proprietor conspired and succeeded in undermining its integrity and independence.

It should institute a structure such as that of *Le Monde*. Its much-vaunted espousal of transparency and openness demands no less.

Can the *Irish Times* afford to disagree and still maintain even a semblance of integrity?

Jack Lane

* [Letter to *Irish Times* not published as of 19th April 2004]

4th April 2004
Madam,

MARTIN MANSERGH NOT A SPY

Mr. Mansergh implied in his article on 3rd April that members of this Society consider him a spy. He provided no evidence for this because there is none. Neither have we had any need whatever to indulge in conspiracy theories when commenting on what he does and says.

Based on what he has written in your paper and in correspondence with us (published and not just 'circulating' as he states) he has consistently misrepresented

the *Irish Times* Trust, Major McDowell and the role of Elizabeth Bowen in Irish affairs and this is what we have sought to point out. The fact that we now find ourselves in their company, as another object of his misrepresentations, is a rare achievement indeed on his part.

À la Adlai Stevenson, we offer to stop telling the truth about him if he stops telling lies about us.

Jack Lane

"THE BURNING OF CORK: An eyewitness account" by Alan J. Ellis. Aubane Historical Society. 10 Euros, £7.50

THIRD EDITION off the Press:
"SEAN MOYLAN in his own words: His memoir of the Irish War of Independence" 232 p.p. Aubane Historical Society. 15 Euros, £12.

"CONNOLLY & GERMAN SOCIALISM" by Brendan Clifford 5 Euros, £4.

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Entente Cordiale ?

continued

an era of European integration rather than imperial rivalry.

“The 1904 agreement ushered in a century of peace between the two large states, after many centuries in which they were more usually at war. It originated in the mutual suspicion of Germany and a joint agreement that their imperial interests should not become grounds for war between them. As a result, Britain’s domination of Egypt and the Suez Canal was recognised, as was France’s control of Morocco. When war came in 1914, France and Britain were allies against Germany, as they were again in 1939. Thus the Entente Cordiale marked a decisive shift in great power relations within Europe, as well as a commitment to defend their imperial interests.”

It is amazing what can be done with words. The *Irish Times* carefully crafted editorial hints at deeper and darker reasons for the *Entente Cordiale* but all the time it depicts it as a mere matter of friendship between former foes. One sentence is a classic: “*The 1904 agreement ushered in a century of peace between the two large states, after many centuries in which they will more usually at war.*”

It was indeed true that the 1904 agreement “*ushered in a century of peace*” between France and England, “*after many centuries in which they were more usually at war*”. But the *Entente Cordiale* also happened to usher in the century in which two of the most destructive and disastrous wars ever fought were fought in Europe—both of them, indeed, on French territory. And England and France lost millions of their peoples in fighting them, with France suffering much more than Britain. Was this a sheer coincidence of the *Entente Cordiale* of 1904?

In fact, most of the things regarded by liberal democracy as the disasters of the twentieth century—the two world wars, Communist Russia, Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, the Great Depression, Soviet-occupied Europe, the Cold War—have their roots in the *Entente Cordiale* of 1904.

The *Entente Cordiale* was the main piece of a jigsaw put together by Britain

between 1902 and 1907 in a dramatic strategic re-orientation in order that Germany, which it was believed was becoming a dangerous trade rival to the British Empire, could be isolated and destroyed.

Some English writers had proposed the strategic re-orientation as long ago as 1870 but it was finally provoked by the early reverses suffered by Britain in the Boer War. Before this Lord Salisbury had pursued a policy of splendid isolation in relation to Europe. But the Boer War made Britain feel deeply insecure. The main thing Britain learnt from the Boer War was never to get into a position of such vulnerability again. British Statesmen stepped into the mind of the enemy and saw their Empire at an extreme disadvantage, open to exploitation by an unfriendly power. They realised that if France, Germany or the United States had chosen to seize the opportunity of the war to embark on a conflict with England, any one of them would have done so on very favourable terms. And they reasoned that this was what *they* would have done, themselves, as a matter of instinct, if a similar situation had presented itself to them. It was, therefore, resolved that the situation would never occur again and if Britain went to war in the future, it would first of all ensure that it did so as part of a powerful and irresistible combination, certain of victory.

Sir Sidney Lee described the danger perceived by London in those days in his biography of Edward VII (1927):

“The year 1901 and the first part of 1902 found all unofficial Europe sympathizing with the enemies of Great Britain in South Africa, and any serious diplomatic mistake on the part of Britain in those days might have resulted in European swords being flung into the balance against her.” (Vol. I p.731)

“There was always a chance, although a remote one, that jealousy of Britain, from which no great European Power could be reckoned quite free, might be so stimulated by circumstances as to bring the members of the two[European] alliances together in a combined challenge to Britain’s place in the world. Britain

was thus isolated, friendless, and engaged in a none too successful or popular war when King Edward ascended the throne... Lord Salisbury, King Edward’s first prime minister, had long been wedded to that policy of splendid isolation which had been the constant British tradition through the last forty-five years of Queen Victoria’s long reign. Persistence in that policy offered little opportunity of improving the foreign situation as it existed in 1901, and might actually have exposed Britain to the risk of a hostile combination on a well-nigh overwhelming scale” (Vol. II, pp.116-7).

Two alliances existed in Europe in 1895: The Triple Alliance comprising Germany, Austria and Italy and the Dual Alliance comprising France and Russia. It was the second of these, the Dual Alliance, which England saw as the main threat to its worldwide interests. Prior to the Boer War, Salisbury, as Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, pursued a policy of friendship with Germany, which had continuity with the old social and military links existing between the two countries and Joseph Chamberlain’s great foreign policy scheme was an Anglo/German/American alliance. But after the Boer War the balance of power policy reasserted itself and Germany began to be spoken of as the Carthage that the new Rome must destroy.

The Great War on Germany was conceived as an idea, planned for as a forthcoming event, and actively made into a reality between 1902 and 1914.

Leopold Maxse was the foremost anti-German writer in England at the turn of the century. At that time he stood out. But this was only because he was ahead of his time. Maxse, through marriage, had the ear of the most influential people in the most important positions and he was also a member of the Coefficients dining club with Edward Grey, Haldane, Alfred Milner and Leo Amery.

Maxse made a big effort to propagandise his beliefs from around November 1901, when he wrote an influential article in his *National Review* entitled ‘*British Foreign Policy*’. This article argued for an understanding with Russia in which outstanding differences concerning territories in the Near East, Persia and the Far East were to be besettled so that the decks could be cleared for an alliance against Germany.

Maxse’s article was not just another

anti-German article. Firstly, the people who were intimately involved in its composition were in a position, or would be in a position shortly, to do something about it. And secondly, they in fact, did—in such a way that the article entitled ‘*British Foreign Policy*’ turned out to be the British foreign policy, from 1906, under the long serving Liberal Imperialist Foreign Secretary, Edward Grey.

The article was signed “*ABC etc.*” and there was much speculation at the time about who the authors of it exactly were, although they were universally believed to be very important and influential people. The article was taken very seriously in Russia, France, Germany and Japan, and a considerable amount of time was spent in efforts to find out who was behind it.

Maxse wrote the article, but it was a collaboration with Grey, soon to be Liberal Foreign Minister; Lord Rosebery, the leader of the Liberal Imperialists; George Saunders, *Times* Berlin correspondent; Sir Roland Blennerhasset, President of Queen’s College Cork; Charles Hardinge, Secretary of the St. Petersburg Embassy and Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office 1905-10; and William Tyrrell, Grey’s future Private Secretary at the Foreign Office. Hardinge made sure the article found its way into important hands in Russia and later actually put the policy into operation in conjunction with his immediate superior, Grey.

An alliance with Russia was meant to be the first part of the jigsaw but the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of 1902 and consequent Russo-Japanese war obstructed this. As a result the pieces of the jigsaw were assembled in a different order—with Japan, France and Russia assembled on board in that order.

Russia initially did not appear receptive to British advances. A strong grouping centred around Sergei Witte resisted. So Britain used Japan as a counter-weight to Russia to bring the Bear to heel. The Japanese wanted Russia to stop encroaching on what they considered their sphere of influence in China and Korea. But sections of the Russian oligarchy hostile to Witte refused, and the Japanese looked for an ally. The critical moment came when the former Prime Minister, Marquis Ito, visited London in December 1901. King Edward entertained Ito and an Anglo-Japanese treaty was signed within a month. Both partners were in a hurry, because Witte’s Trans-Siberian Railway was nearing completion, and that would vastly

increase Russian power in the Far East. The key clause of the treaty was that if Japan went to war in the Far East against a single power, Britain would observe benevolent neutrality. This meant that if Japan and Russia came to war, the British would prevent any other Europeans from helping Russia. This gave Japan a free hand for Admiral Togo’s sneak attack on the Russian base of Port Arthur in early 1904.

The humbling of Russia by Japan had a double effect in Europe. The Tsar, seeing Russia in a position of weakness, now saw the attraction in a clearing of the decks and an alliance with Britain. And France, Russia’s ally, worried about her exposed position vis-à-vis Germany as Germany’s Eastern flank was released from any threat from Russia. So France was made amenable.

In December 1901 Maxse had published another article by ABC etc. in the *National Review* under the title, *Some Consequences Of An Anglo-Russian Undertaking*, which considered in more detail the other piece in the anti-German jigsaw—an Anglo-French Entente. Edward Grey again made suggestions on the draft and congratulated Maxse on the effect of his first article saying, “*if the second gets the ear of France it will add to it*” (cited in John A. Hutcheson, *Leopold Maxse and the National Review, 1893-1914*. pp. 135-6.) In this article Maxse wrote:

“We were careful to insist that it was possible for the two great empires to come to terms in a manner advantageous to both without compromising on the one hand the alliance between Russia and France, or on the other the entente between Great Britain and Japan... It is therefore gratifying to us to learn that the suggestions we recently put forward had met with no unfavorable reception in Paris, while they are believed to be cordially endorsed by those responsible for the policy of Japan... Politically some encouragement may be derived from the fact that in recent years diplomacy has succeeded in closing most of our dangerous controversies. In this country there is a large and powerful school on both sides of politics that have never ceased declaring that the highest interest of Europe demands an entente cordiale between France and England. They are merely following the teaching of some of our wisest statesmen in the past. Every reader of history is aware of the anxiety of the great Duke of

Wellington to promote this policy, and persons only moderately acquainted with the occurrences of 1814 and 1815 at Vienna and at Paris realise how earnestly he laboured to prevent the power of France being utterly broken by the allies... Again, it is notorious that when Lord Palmerston was charged with the conduct of the Foreign Relations of this country, he did not fail to grasp an opportunity for securing the friendship of France; and in his eagerness to attain this end, he on one celebrated occasion took action for which he received the severest rebuke that Queen Victoria ever gave to a Minister.” (*The National Review*, December, 1901.)

The April 1904 *Entente Cordiale* between England and France was the result. Britain was willing to trade control of Egypt for French dominance in Morocco to get a deal with France. This was a very unequal bargain. Since the 1880s, the British presence in Egypt had been officially temporary, ostensibly a matter of restoring order in the name of the other European powers. The British had, of course, no intention of getting out, but instead wanted the whole Nile Valley. But the French, the builders of the Suez Canal, still retained some rights. However, when the French caved in, the British position in Egypt was unassailable, at least by other Europeans. Morocco was much different.

The Moroccan government was stronger, and there were strong competing claims by Germany and Spain. In fact, the idea of French pre-eminence in Morocco placed France on a collision course with Germany once again. And that was handy.

The *Entente Cordiale*, the earlier Anglo-Japanese Treaty of 1902, and the later Anglo-Russian Agreements of 1907, were, in essence, the response of England to a series of developments which might have challenged the commercial domination of the British Empire. The threat against the British Empire and its colonial expansion was not one of military aggression, but rather involved the extension of European railroad and other infrastructure into areas designated by Britain as part of the colonial sector. England believed that this might break the monopoly of British sea power—which dictated to the world its trade relations and made sure John Bull remained top dog.

This was all to do with geopolitics. Britain feared Eurasian infrastructural integration as a threat to the Royal Navy’s

dominance of sea trade. The British geopoliticians—Halford Mackinder and Alfred Milner—believed that whenever there was Eurasian infrastructural development, the control of the Eurasian heartland would threaten the dominance of the island rim countries—such as England and its Anglo-Saxon cousin, the United States.

During the 1890s, each of the leading continental states possessed a prominent institutional grouping of people who sought to implement proposals for extra-national infrastructure development. In France, there was the Foreign Minister Gabriel Hanotaux and Ferdinand de Lesseps, the builder of the Suez Canal. In Russia, there was Finance Minister Sergei Witte, the builder of the Trans-Siberian railway, and his comrade, the scientist Dmitri Mendeleev. In Germany, there was Georg von Siemens of the Siemens concern and the Deutsche Bank, who was financing the Berlin to Baghdad railway.

Gabriel Hanotaux was the French Foreign Minister in 1894. He was a keen historian who wrote biographies of Joan of Arc and Cardinal Richelieu. He also wrote a multi-volume history of France. Unfortunately, most of his political writings are unavailable in English. I have seen some translations and they are most interesting.

Hanotaux was against the English inspired Imperialism which was developing in France and which sought to merely exploit equatorial Africa in the English manner. He concurred with the German policy in the Middle East—that native culture, laws and customs should be preserved to coexist with any beneficial European economic and structural development that might be provided to these peoples. In Africa, he demanded a progressive colonial policy that would develop water resources, irrigate and cultivate land, organise industrial and transport development and combat diseases—for the benefit of the natives themselves.

Hanotaux had a good sense of European affairs from his historical understanding. His objective was an alliance between France, Germany and Russia, so that a Continental European bloc of industrial and economic development could develop within the peace, stability and prosperity that had developed since 1871. The strategic thinking of Witte and Hanotaux converged on a continental European coalition of France, Germany, and Russia, based on a community of interest in

economic development. Above all he hoped it would be capable of putting an end to the divide and rule “*balance of power*” strategy of the British, which always sought to arrest such a development and keep Europe in permanent conflict to serve England’s Imperial expansion abroad.

France had contributed money to the German Berlin to Baghdad railway scheme in 1902. A number of prominent French writers proposed a Franco-German union in 1904 based on the Austro-Hungarian model—partly as a solution to the Alsace/Lorraine problem. (See E.G. Jellicoe, *Playing The Game*, pp.35-6, a very interesting 1925 book by a disaffected English Liberal.) If Hanotaux had remained and the trend of Franco-German understanding had been left to develop, a European community composing France, Germany and Austria-Hungary might have developed a century before its actual establishment—before Britain had been able to engineer two disastrous balance of power wars.

Hanotaux was an opponent of the Radical Republicans’ desire for *revanche* over the 1870/1 defeat at the hands of Germany, in which France had lost Alsace/Lorraine, and he wanted to heal the rift between his country and the Germans. But *La revanche* was also Britain’s leverage over France to help it exact vengeance from Germany for the lost provinces in 1871.

Hanotaux was undermined by the anti-German sentiment that broke out in France over the Dreyfus affair. This occurred in 1894 when a Jewish captain in the French army was tried by a military court and—wrongly—found guilty of spying for Germany. A central figure in the affair was a radical, Georges Clemenceau—later France’s wartime premier and the chairman of the Peace Conference at Versailles. Clemenceau’s talents for overthrowing governments gave the Third French Republic much of its instability and he was widely attacked from 1892 on as a British agent. Former French Foreign Minister Emile Flourens argued that the Dreyfus affair was concocted in order to break French institutional resistance to a Clemenceau regime. Flourens wrote in 1906: “*Clemenceau is the pro-consul of the English king, charged with the administration of his province of the Gauls.*” The associates of the late French leader Leon Gambetta were determined to resist Clemenceau and they were backed by the French General Staff. Clemenceau,

according to Flourens, unleashed the Dreyfus affair in order to break the resistance of the French Army to Clemenceau.

Flourens also argued that British elements stoked up the post-1904 anti-clerical hysteria in France, which included the confiscation of Catholic Church property and the break of diplomatic relations with the Holy See. Flourens believed that Britain was seeking to shut down the French Catholic foreign missions, which had proved a barrier to British colonial expansion and ultimately create a schismatic church in France on the English model: “*Comme le schisme en Angleterre date du regne de Henri VIII, le schisme en France datera du regne d’Edouard VII*” (*La France Conquise*, pp.155-6).

Hanotaux was absent from the government during the crucial Fashoda incident, with England, and left for good in June 1898. And the French will was broken by Britain at Fashoda in 1898.

Hanotaux had challenged the British Imperialists in Africa with flanking movements. He had always avoided a direct confrontation until a united Europe was behind such a move. But at Fashoda a group of French soldiers put up a direct challenge to Britain’s Cape to Cairo path with a plan to establish a belt of French influence between Dakar and Djibouti. The British took this as an act of war and put it up to the French. The new French Foreign Minister, Theophile Déclassé, who had for some time believed that if France wanted to have an empire at all she had to do it with British co-operation, pulled the Imperialists into line. This was a big turning point in Anglo-French relations. England realised that the French had implicitly conceded to British Imperial primacy in the world. In 1899 Déclassé accepted a treaty with the British establishing spheres of influence that totally excluded France from the Nile Valley. Thereafter France effectively became a junior partner of British Imperialism and was open to doing business with the Empire.

Roger Casement noted in his article, *The Enemy Of Peace* in 1913:

“Were it not for British policy, and the unhealthy hope it proffers France would ere this have resigned herself, as the two Provinces have done, to the solution imposed by the war of 1870. It is England and English ambition that beget the state of mind responsible

for the enormous growth of armaments that overshadows continental civilisation.” (*The Crime Against Europe*, pp17-26, Athol Books edn p92-100.)

The British architects of foreign policy feared that France was getting over its resentment at the defeat of its 1870 attack on Germany, and its loss of Alsace/Lorraine, and was about to come to terms with the existence of the German State. If that happened, there would have been an end to the British “*balance of power*” strategy. So Britain reorientated and allied itself with its traditional enemy in Europe to prevent the dying out of French irredentism over its lost Provinces. It was in the interests of the British balance of power approach that a French *revanche* be preserved and European reconciliation and unity prevented.

British Imperial strategists noticed that France’s colonial rivalry with England had resulted in its eyes being turned away from its lost provinces. And they drew the conclusion that the effect of a clearing of the slate in an agreement with France would help to refocus French eyes on the lost provinces. At the same time they calculated that providing the French with an ally of the calibre of Britain would have the effect of producing a massive boost to French military confidence. Since the war of 1870/1 Germany had grown stronger in terms of population, commerce, industry and military capacity, whilst France had stagnated. If those in France who adhered to the *revanche* ever wanted to get back the last provinces they would have to do business with England. An Entente would make the impossible irredentist dream a practical proposition

The *Irish Times* editorial gives the impression that the *Entente Cordiale* was the first step in “*European integration rather than imperial rivalry.*” But it was meant to achieve precisely the opposite. It was designed to frustrate and destroy European and Eurasian integration, prolong Imperial rivalry, and keep England as the foremost of the rivals.

In the short term, of course, it achieved just this. An encircling coalition of Russia, France and Britain was achieved and the opportunity presented itself in August 1914 for England to join a European war to see off Germany as a rival. But Germany was not so easily seen off, despite the preponderance of forces assembled against her. And the European war had to be escalated into a world war to finish the job.

And so the chain of events which started with the *Entente Cordiale* in 1904, took in a world war, followed by massive economic and political dislocation in Europe, communism in Russia, the rise of fascism, another world war, Soviet domination of half the continent, the Cold War and the continuing destabilization of the Middle East.

After signing up to the *Entente Cordiale* France lost nearly 2 million of its citizens in the Great War; was prevented by Britain (in the interests of balance of power) from imposing a secure settlement on the Germans; had to fight a second disastrous war with Britain in which she was defeated and occupied by the Germans (whilst the British army fled across the sea); and then had to endure 4 years of

civil conflict as the English initiated terrorist attacks against the German administration.

And as for England and the *Entente Cordiale*... Well, John Bull won his great war on Germany, after going into hock to Uncle Sam, but then increasingly blundered and lost most of the Empire, in the course of fighting a second one. In that second one Bull had to get into further debt to the United States and at the same time stake her fortune on Stalin’s Red Army. In 1904 John Bull was the foremost world power but a hundred years later he has degenerated into a very junior partner to Uncle Sam’s recent blunderings.

One hundred years of the *Entente Cordiale*. A reason for celebration? *Non!*
Pat Walsh

Review: *Straw Dogs*

"Progress" ?

This is a very enjoyable book. The author, John Gray, examines many of the fondly held assumptions of the modern world. In particular he questions the idea of “*progress*”.

According to Gray, the idea of “*progress*” has a Christian origin. The polytheistic world of ancient times was at ease with different religions, but the monotheism of Christianity could only accept one God and one religion.

Christianity promised a better world for its adherents and this promise of a better world or “*progress*” has been retained by the ideologies that have replaced it. In particular, Science, which is the modern religion, gives us the illusion that we can control our own destiny.

The author urges humility on behalf of the human race. We are no different from animals. He defines the belief that reality is only valid if it is perceived by humans as “*solipsism*”, and the belief that we are different from animals and can control our destiny as “*idealism*”. Both beliefs are illusions.

Gray questions the notion of human consciousness and free will, the characteristics which are supposed to distinguish us from animals. He claims that modern science contradicts the idea that human actions are determined by a central directing internal mechanism. On

the contrary, most of our actions are determined by the unconscious or by instinct. He compares the mechanism by which we act as like a “hive” of bees with each bee having a role to play but with no central directing authority. We tend to explain or rationalise our actions after the event by calling into play the word “*consciousness*”.

There are natural laws outside our control. He believes that at present the “*overpopulation*” of the planet will correct itself by war, famine and disease. Declining rates of fertility, reflecting personal stress from overcrowding, will not be enough. Ultimately, the planet will protect itself with or without the human species.

While technology can achieve much in terms of food production and comforts, it will also lead to great ecological disasters and more lethal wars. Gray briefly raises the question of what we mean by humans controlling technology. Do we mean a group of corporate oligarchs or a criminal conspiracy?

He also talks about the futility of action in an unending effort to reach new plateaus.

Many of Gray’s ideas are not new. He himself acknowledges the influence of Schopenhauer. But Marx, who he castigates, was also well aware that technology or the capitalist system has a

logic of its own, which is independent of human control, but that the system benefited the owners of the means of production rather than humanity as a whole.

I don't accept that we are just like other animals. Although we are part of the animal kingdom, the accumulation of quantitative differences in terms of our use of technology, the way we organise our society etc make us qualitatively different from other animals. Gray's method of reasoning can be specious. For example, apes can use tools for obtaining food and have some other characteristics we associate with humans. But this does not eliminate the differences between them and us. The ability to use a stick to obtain fruit from a tree on the one hand and the use of, say, nuclear power on the other are the same in the sense that the ape and the human animal are using something external to themselves to achieve objectives. However, in other respects the two are not in the same "ballpark" or even same "sport". To deny the qualitative differences between the two is not helpful in understanding reality.

This habit of showing that two separate things have similar characteristics and therefore are essentially the same is repeated by Gray in his broad historical sweep of human history from hunter-gatherer to farmer to the present day. I agree with Marx that there are different historical epochs. While our species has always had an element of "*rapiens*" as well as "*sapiens*" about it, the frenetic activity of the modern world is more to do with the economic and political system than anything inherent in "*Homo Sapiens*".

I'm no expert on "*the conscious*", but I found Gray's explanations quite plausible. Most of our actions are unconscious at the time we do them. However, the act of conscious reflection after the event might influence our future actions even if at the time we act we do so unconsciously. A stronger influence on the individual's actions is the social conditioning he receives through the education system, family, peers and general cultural influences. All of these relieve the individual of having to think every time he acts. It is difficult to see how society can function otherwise. Again, I disagree with Gray's idea that the determinants of our actions are no different from other animals.

Although the general tone of the book is provocative I found his conclusion a bit

limp. In the final paragraph of his book he says:

"Other animals do not need a purpose in life. A contradiction to itself, the human animal cannot do without one. Can we not think of the

aim of life as being to see?"

I cannot agree with such a passive and individualistic approach to life. Nevertheless, overall the book is worth reading.

John Martin

Laïcité

President Chirac of France proposed, on 17th December 2003 that a law clarifying aspects of *laïcité* (a peculiarly thoroughgoing French version of secularism, or even anti-clericalism) be enacted. This was the result of reports by two commissions, one led by a former minister and "immigration expert", Bernard Stasi (Paul Silverstein, *The Middle East Report*, January 30, 2004). A member was "*ex-revolutionary philosopher Régis Debray*", of the twenty-person commission, only six were female. A controversial element of this law arose out of the insistence of young Muslim women (girls, by anybody's standards) on wearing the *hajib* (a headscarf). The wearing of the *hajib* has been a contentious issue in French (state) schools since 1989. The matter was brought to a head in 2003 by two young women called Levy. Their father is a non-practising Jew, their mother a fairly moderate Muslim, but their insistence on wearing the *hajib* has been put down to extremist relatives. It appears to be a settled opinion of French feminists and the left that the *hajib* is a symbol of male oppression of Muslim women, even though there have been large demonstrations by women claiming that the wearing of the *hajib* is their own choice: "*Chirac, Sarkozy, la foulard on l'a chiosé!*" / Chirac, Sarkozy [the interior minister], we choose the headscarf.

Among the groups opposing the imposition of this law were the Teachers Unions, who argued that these problems have been worked out through negotiation since the question became a live issue in 1989. (The judicial authorities are probably also opposed, as the High Courts have consistently refused to declare the wearing of the *hajib* unconstitutional, and have suggested that negotiation is the way to resolve such matters, and that it is a question of the internal discipline of each school.

The law, which was passed on 10th February 2004, raises other serious

questions. It applies in Overseas Departments, which quite often have a majority of Muslims in their public schools. Also, as Alsace-Moselle was part of Germany in 1905 when the original law laicising the schools came into effect—and administrative practice did not change after incorporation in France—state schools there quite often have nuns teaching in them. They wear crosses, or crosses of "*massively excessive dimensions*". Furthermore, this part of the law also applies to the small sect of Chaldean-Assyrian Christians. It can't have escaped the attention of the Muslim community (or communities) that this ancient sect is Arab. The Catholic Church, an opponent of the law, runs its own school system, which while officially private, is financed by the secular Republic.

The law was enacted by 494 votes to 36, there are 577 members of the National Assembly, 120 of whom spoke in the twenty one and a half hours of debate leading up to its enactment. There are no Muslim members of the Assembly, not even from Overseas Departments. The problem with this question is that nobody knows how many Muslims there actually are in France. The census makes no provision for annotating religion or ethnic background (so unlike Northern Ireland, where the UK authorities at the last census asked practically nothing else), so the calculation of the numbers is guesswork. The 'militant' Muslims and the National Front (and large sections of the consciously Republican left) tend to exaggerate the figures, claiming that 10% of the population is Muslim. (And, something else to make a Northern Ireland person feel a kind of nostalgia, the paranoid perception of Le Pen-ites is that they breed like vermin.) The National Institute for Demographic Studies estimated that the actual number of Muslims in France is 3.7 million, less than half of the usual (political) estimate, and about 5% of the population.

The politics of education in France is

very interesting and touch on the basis of French Republicanism, and also banal electoral calculations (Chirac and Sarkozy may be trying to up-stage Le Pen and the National Front in the run up to Assembly and Presidential elections—Sarkozy (of Hungarian origin) and Chirac are jockeying for the Presidential nomination in 2006). As the French State has no problems with a Catholic school system (and also allegedly a private Jewish one), a Muslim school system on the same principles seems to be a fairly obvious solution to this ideological problem. The children could be brought up in a Muslim atmosphere (supposing their parents wanted such a thing); they could be taught in separate-sex schools, which seems to be good for female pupils, apart from any religious aspect of teaching. And the Muslim population would not have the excuse that they are held back by the State (this is not to say that the French State is not extremely heavy-handed in dealing with the largely Muslim ‘cités’ / ghettos). A separate—but it would have to be honestly separate but equal—school system may sound like the worst possible solution, but separate systems for Roman Catholics and Jews works in Britain—and in Scotland, the Catholic schools are so successful academically that Muslim parents are prepared to pay for the privilege of sending their children to them. The composer James MacMillan, some years ago, high-spiritedly suggested that given their track-record, there should be more, not fewer of them.

This problem in French public life led to controversy in the Irish press. It was an intellectually poverty-stricken debate, with a great deal more heat than light being produced. Writers largely took up rigid ‘ideological’ positions, and did not mention (or probably did not know) of the situation regarding the Catholic and Jewish schools, nor the exceptions in the ‘French hexagon’ itself, or in the Overseas Departments. The quality of the debate was summed up in the smart-alecky remark in *The Irish Catholic*, where Simon Rowe sneered at “*The Observer* (or the *Guardian*-on-Sunday as we call it around here.)...”. As these two newspapers have been run by the same company and have used the same journalists for the past ten years and more, the best thing that can be said about the Rowe’s remark is that it is simply stupid. Rowe, and John Waters in *The Irish Times*, and Kevin Myers (possibly:—his contribution was incoherent, seeming to blast glib liberal ‘multi-culturalism’ and Islam simultaneously) gloated over the fact that a contradiction had opened up in what they described as liberalism.

Some correspondents to the Letters

columns, tried to point out to these people that liberalism, and French Republicanism, have their own agendas, which are not quite the wishy-washy thoughtless gliberalism of the Irish middle class. Niall O’Donohue put a straightforward (French) republican view in the *Irish Times*, 28th January 2004. He gave a good account of the process of laicisation of the French state school system from the days of the Great Revolution onwards. Inevitably he could not put it into a political context, in a short letter, and appeared to be claiming that the private Catholic and Jewish schools are not financed by the State. A letter from John Mulloy, took an oppositional view of the proposed law, writing that “...*culture... is collective*” and implicitly, that if the French State was not capable of providing a cultural collectivity for all of its citizens, it did not have the right to refuse Muslims, or anybody else the right to assert a particular identity.

Most of the professional journalists, while producing bits of information, wrote from rigid (and rather false-sounding) viewpoints. The liberal forces are divided about whether or not the headscarf was inherently sectarian or anti-woman. Breda O’Brien (*IT Saturday*, 24.01.04) in *Opinion and Analysis* under the headline *Headscarves Should Be Welcomed, Not Banned*, pointed out that in Iran girls from the age of nine are forced to wear the *hajib*, or even the all-enveloping *chador*. But in the 1960s and ’70s wearing such garments was an act of defiance against the “...*imposition of western culture by the Shah*”. O’Brien does not draw out the implication of this, that “*western culture*” despite assertions by Fintan O’Toole (and John Waters) is not essentially liberal or democratic. The Shah was put in place by the CIA and maintained his rule by running a brutal police state.

In the *Rite and Reason* slot (*IT Mon.* 26.01.04) Kevin Williams, under the headline *Sacred And Secular Have A Place In The Education Of Youth*, contrasts the systems in France and in Norway. The Norwegian system emphasises “*our Christian and humanist values*” which, apparently, “*both demand and foster tolerance, providing room for other cultures and customs*”. This is contrasted with the French *laïcité*, the activist aspects of which are not dealt with, and which is conceived of as maintaining simple neutrality as between contending systems of thought. Dr. Williams (of the Mater Dei Institute, Dublin City University) unfortunately does not mention some facts about Norway. It has a State Church, Lutheranism, which is still quite powerful. It also has stringent laws about who gets into the country, and who gets to be a citizen. One of the major reasons why

Norway remained outside of the European Union—apart from the fact it is hugely wealthy, due to oil—is that it did not want even other white Europeans being allowed to enter the place at will. Any nation can teach open-hearted acceptance of all and sundry in intellectual terms, if it is only allowing small numbers of carefully chosen migrants into the State.

Seán McGouran

Reclaiming Gender

Edited by Marilyn Cohen and Nancy J. Curtin

Macmillan

£35.00

Subtitled *Transgressive Identities in Modern Ireland*, this is not a very good book. William F. Kelleher is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Illinois, his essay, *Putting Masculinity to Work on a Northern Ireland Shopfloor*, demonstrates that anthropology has fallen into the ‘social science’ trap of using an enclosed ‘lingo’ to disguise the fact that it is an art, and not a ‘science’: ‘social’, ‘soft’ or other. Admittedly the actual body of the essay is written in plain English, but throws up another problem: “participant observation”. This is a contradiction in terms, as nobody is invisible and a presence will be taken into account by the other people acting in any given situation.

He examines a strike at Tyrone Crystal, and implies that it was broken because of whispers that the Catholic male shop steward was having sex with a Protestant female shop steward from another firm. This sort of whispering campaign is the stuff of any strike, and these days the nudging and winking does not necessarily have to be about persons of different genders. The two firms are not named in the text, but it is fairly obvious what they are, the other firm is Moy Park, a food-processing plant.

For an anthropologist Mr. Kelleher has rather fixed views. Because Tyrone Crystal was set up by the parish priest, Father Austin Eustace, (a Physics lecturer in Coleraine, before being sent to deepest Tyrone), Kelleher assumes that the firm was run on ‘conservative’ lines. It was actually run as a co-operative, the strike was partly to do with the ‘privatisation’ of the enterprise, “taking the plc route” is the euphemism in the Republic for this sort of ripping-off of the people who built up the enterprise. (It is, of course, conceivable that Kelleher is ideologically opposed to co-operativism, but surely such personal beliefs should not enter a ‘scientific’ analysis of social matters?)

Mr. Kelleher ignores a number of matters which are interesting and would have thrown some light on social relations in Northern Ireland. Why did the women on strike leave the picket line and get other jobs? He implies that it was sexist banter at the braziers that made them desert the men. How easy was it for them to get other work? Tyrone Crystal and Moy Park were respectively largely Catholic and largely Protestant in their workforces, but the latter had (apparently) no problems in going beyond formal labour solidarity to providing sandwiches for the picketers and food-parcels for their families. This sort of class solidarity was maintained in Northern Ireland all through the twentieth century, but nobody seems interested in the matter. Kelleher also does not seem to have considered the idea that the woman probably was senior to the man in the Trade Union.

Seán McGouran

Money

Part 11 of review of *Das Kapital*

The most difficult part of *Capital* is the section on money in Volume 3. Engels says in his Preface to Volume 3 that the subject by its nature is more complicated and, while writing, Marx was overtaken by illness from the strain of overwork. As a result there was “no finished draft, not even a scheme whose outlines might have been filled out, but only the beginning of an elaboration—often just a disorganised mass of notes, comments and extracts”.

Engels goes on to say:

“I tried at first to complete this part, as I had done to a certain extent with the first one, by filling in the gaps and expanding upon passages that were only indicated, so that it would at least approximately contain everything intended. I tried this no less than three times, but failed in every attempt, and the time lost in this is one of the chief causes that held up this volume. At last I realised I was on the wrong track. I should have had to go through the entire voluminous literature in this field, and in the end would have produced something that would nevertheless not have been a book by Marx. I had no other choice but to more or less cut the Gordian knot by confining myself to as orderly an arrangement of available matter as possible, and to making only the most indispensable additions.”

As the executor of Marx’s intellectual legacy Engels felt obliged to reflect the spirit of the work. Where there was a doubt as to what Marx’s intentions were, as in the case of his writings on Money and the Banking System, Engels decided to let the words speak for themselves.^t

THE VELOCITY OF MONEY

Marx first introduces the concept of Money in Volume 1. In primitive societies barter was a cumbersome form of exchange because there had to be what modern economists call a “double coincidence of wants”: each party in the exchange transaction had to want what the other party was willing to sell. This problem was overcome by the development of a “universal equivalent” or money commodity. This commodity could be used to buy any commodity in the market place. Money was first used for trading between

societies rather than within societies. The money commodity had to be portable. For this reason livestock was used as the money commodity for trading between nomadic societies. The disadvantage of this commodity was that it was not divisible into smaller quantities of equal value. Consequently precious metals, in particular gold, gradually replaced other money commodities.

In an exchange transaction, money travels in the opposite direction to the commodity. In other words when the commodity goes from A to B, money goes from B to A. If the commodity that has been exchanged from A to B is about to be consumed by B it will no longer be in the circulation sphere. However, the money that has gone from B to A will remain in the circulation sphere unless A decides not to buy commodities with it and instead hoards the money.

Marx noticed that the same Pound note could participate in more than one transaction on the same day. For example A could buy commodities worth 100 Pounds from B. B could use the same 100 Pound note to buy commodities worth 100 Pounds from C. The 100 Pounds that C has could be used to buy commodities from D. D in turn can use the 100 Pounds to buy commodities from E. Finally, the same 100 Pound note could return to A if E buys 100 Pounds worth of commodities from A. If we assume that all of this happened in the same day, we can say that 500 Pounds worth of commodities was circulated in one day, but the quantity of money that was used was only equal to 100 Pounds. This was because the 100 Pounds had a “velocity of circulation” of 5. In other words the same money exchanged hands 5 times (from A to B, from B to C, from C to D, from D to E and finally from E to A) in one day.

The quantity of money in circulation in any one period is equal to the sum of the quantities by their prices divided by the velocity of circulation. In the above example the amount of money in circulation was 500/5 or 100 Pounds. In Marx’s analysis money tends to be a “dependent variable” or the quantity of money is dependent on what is happening in the real economy. So, the faster commodities

circulate, the less money is needed. Also, the more commodities there are, and the higher their prices, the greater will be the amount of money needed in the circulation sphere.

Modern economists by contrast, especially the Monetarist school of economics, often think of the Money supply as an “independent variable”. It is believed that the quantity of money can be determined by public policy and that this can influence what is happening in the real economy. We will return to this later.

THE VALUE AND PRICE OF MONEY

The value of the money commodity could originally be measured in the same way as any other commodity: that is, by the amount of labour contained in it. If the value or price of the money commodity decreased, the price of all other commodities would increase. Marx noticed that new discoveries of gold which caused a decrease in the amount of labour contained in a given quantity of gold had the effect of increasing the prices of all other commodities. The opposite applied if the price of gold went up. In this instance the price of all other commodities decreased.

Marx recognised that paper money has only a nominal value, but he believed that it could only act as money because it represented a real commodity (i.e. gold).

In a footnote in Chapter 3 of Volume 1 he quotes extensively from a contemporary economist called Fullarton as follows:

“That, as far as concerns our domestic exchanges, all the monetary functions which are usually performed by gold and silver coins, may be performed as effectively by a circulation of inconvertible notes, having no value but that fictitious and conventional value ... they derive from the law, is a fact which admits, I conceive, of no denial. Value of this description may be made to answer all the purposes of intrinsic value, and supersede even the necessity for a standard, provided only the quantity of issues be kept under due limitation”. (Fullarton, Regulation of Currencies 2nd edition, London 1845).

Marx includes the above quotation to show how even the best bourgeois economists can misunderstand the nature of money. He makes the following sarcastic comment on Fullarton’s views:

“In other words, because the money commodity is capable of being replaced in circulation by mere

symbols of value, it is superfluous as a measure of value and a standard of prices!"

And yet in this instance Marx was wrong and Fullarton was right! The money commodity is "*superfluous as a measure of value and a standard of prices*". For part of the twentieth century the price of the major currencies was linked to the Dollar which in turn was linked to the price of gold. But this system, known as the Bretton Woods system, collapsed in the 1970s. Since then the value of the major currencies of the world has no connection with gold or any other commodity. Central Banks still keep gold reserves but these are only held as a means to support the currency in the event of a speculative attack.

In a closed economy in which there is no international trade, the greater the ratio of the amount of money in circulation to the amount of commodities produced, the lower will be the price of money and therefore the greater will be the price of commodities. For example, assume a simple small Economy with three commodities produced each day, each with a price of 100 Euros. Each of the three commodities is produced by A, B and C. Assume also that each individual producer buys half the commodities of the other two producers.

Now if there was a State in this economy, and it decided to print an extra 30 Euros in money what would be the effect on prices? The mere act of printing money has no effect on prices. For money to have an effect on prices it would have to enter the circulation sphere. The State would have to give the money to the consumers in the economy (i.e. A, B or C) or else consume products itself.

If for example it gave 10 Euros each to A, B and C each of them would be in a position to consume 10 Euros more in products. But production in the economy has not increased. All that has increase is the amount of money or the amount of purchasing power measured in money terms. If all this extra purchasing power is used in consumption, the prices of the commodities will increase by 10%.

If none of the extra 10% in money purchasing power is spent, prices will not increase. However, prices will eventually increase when the surplus cash is used for consumption. Only if the volume or quantity of goods increases by 10 percent at the same time as the money purchasing

power increases will there be no price increases.

If it is accepted that money can exist without a money commodity such as gold backing it, the question of how much money there is in circulation becomes less important, since the Central Bank does not have to increase or decrease its reserves of gold with changes in the money supply.

In my view, the velocity of circulation is also less important in the absence of a money commodity for the same reason.

The key determinant of the price level (the inverse of the value of money) is the amount of nominal purchasing power exercised in relation to the total value of commodities in the economy. A society can postpone current consumption by allocating its existing resources to investment goods. Such investment will increase production and enable a greater level of production in the future. Other things being equal, such a society will have less inflation than a society that does not invest and allocates more of its resources to current consumption.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

The exchange rate of a currency is its relative price in relation to other currencies. The relative price or the exchange rate of a currency is determined by the laws of demand and supply.

If a country sells more products and services to the rest of the world than it buys there will be a greater demand for its currency. In such circumstances its currency is likely to appreciate in relation to currencies in the rest of the world. The opposite is the case if the country is buying more from the rest of the world than it is selling. If the balance of trade was the only determinant of the exchange rate, there would be a tendency for all countries to have a balance of trade of zero. The country that has a positive trade surplus would increase the value of its currency in relation to the rest of the world, and therefore prices of imports would become very cheap, and its own exports would become more expensive. The country which has a trade deficit would find imports more expensive and its exports very competitive against the rest of the world.

However, countries with a trade surplus such as Japan can lend to countries with a deficit such as the United States. So instead of spending their Dollar receipts, the Japanese can invest their money in the US

economy. The net effect on the Dollar and the Yen is neutral. The Dollars that have left the US to buy Japanese manufactured goods return to the US when the Japanese buy investment products such as US bonds, shares or land. Although there is no change in the exchange rate, the US economy has consumed goods which have been manufactured by the Japanese, whereas the Japanese continue to hold investment goods which they anticipate will give them a future stream of income from the US. It could be said that this is a problem for the US economy but, on the other hand, if the US reduced its consumption it would also be a problem for the Japanese economy.

The US Dollar also attracts investment because it is considered a stable currency. Unlike smaller currencies it is not subject to wild fluctuations. The US can borrow from abroad at low interest rates because there is a relatively low risk of devaluation in the Dollar.

The US Dollar is also used as the currency for trade in oil. This also sustains its value. Oil importing countries have to buy Dollars to make oil purchases. However, it is possible to overstate the significance of this. The Dollars are sold again when the Oil producing countries buy products from the rest of the world. Nevertheless, it is true to say that a stock of Dollars has to be kept by countries who want to trade in oil (i.e. most countries in the world). If oil producing countries decided to denominate their prices in Euros, the likely effect would be a diminution in the value of the Dollar as well as a significant loss in business to American banks.

In the absence of capital controls, currencies are also vulnerable to speculative attacks. Foreign currency speculators borrow vast amounts of the currency they wish to attack. They then sell the currency, causing devaluation and make vast profits by repaying the loans which are denominated in the devalued currency.

THE BANKING SYSTEM AND PAPER MONEY

The best way of describing the banking system is by showing how it might have evolved. Perhaps the first bankers were Gold Merchants who accepted deposits of gold into their warehouses. On receiving the gold they would issue a receipt to the depositors. This receipt indicated that the holder of the document was entitled to withdraw the stated amount of gold.

Maybe originally the depositor who

wanted to make a substantial purchase went to the gold merchant and gave him his receipt to withdraw the gold needed to buy commodities. However in time the receipts issued by the Gold Merchant “gained currency”. They became acceptable as a means of payment and it was considered unnecessary for the buyer to withdraw his gold in order to make a purchase. The Gold Merchant’s receipt which the buyer offered was perfectly acceptable to the seller of the commodity.

However no State could allow a private party to produce money unhindered. Also no society could accept money without the backing of the State. The full force of the State apparatus is needed to limit forgery.

As paper money became more acceptable, its owners began to deposit the notes in separate institutions for safekeeping. Perhaps these banks originally charged people to keep their deposits. However, the bankers began to notice that the money lying in their vaults was not being used. Although there were frequent withdrawals and deposits, the overall stock of money in their vaults was quite stable. It must have occurred to some of them that they could use other people’s money to make money for themselves.

If, for example, a bank has 100,000 Euros in deposits from its depositors, what is to prevent it from lending a proportion of that money to people willing to pay interest on the loans? The only risk is if the original depositors decide to withdraw their money. The credibility of the bank would be totally undermined if it did not have money available for these depositors. But is this likely? In general, banks can lend up to 90% of their deposits to borrowers without having the problem of not being able to pay depositors when they withdraw their money. So, in the above example, the bank could lend 90,000 Euros to borrowers and therefore keep 10,000 Euros in reserve. The ratio of reserves to deposits is equal to 10% which under normal circumstances would be considered a reasonable ratio.

The greater the amount of deposits that a bank has, the greater the amount of loans it is able to make. Therefore it attracts deposits by offering interest. The interest it charges borrowers must, of course, be greater than the interest it pays to depositors for it to make a profit. The gross profit on the borrowing and lending business of a bank is equal to the following:

$$(B \times (1-R)-S) \times D$$

where B = the interest rate charged to borrowers, R = the reserve ratio, S = the interest rate given to Savers and D = the amount of deposits.

In the above example, if the interest charged to borrowers is 5% and the interest rate given to savers is 4.5%, the bank will make a gross profit of zero. The relevant figures are:

$$(5\% \times (1-10\%) - 4.5\%) \times 100,000 = 0$$

We can deduce from the formula the following fairly obvious conclusions, if we assume the bank makes profits:

- a) The greater the difference between the rate charged to borrowers and the rate given to savers the greater will be the bank’s profit.
- b) The greater the amount of deposits the greater will be the bank’s profit.
- c) The lower the reserve ratio the greater will be the bank’s profit.

An aggressive bank would want to have a low reserve ratio, but if such a bank was unable to supply cash to its depositors when required the whole banking system would be undermined. In most countries the State is effectively the final guarantor for the depositors. In exchange for this burden it insists that banks have minimum reserve ratios.

In the US during the 1980s some of the legal restrictions applying to “Savings and Loans” institutions (equivalent to our building societies) were relaxed. The consequence was a massive expansion of credit. When many of these institutions were bankrupted as a result of bad debts and dubious investments, the State had to step in to compensate the depositors at the cost of hundreds of millions of Dollars. This measure was considered necessary to restore confidence in the financial system.

A similar issue was faced by the Irish Government in the early 1980s when the largest Irish bank, AIB, was faced with hundreds of millions of Pounds in liabilities following the acquisition of an insurance company. The Government stepped in to save the bank. Arguably, this was unnecessary. All that was required was that the savings of the depositors were secured to maintain confidence in the banking system.

Twenty years later, the same AIB bank faced another crisis when about 700 million Euros was discovered to be missing in one of its American subsidiaries. This

time the bank could absorb the loss without the help of the State. The first thing it did following the announcement of the loss was to reassure the public that it had sufficient reserves to meet any demands from its depositors. But the crisis begs the question: if the bank itself does not know its own financial position what chance has the Government of regulating the reserve ratios of these institutions?

Since the dawn of history banks or money lenders have attracted more than their fair share of opprobrium. The main reason for this is the moral repugnance felt for people who make money by using other people’s money. According to Marx the practice of usury bankrupted the peasants of Ancient Rome and converted it from an economy of small peasants to a slave economy. Loath though I am to defend such institutions, it must be admitted that they serve a number of social functions.

Banks are sometimes called “*Financial Intermediaries*” because they act as an intermediary between one set of people who want to lend and another set of people who want to borrow. Borrowing and saving enables an individual to have a more even pattern of consumption throughout his life. The most common example is the purchase of house. A person who wants to buy a house does not have to wait until he has saved the money. He can “consume” the benefits of the house before he has fully paid for it. But, if credit was not so freely available, it is possible that the house would not cost so much in the first place! Usually the young borrow from the old in order to consume. Those who are retired tend to consume out of savings that have been accumulated during their working lives. The State, by means of social insurance and state pensions, also evens out consumption throughout an individual’s life.

Marx believed that banks, by transferring funds from lenders to borrowers, enabled a reduction in hoarding or the holding of idle capital.

Banks also enable funds to be transferred from a wealthy (also perhaps indolent) class to a more energetic class. In nineteenth century England the banking system was able to facilitate the transfer of the vast profits from the slave trade to the industrial capitalist class resulting in a massive increase in the forces of production.

Finally, banks facilitate the sacrificing

of consumption by society as a whole in order to increase the productive forces. There are some products that require enormous expenditure of resources before any benefits are received. Examples are the research and development expenditure required to produce new products. It might take many years of paying well-paid scientists and engineers before anything tangible is produced. In the meantime someone is sacrificing his consumption to finance this. If the State is financing the project, the general tax payer is sacrificing his consumption through the taxes he contributes. If the project is financed by share capital, the shareholders are foregoing their consumption. Finally, if the project is being financed by borrowing from the bank, the bank depositor is financing it.

Of course it is also possible that such investment expenditure can be financed from abroad in which case foreign savers are financing the investment.

INTEREST

In Chapter Nine we briefly looked at interest. It was noted that interest is paid out of the general profits in society. If profits or surplus value were not created in a society, it would not be possible to pay out interest. It was further noted that the interest rate tended to be lower than the average rate of profit since the capitalists who received interest were willing to receive a lower return to avoid risk. (All of this assumes that capitalist class is the only class that can save. This follows from the assumption that the worker is paid only a means of subsistence, which is probably an unrealistic assumption.)

In general the interest rate is determined by the laws of supply and demand. The greater the supply of funds, or the propensity of a society to save, the lower will be the rate of interest. It follows that the less the supply of funds, or the greater the propensity of a society to consume, the higher will be the rate of interest.

It is sometimes said that Ireland, which has a relatively young population, has benefited from the low interest funds available from a more mature society such as Germany with greater accumulated savings.

Interest is also sometimes considered to be a measure of how society values present consumption as opposed to future consumption. The greater a society values present consumption, the smaller the amount of savings there will be and

therefore the higher will be the rate of interest.

Although Marx believed that the rate of interest in general was less than the rate of profit this did not mean that there was a direct relationship between the rate of profit and the rate of interest. The rate of interest did not necessarily rise with rising rates of profits. On the contrary, he noticed that often in periods of crisis the rate of interest was at its highest. Periods of crisis often reflect doubts about the future. These crises can occur in periods of overproduction. The capitalists, having invested heavily in a branch of production, suddenly realise that they cannot sell their commodities. Although they are not receiving revenues for their products, their expenses remain at the same level. There usually follows a desperate scramble for

funds to pay short-term expenses. The demand for funds, in the absence of a supply of funds generated by profits, causes the interest rate to rise. As well as this, the lenders of funds (i.e. the banks) become nervous about the possibility of bad debts. This nervousness further restricts the supply of funds, putting further upward pressure on interest rates. This nervousness can exacerbate the crisis if the high interest rates cause bankruptcies.

In general Marx believed that the banking system contributed to dramatic increases in the forces of production by maximising the utilisation of social capital. But by making possible massive long-term investments with no immediate returns the banking systems can also exacerbate crises of overproduction.

John Martin

CLONBANIN continued

released papers. Mr. Heath met Senator Kennedy in Washington on February 2, 1973. One of his aims was to urge Senator Kennedy to heed Mr. Lynch's pleas that all US financial aid for the North be channelled through organisations such as the International Red Cross.

"During the meeting the British Ambassador said Social Services payments from the British Exchequer to Northern Ireland were Stg.£70 per head compared to the average Stg.£20 per head in the Republic. The records go on: 'The Prime Minister said Mr. Lynch had made it clear that he could not afford to assume responsibility for Northern Ireland right now.'" (Irish Independent, 2.1.2004).

"THE former Irish Fertiliser Industries plant in Cork is to be dismantled piece by piece and shipped to Chile. The factory at Marino Point, near Cobh, County Cork, closed along with two other plants in Arklow, Co. Wicklow and Belfast last October with the loss of 620 jobs nation wide.

"The sale has been settled and the whole factory will be moved to Chile where it will be rebuilt. The dismantling will take approximately a year and a half to complete and we would hope that an Irish workforce will be employed to do the work." said Ray Jackson, Liquidator from the accountancy firm KPMG." (Inside Cork-30.10.2003).

Mr. Jackson refused to reveal how much the plant was sold for and would not confirm the name of the purchaser.

"THE TAOISEACH last night urged Irish people not to protest against the June visit of President Bush, which, he said, will

be an honour for the Irish people and a chance to put the European view to him on a range of issues.

"Speaking to reporters last night, Mr. Ahern said the Irish Presidency of the EU was trying to get the EU-US relationship 'back on an even keel' and in this light he hoped there would not be protests.

"He said the US economy was now doing very well and there was a prospect of promoting investment and trade. "This is an opportunity for Ireland," he said." (Irish Times-26.2.2004).

ARE THEY 'CUMANN' OR GOING?
"ASYLUM-SEEKERS living at the former holiday camp in Mosney have asked Fianna Fail if they can set up their own cumann in the run-up to the June local elections." (Sunday Independent-8.2.2004).

400 non-nationals based in the Co. Meath refugee centre have had their names put on the register of electors. But Fianna Fail has sought clarification from Michael McDowell's Department of Justice about the exact status of the mainly Cuban and Nigerian Fianna Fail supporters.

"We strongly believe that Fianna Fail will help us. They will fight for us and relate our problems to the Government," Peter Abawashu, an asylum-seeker at Mosney stated.

The Mosney residents claim they are not joining Fianna Fail for ideological reasons, but in an attempt to reform the country's biggest political force from within.

"The Labour Party says it has already published leaflets in several languages advising non-nationals of their voting rights. General Secretary Mike Allen said limitations on the electoral register made it hard to identify non-nationals so the Labour Party was targeting these potential voters at cultural events such as the Chinese New Year." (ibid.).

“Peering Through The Smoke Screen”

by Ian Mundell (extract)

“You would have to be stupid not to have realised by now that smoking kills. The evidence is overwhelming and the death toll is huge...

“But there is another, less well-known side to this story which suggests that cigarettes can protect against disease. A number of epidemiological studies have reported that smokers suffer fewer cases than nonsmokers of the progressive brain disorder, Parkinson’s disease. The same has been found for Alzheimer’s disease, the common form of dementia, and the inflammatory gut disease ulcerative colitis. Smoking also appears to protect against rheumatoid arthritis, some cancers and other conditions.

“Many scientists believe these studies open important avenues for research that could reveal the mechanisms of these diseases and new treatments. But strong evidence also exists that, because of the stigma attached to smoking, researchers, funding bodies and drugs companies have failed to follow up these leads.

“Epidemiologists began to find apparently beneficial effects of smoking in the late 1960s, when a study showed that American military veterans with Parkinson’s disease were less likely to be smokers. Although other studies produced contrary or equivocal findings, the weight of evidence suggests that smokers are 50 per cent less likely to develop Parkinson’s disease than those who have never smoked.

“In the mid-1980s a similar effect was spotted for Alzheimer’s disease although, again, later studies have produced varying results. Some found that smokers are 70 per cent less likely to develop the disease than abstainers; in others, smokers had no advantage. The most consistent finding of a reduced risk in smokers has been found in inherited Alzheimer’s disease.

...

“In Alzheimer’s interest has focused on the ability of nicotine to improve attention and the brain’s ability to process information, although this is unlikely to explain a protective effect.

“The epidemiological evidence suggests that there is something in the cigarette smoke, in the nicotine, that directly relates to the manner in which brain cells die’, says Peter Whitehouse, director of the Alzheimer’s Centre, University Hospitals of Cleveland, Ohio. ‘It’s not just supporting the cells that are still there... but prevent the cells from dying in the first place.’

“One theory that could explain this preventive effect stems from a tie-up between nicotine and acetylcholine, one of the vital chemicals that relay impulses from one brain cell to the next. Acetylcholine stimulates

GAA continued

We are told we must look forward to the future. The past is a different country. The oppressed must forget whilst the oppressor celebrates. Look at Britain, it inundated with celebration of tradition and wars!

PAIDI O SE

Paidi O Se is the latest person to be attacked for expressing an honest opinion, following a speech in Newry, Paidi said:

“Every time that I come up to Down, every part of the Northern Counties being involved in football and all that. Thanks to be God there’s an awful lot of how do I put it... there’s an awful lot of release of pressure there at the moment, whereby there is no foreigner people telling us, checking us out or whatever going in. I can’t put it any clearer than that.

“Then he spelt out his position on Croke Park. He went on: ‘There are a number of issues I would like to outline tonight. Issue number one would be the question should soccer or rugby be played at Croke Park. And people have been turning and twisting and everything they like about that issue.

“I was asked that question in New York last week. Would you agree, Paidi, that soccer and rugby should be played in Croke Park? And I said, fine, I will under one condition, that it’s under a 32 county All Ireland” (Evening Echo, Cork, 6.3.2004).

“The *Newry Democrat* and its sister publications in the Thomas Crosbie Holdings Group completely disassociate themselves from the political remarks of Mr. O Se.” (ibid).

“A defiant O Se said afterwards that he had ‘nothing to subtract’ from his remarks and had a very clear conscience” (*The Kingdom*, Killarney, 9.3.2004).

And why the hell should he!

Thomas Crosbie Holdings also own the *Irish Examiner*. A few days after Paidi’s remarks, the following appeared on the front page: “*Not since the burning of Cork has the city by the Lee been so emblazoned with fire, colour and a sense of vibrant expectation*” (11.3.2004).

It is surely a measure of what we are, when such a flippant and contemptible remark about the deliberate destruction of a city centre by British armed forces went unchallenged in Cork city. Had the Tans only known, they could have fulfilled our “vibrant expectation” by burning down the *Cork Examiner* building when they were finished burning down our City Hall and the Carnegie Library.

The battle here is between those who believe the GAA is a lot more besides sport and those, mainly in the media, commercial interests who would treat it as another entertainment activity, devoid of social or historical roots.

“So the Association has defied the culture of integration and openness and made itself look like a dinosaur. Why?” (Irish Independent, 10.3.2004).

The *Irish Independent* today may laud its wide coverage of Gaelic games and hurling but Sir Anthony O’Reilly’s daily boycotted for decades any coverage of our national games. It was only with the establishment of The Irish Press, that William Martin Murphy’s titles condescended to cover Gaelic games.

Surely Sir Anthony and his fellow press mogul, Rupert Murdoch, have enough shekels to help out their Anglophile mates in the soccer and rugby fraternity!

As we go to press, we have learned of the sudden deaths of John McCall, the Irish U-19 rugby star from Armagh, and the passing of 31-year-old Frankie McMullen, the Antrim and Dunloy hurler, who played in the All-Ireland club hurling final against the North Cork team, Newtownshandrum, in Croke Park on St. Patrick’s Day last.

two different types of ‘receptors’ on these cells, one that can be artificially stimulated by a substance called muscarine, the other by nicotine.

“Nicotine has the added effect of increasing the number of the nicotinic receptors on brain cells. When researchers found that Alzheimer’s patients had depleted numbers of acetylcholine receptors in their brains, they questioned whether nicotine’s actions might stop brain function deteriorating.

...

“‘When the first results appeared everybody bent over backwards to find reasons it couldn’t be true’, says Gray [Jeffrey

Gray, prof. of psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry in London]. He likens the efforts of medical researchers to disprove the benefits of smoking with attempts by the tobacco industry to destroy the link between smoking and heart disease.

...

Ian Hindmarch, professor of psychopharmacology at the University of Surrey, says in the 1970s approval to study smoking’s apparent advantages was as hard to come by as permission to research into cannabis. ‘The ethical committees wouldn’t let us do it’, he says...

(From *New Scientist* 9th October 1993).

GAA continued

“So too will be the fact that Cormac was a model footballer, did not smoke or drink, deeply respected his Catholic faith and was still regarded as ‘one of the lads’, which shows that one does not have to put on a macho lifestyle or act the ‘hard man’ on the field to become a genuine hero.” (Ibid.).

From Brantry, his townland, he was taken for burial at St. Patrick’s Church, Eglish, on Oona Waters, four miles south of Dungannon and not all that distant from another sacred ground, Tullaghoge, three miles south of Cookstown, nine or 10 miles from Eglish, the inauguration seat of the O’Neills. Mountjoy destroyed the chair in August, 1602.

Cormac’s grandfather, Charlie O’Neill, played the fiddle and Aunt, Marie Burns, played the harp in St. Patrick’s Church, Eglish.

In the land of O’Neill, where they buried Cormac McAnallen on that Friday morning, 5th March 2004, in his death, we seen and experienced a land and a community that offers an alternative to the rootlessness and cynicism which Ireland has been dragged into for the last couple of decades!

CROKE PARK

“But what I can’t accept is the comments on *Prime Time* re British soldiers in 1920. With that type of mentality, we will never be able to move forward.

“Can the Cork County Board (i.e. Frank Murphy) accept this point of view? Those comments are indefensible and even more so after the gracious words in defeat used by Clive Woodward and Lawrence Dallaglio after our great victory at Twickenham” (Donough O’Reilly in a letter to Irish Independent, 12.3.2004).

Croke Park is not just a great sports ground, it’s a national shrine, bathed in the blood of innocent Irish men and women, and yes, children—the Tans didn’t spare children on Bloody Sunday, even outside the ground, on that day in November, 1920, in a match between Dublin and Tipperary in aid of the Irish Volunteer Dependents’ Fund. Michael Hogan, the Tipperary player, was murdered along with 11 other people.

It wasn’t the GAA that coined the term, Bloody Sunday, it was General Frank Crozier, Commandant of the Auxiliaries, who to his credit probably averted an even

worse massacre.

Mr. O’Reilly is not prepared to go back to 1920, what about 1972, 1983 or 1998, when the GAA badge or identity in certain quarters meant certain death? The GAA doesn’t have to go back to 1920. Below are listed the members of the Association whose membership of the GAA probably singled them out for death.

1972: Louis Leonard, 26-year-old family man and captain of the Derrylin GAA football team was murdered by an undercover British Army plant.

1974: Ballycran GAA clubhouse, Ards Peninsula burned down.

1973: Frank McCaughey, Aghaloo GAA club, Aughnacloy murdered by the UVF.

1981: Kevin Lynch, an active member of the Dungiven GAA club died after 71 days on hunger strike.

1983: Aiden McAnespie, also from Aghaloo GAA club, murdered on his way to a Gaelic football match by a Grenadier Guard, who was charged with an unlawful killing but was never convicted. Dr. Mick Loftus, President of the GAA “called his death murder”. Cardinal O Fiaich said the same.

1991: Ballycran GAA clubhouse burned a second time.

1993: Sean Fox, a 72-year old member of St. Enda’s GAA club, Glengormley, North Belfast murdered by loyalist gunmen.

1997: Sean Brown, Wolfe Tone GAA club, Bellaghy, Co. Derry abducted and murdered.

1997: Gerry Devlin, 30, St. Enda’s GAA club, Glengormley shot dead.

1998: Fergal McCusker, Watty Graham’s GAA club, Maghera, Co. Derry, murdered by the LVF.

THE WEST BRITS

What kills the revisionists and the anti-Republicans is the fact that the GAA is a nation-wide organisation, alive in every parish from the Glens of Antrim to the Beara Peninsula. The murder of Aiden McAnespie was felt as bitterly and as sorely by Cork GAA members as it was by the Northern Gaels.

The PDs and the *Irish Independent* would dismiss such deaths as part of the ‘tribal’ conflict in the North—‘thank goodness we have none of that down here’.

The GAA ensured that such murders were affairs of the nation and posed an obligation on all Irish people to find an honourable and peaceful solution.

Frank Murphy and his County Board have upheld these values more than most. When our Northern members were under threat, Cork County Board never failed to rally and above all, take cognizance of the plight of our Northern Gaels! That is why the petty and the pathetic detest Murphy so much.

Nobody can tell the Cork County GAA Board about sports stadiums! *Pairc Ui Chaoimh* is one of the finest Gaelic grounds in the land. An example of how soccer is administered in this country can be seen in the manner in which that code lost Flower Lodge to the GAA. Flower Lodge has probably one of the finest playing surfaces in Ireland. It is now *Pairc Ui Rinn* and one of the gems in the crown of the Cork GAA. The bigots can eat their heart out!

“The GAA engaged in its own drive to raise money for the Omagh appeal, and channelled gate receipts and other revenue into its own fund. This turned out to be more than a casual gesture because the G.A.A. subsequently emerged as the single biggest contributor to the appeal fund. In May, 2000, Joe McDonagh, the Association president, Liam Mulvihill and officials from Tyrone and Donegal county boards gathered at Healy Park in Omagh to present a cheque for £750,000 to the trustees of the appeal.” (*How The GAA Survived The Troubles*, Desmond Fahy, Wolfhound, 2001).

We don’t know what *The Sunday Times* or Bob Geldof contributed, but by hell, they sure got some publicity from Omagh compared to the three-quarter of a million pounds donated by the GAA

The GAA is ever slated over ‘Rule 42’ and ‘Open access’ to Croke Park! This is by a media now predominately owned by British newspaper chains and the pro-British *Irish Independent* and *Irish Times* titles.

One had only to watch the Ireland v England Rugby game, to witness the cringing end this mealy-mouthedness has brought about. On the pretext that the Irish National Anthem, *Amhran Na BhFiann* would insult the Ulster players on the team, it has been replaced by some ditty composed by the author of *Puppet On A String*. However, on the day, only one Ulster player lined out, his National Anthem *God Save The Queen* was sung with gusto, the rest of the Triple Crown winning team from Dublin, were too ashamed to sing their own National Anthem.

continued on page 18



*“It’s a narrow gate
and a hard road that leads to life
and only a few find it.”*

'Mortas Cinnagh'

CORMAC McANALLEN died on Tuesday, 2nd March 2004, of a rare viral infection of the heart. He was 24 years of age.

A fluent Gaelic speaker, he taught history and politics at St. Catherine’s College, Armagh. His school principal Margaret Martin said: *“There is a sense of national loss and he epitomised someone who was very committed not only to education, but to Irish culture and Gaelic games.”*

“He was a born leader, quiet, unassuming and such a gentleman with a maturity that belied his years” (Mickey Harte, Tyrone Manager).

He was in line to achieve a unique treble, Captain of an All-Ireland Minor, U-21 and Senior All-Ireland football champions.

We had meant to say it before, but the death of Cormac McAnallen leaves us no choice, the success of Armagh and Tyrone on the playing field was born of struggle : the 30 year war in the North, the sacrifices, the loss of life gave the people of those two Counties a determination, a will and the self-esteem to make their mark in Irish life.

They did it on the GAA field. Not since its foundation in 1884, did GAA followers witness the momentous day like that Sunday in last September, when two teams from the same province lined out in an All-Ireland final for the first time.

It is no accident either, that the majority of Gaelic Football and Hurling titles are held by the three Counties of Cork, Kerry and Tipperary, the heartland of the struggle for freedom in the 1920s. When young people had nothing else, they had the Gaelic Athletic Association.

It was the GAA playing fields that

developed the leadership of many fine young Republicans, some later to give their life for Irish independence.

Contrast the scenes of community in Tyrone with the arrest in Spain of Keith Gillespie from Belfast, a Northern international soccer player, with two mates from Leicester City now charged with the rape of three girls in a luxury Spanish hotel.

A fellow guest in their hotel said players glugged dozens of bottles of 330 Euro-a-time Cristal champagne in the bar.

Or the trial in Dublin of the ex-Blackrock boys for the murder of teenager, Brian Murphy at Club Anabel in the Burlington Hotel.

Two very different Irelands—Mary Coughlan, the Minister for Social Welfare, would have got a better understanding of the meaning of family, and community too, had she visited south-east Tyrone during those sad days of Cormac’s bereavement in early March, 2004.

Cormac never took the back door, said

his colleague, Margaret Martin, St. Catherine’s Principal, he was *“mortas cinnagh”*, *“pride of race”*. She mentioned Cormac’s belief in the collective, he maintained that it was *“wrong to be too individualistic”*.

“He personified everything that was good about humanity” (Fr. Gerard McAleer, St. Patrick’s College, Armagh). “He was a gift to the world, he was a gift to Tyrone.”

“In little over an hour that afternoon in Belfast, Cormac had taken me from the skills of the Kerry inside-forward line to some of Hugh O’Neill’s more famous battles, including the Battle of the Yellow Ford that took place only a few miles from his English home. He had, obviously, chosen the perfect profession for himself in history teaching” (Mark Gallagher, Irish Examiner, 3.3.2004).

The McAnallens are renowned for their intelligence and keen interest in politics and history.

Cormac made a point of making his acceptance speech after the 1998 All-Ireland Minor final in Gaelic.

“He exemplified everything that was good in a Gaelic footballer and human being.”

“Cormac McAnallen was the sort of young man who over the decades have edified the GAA, giving it the extra layer of quality and class which signifies that the GAA is more than just a mere sports organisation.” (Eugene McGee, Irish Independent, 3.3.2004).

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