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*The Irish Times:
Gageby And McDowell*

**Labour Organisation In
Northern Ireland**

"To Work Or Not ?"
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Warmongering

As the Irish Republican Army commits itself increasingly to a peace process, the Irish Defence Force agitates for war. General Gerry MacMahon, a former Chief of Staff, wants the Defence Force freed from "*the UN mandate lack*", so that it can go to war (Irish Times 20.10.04). UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan spent five days in Ireland pleading for the participation of the Irish Defence Force in a system of "*hit squads*" to be run by the European Union for the United Nations where the UN cannot act. And John O'Shea, belligerent head of GOAL, "*an international humanitarian organisation*", urged the Taoiseach to respond to Annan's call, so that the UN Security Council, which is "*hung up on national sovereignty*", could be circumvented (Irish Times 14.10.04). And the *Irish Times* naturally gives great publicity to these demands that Irish soldiers should once again become active in international power politics, fighting for good causes around the world as they used to do when there was a real Regular Army in Ireland, the British Army. The undermining of the concept of '*national sovereignty*', a principle which kept the peace in Europe in the half century after World War II, also sits well with the agenda at the root of the *Irish Times* project.

So is Kofi Annan trying to set himself up as world dictator and to sideline the Security Council into a talking shop? How can this be? The Secretary General derives his executive authority from the Security Council. If his scheme comes into effect, it can only be at the behest of the dominant power on the Security Council, the United States. If Annan proceeds with this scheme and is not disabled, it can only be that he is acting as an agent of the United States.

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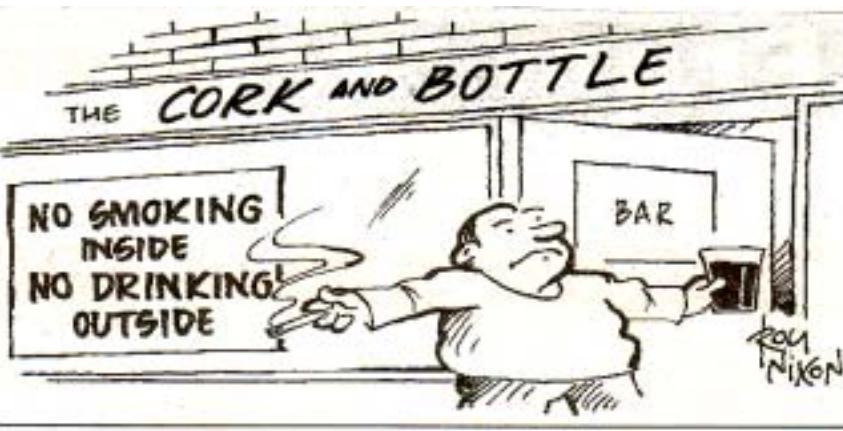
Europe In Crisis

The *Irish Times* told us on the 28th October that Mr. Barroso's decision to delay ratification of his new Commission under the pressure from the European Parliament on 27th October was a "*good outcome to the EU Confrontation*". It seemed a bit premature to even claim an outcome at that stage. The immediate outcome is still to be known and the long-term outcome is hardly knowable at this stage. But for the Irish political class whatever happens in Europe is a good thing. Nowadays, the Irish political mind goes blank at the thought of Europe. Ducking and diving while the money comes in is the order of the day and that's the beginning and the end of it.

The only element that tries to bring thought is Anthony Coughlan. He does so according to the guidelines set down by the old Communist Party of Great Britain via his mentor Desmond Greaves in the 50s-60s and the British Eurosceptics, mainly Tories, of the 70s onwards. There is continuity and common ground from Communists to Conservatives in Britain on the issue of Europe and Coughlan is its agent in Ireland. That is why he never can really appeal to the Irish body politic. His conceptions are not organic to that body.

This is the second defeat of the Commission by the Parliament and is clearly the second of many to come. The particular issues concerned do not matter.

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Annan's recent statement that the invasion of Iraq was illegal was a piece of demagoguery, designed to gain him credibility as an independent agent in world affairs. He is not an independent agent. And the invasion of Iraq was not illegal.

Insofar as there is a system of law operative on a world scale, it is the law of the United Nations as determined by the Security Council. And five States are legally exempt from it—the five Permanent Powers on the Security Council. Each of these Powers has the right to operate its own policy on a world scale. It cannot be found to be in breach of international law—unless it finds itself to be so. No judgment can be given against it. It is free to do whatever its military power enables it to do.

If Annan acts militarily on issues on which the Security Council cannot agree to act, that can only be because he acts as agent of one of the Powers which are above the law. And, in the present instance, that can only be the USA.

General MacMahon cites East Timor as if it was a precedent for what Annan proposed to the Irish: "*East Timor was stabilised by a UN-mandated but Australian-led force, which was replaced by a more traditional UN peacekeeping force with an enforcement mandate once the situation had been brought under command. In this instance, Irish soldiers served under Australian command.*" But Annan's scheme is that there should be

action without a UN mandate.

And General MacMahon tells a very small part of that UN story. When Indonesia occupied East Timor, Australia recognised Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor on the basis of the right of conquest. That recognition, which struck at the ideological core of the UN, was not censured by the UN, even though a Security Council resolution had condemned the Indonesian conquest. This resolution was of no practical account because it was not passed under Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter. Chapter 7 resolutions authorise executive action to enforce them. Other resolutions are just ideological window-dressing. Israel always treats them with contempt when they are directed at it. So did Indonesia in the case of East Timor. But, while the subjects of these futile resolutions usually treat them with the contempt they deserve, it is not usual when doing so to assert a principle which is a total negation of the pretensions of the United Nations. But that is what Australia did when it recognised Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor on the basis of the right of conquest. (And Donald Rumsfeld came close to doing it recently with regard to the Israeli occupation of the whole of Palestine west of the Jordan.)

The Indonesian occupation lasted for about a quarter of a century, and during that period about a third of the population of East Timor was killed by the occupation force.

The Indonesian Government of that era had come to power in a military *coup d'état* in 1965-6 in which a million people were killed. Its leader, General Suharto, was one of the pillars of the Western segment of what is called the International Community. He governed the State well, by comparison with what has happened since he was undermined. The country was not riven by religious war, and a degree of what might even be called prosperity was maintained by the method that later came to be called corruption.

(General Suharto's coup in Indonesia was instigated by the Americans and the British. The British Ambassador, Sir Andrew Gilchrist, was closely involved. There was a strong Communist movement in the country, which was massacred by Suharto's forces using the pretext that a *coup* was planned. Gilchrist was later moved to Ireland, where he represented the Empire during the initial phase of the Arms importation saga in 1969. Major Thomas McDowell, top dog of *The Irish Times*, was put in touch with Gilchrist when he offered his services to Prime Minister Harold Wilson.)

With the crumbling of the Soviet regime and China's withdrawal from foreign affairs to develop a market economy, Washington decided it had no further need of Suharto, so it decreed that he was a dictator and that the closed economy he was running was an intolerable obstacle to the free circulation of capital. It subverted the regime which had kept the region stable on behalf of 'the West/International Community' for thirty years. The liberation of East Timor from the Indonesian tyranny then became an enforceable UN position. And Australia undertook the work of liberation as enthusiastically as it had previously upheld the right of conquest. Its only object was to maintain a lucrative presence in East Timor, and it was a matter of indifference to it whether in doing it it made a mockery of the United Nations or enforced its mandate.

While Kofi Annan was in Ireland trying to raise a hit squad for use without a UN mandate, Garret FitzGerald appeared on the Vincent Browne show on Radio Eireann to discuss the invasion of Iraq. He accepted the Annan dictum that the invasion was illegal, but denied that the Irish Government acted in breach of law in facilitating the prosecution of the war by allowing Shannon Airport to be used as a transit point for US troops and the overflight of US aircraft. His reasoning

(which echoed that of Martin Mansergh on the Vincent Browne show last year) was that in foreign policy matters each state has two obligations—to act in accordance with an ideal or principle and to serve its own particular interests. The Irish interest was served by facilitating the American invasion of Iraq. And, even though that invasion was illegal, Ireland did not act in breach of law in facilitating it because the invasion would not have been prevented by an Irish refusal to facilitate it, and the only effect of such a refusal would have been to damage Irish interests.

This reasoning gives rise to the strange principle that it is lawful to facilitate an illegal action if refusing to facilitate it would not have the effect of preventing it.

But why resort to such casuistry? Surely FitzGerald can read a book of rules and apply them. The book of rules of international law is the United Nations Charter. Under those rules the Secretary General is not a judge who decides what is illegal. His opinion has no judicial force whatever. And, under the rules, an action engaged in by two Permanent Powers cannot be illegal.

This is not a perverted application of the rules. Nor is it a literal application of them which breaks the spirit of them. The rules governing the operation of international law in the context of the UN (and all other contexts were abolished by the founders of the UN) were specifically designed to exclude the application of the law to the Permanent Members of the Security Council, the Powers with a Veto on Security Council resolutions.

The UN is a construction of the Great Powers of 1945, designed to serve their interests. Any other representation of it is a vacuous ideal—an illusion. The Veto of the Permanent Members makes it impossible that it should be anything else. And if it wasn't for the Veto, the UN would not exist at all. The Great Powers of 1945 would only allow it to be established on the condition that it could not act against them. The Great Powers were essentially two, the Soviet Union and the USA, with Britain a poor second, and France and China added as makeweights. And the terms in which its ideals were set out had to be acceptable to Russia and America, and had therefore to be capable of being understood in drastically different ways.

For half a century it was understood to be a general principle of the UN that new

states should not be established through colonisation and conquest, even though the UN General Assembly itself, with the support of the two Great Powers, provided for the colonisation and conquest of Palestine by the Jewish nationalist movement in 1947. The other generally understood principle was that existing states which were members of the UN had inalienable sovereignty. This principle was breached in practice with regard to Yugoslavia and John O'Shea appears to want it discarded as a principle:

“The Security Council is... hung up on national sovereignty... Some mechanism must be found to prevent genocide and to stop it when it does occur... The UN was well aware of what was going on in Rwanda 10 years ago but a million people were slaughtered and it did nothing to stop it”.

O'Shea writes of the UN as if it had corporate existence as a world authority, which it hasn't. If it had it would be a World Government. It is not possible that it should become a World Government. And the over-riding of national sovereignty of one state will only be done in pursuit of the interests of another state.

The outcome of the ‘Rwandan genocide’ was that the people who were exterminated became the rulers of the state—a paradox which arises from the misuse of language. The context of the ‘genocide’ was the invasion of Rwanda by a Tutsi Army from Uganda which created a reign of terror in the invasion path, provoking the response of the Hutu majority. The militaristic, American-trained Tutsi minority quickly gained the upper hand, took control of the state and set about punishing the majority in the name of Justice etc. It established a military dictatorship which has not cared to introduce democracy. At the same time its armies have been active in neighbouring states where more people have been killed than in ‘the Rwandan genocide’ without causing great concern to the ‘international community’. These events, whether in Rwanda, Uganda or the Congo, do not express a form of barbarism endemic in African culture which the world of Western civilisation has an obligation to stop. They are products of the activity of Western civilisation in Africa, governed by very definite Western interests which determine which of these events should arouse the conscience of the world.

The British Government hailed the NATO attack on Yugoslavia as establishing the principle that national sovereignty

Poem addressed to Blair/Bush, by *Osama bin-Laden*

To the Ingleeze Khafir,
calling himself
Djann Bool Djenkinzun
[John Bull Jenkinson]

Thus writeth Meer Djafrit:
I hate thee Djann Bool,
Worse than Marid or Afrit,
Or corpse-eating Ghool
I hate thee like sin,
For thy mop-head of hair,
Thy snub nose and bald chin,
And thy turkey-cock air.
Thou vile Ferindjee!
That thou thus shouldst disturb an
Old Moslim like me,
With my Khizzilbash turban!
Old fogy like me,
With my Khizzilbash turban!

I spit on thy clothing,
That garb for baboons!
I eye with deep loathing
Thy tight pantaloons!
I curse the cravat
That encircles thy throat,
And thy cooking-pot hat,
And thy swallow-tailed coat!
Go, hide thy thick sconce
In some hovel suburban;
Or else don at once
The red Moosleman turban.
Thou dog, don at once
The grand Khizzilbash turban!

[OK, the author is not Osama bin Laden, but James Clarence Mangan, 1803-1849, JL]

had been set aside in the cause of the higher rights of humanitarianism. When preaching that war, the Prime Minister went around various East European capitals declaring that “literally thousands” of people were being killed every day in the Serbian genocide in Kossovo. That would have meant that well in excess of 100,000 people were killed by Serbs in the period preceding the NATO bombing. It was later established that nothing of the kind had happened. Before the NATO bombing there had been

low-level conflict between an Albanian guerilla (or terrorist) movement and the Yugoslav authorities in which very few people were killed. The assault of the Serbs on the Albanians began after the NATO bombing started. it was a consequence of the bombing, not the cause. And the system established by NATO in Kossovo was one under which Serbs were terrorised by Albanians.

The Yugoslav State had to be got rid of because it was a Communist survival in the new capitalist Europe. It survived when the other Communist states fell in 1989 because it was not part of the Soviet system, having been in effective alliance with the capitalist West for forty years. When the West got the better of the Soviet enemy, it had no further need of its Communist ally against that enemy and set about destroying it, inciting extreme nationalist passions for that purpose—and the Western media never mentioned the awkward fact that, in the reconstruction of Yugoslavia towards the end of the Second World War, Royalist Serbia had been subjugated by Tito's Communist Partisan movement with the military and political support of Winston Churchill.

The United Nations is a Great Power structure. Small states, however many of them there are, cannot direct its affairs. The most honourable thing a small state can do is to refuse to become a pawn to be used by the Great Powers. That is what Switzerland has done. In recent years, and particularly under Brian Cowen as Foreign Minister, Ireland has been eagerly pawning itself.

Cowen visit Israel in January and made a speech at Tel Aviv University on January 14th. We quote from his press release:

"Some of you may not be aware of the long history of affinity between the Irish and Jewish people. The annals of Inisfallen, an 11th century manuscript mentions the visit of five Jews bearing gifts to an Irish chieftain and records show the establishment of a Jewish community in Dublin as early as the 13th century... Baron de Rothschild contributed 10,000 Francs... towards the relief of the great famine... In James Joyce's classic novel, *Ulysses*, the main character... is a Dublin Jew... The sixth President of... Israel, Chaim Herzog, was born in Belfast and spent his formative years in Dublin... The small but active Jewish community... has made a significant contribution to our country... Israel and Ireland have much in common... Both Israel and Ireland regained their independence during the course of the 20th century. To do so they had to fight a common occupier that has

since become a close friend to both our countries... Given these many ties that bind us, I am somewhat dismayed to read in the Israeli press that Ireland is seen as being less friendly to Israel than most other Member States of the Union... The Holocaust was an atrocity without parallel... When I woke this morning, I picked up the local newspapers. Looking out of the front pages were the faces of innocent young Israelis who now lie dead; their lives, so full of hope and potential, brutally ripped away by an act of senseless terrorism. I then turned on the television to see film of the young woman, a mother of two children, who had so misguidedly blown herself up and killed these young Israelis. One can only wonder about the motives and state of mind of someone who would commit so heinous an act. I have nothing but condemnation for those who recruited her and sent her out to do such a thing."

In another speech on the same day in the same place Cowen said:

"The government of Israel rightly calls on the Palestinians to create a law-abiding society which fights against violence and incitement. For that same reason, Israel, in exercising its right to protect its people, must avoid actions that themselves might suggest a lack of regard for human life or exacerbate hatreds" etc. "I note there is a growing debate within Israel on the future of the Settlements. As you know, the position of the EU, shared by the international community is clear. The continued development and expansion of Settlements by Israel in Occupied Territories is against international law."

The two speeches read as if they were intended for different audiences. The first, apparently addressed to Zionists (i.e., Jewish nationalists), condemns Palestinian resistance to Jewish measures which in the second speech are said to be against international law, while the second contains no condemnation of Israel. And the first contains this outlandish statement: "*I completely reject claims that the Roadmap has failed. The fact is that it has not been properly implemented*"—it has not failed, but only failed to be implemented! But, outside the realm of diplomatic make-believe, it was generally understood that the purpose of the Roadmap was not to be implemented, but to give Tony Blair something to say to his idealistic backbenchers who wanted to be deceived so that they could support the war on Iraq.

In forging a bond between Ireland and Israel Cowen runs together two epochs in

the history of the Jews which are entirely different in character. In the first the Jews led a dispersed existence in various countries, which was a mixture of oppression and privilege. Leopold Bloom belongs to that epoch—but it seems doubtful that he was a Dublin Jew, and more likely that he was constructed from Joyce's experience of life in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In the second epoch the Jews were formed into a colonialist movement for the conquest of Palestine, which was constituted into one of the Powers of the earth by being given a seat at the Versailles Conference of 1919. The Irish, who had never ceased to occupy Ireland, were refused even an audience at that Conference. The Jews, who had abandoned Palestine two thousand years earlier, were awarded Palestine as the place where the Jewish State was to be reconstructed, and the Jewish Agency was recognised as a kind of state power on behalf of the Jewish colonisation of Palestine that was authorised by the British Empire (Balfour Declaration, 1917) and confirmed by Versailles (League of Nations Mandate, 1921).

The Balfour Declaration was a comprehensive negation of the ideals of democracy and the rights of nations for which Britain had pretended to fight the Great War, and Balfour frankly acknowledged that it was. And the League of Nations Mandate tainted the League at the start by authorising colonisation, and the ethnic cleansing of Arabs which was seen to be its inevitable accompaniment by every politician who was not practising diplomatic simple-mindedness for an ulterior purpose. The Mandate system was supposed to prepare the peoples of the various regions of the overthrown Ottoman Empire for self-government. It did this after a fashion in other regions, but in Palestine it was understood that there was to be a change of people through Jewish colonisation before the development towards self-government should begin.

When the Irish were fighting the Black and Tans to give effect to their 1918 vote for independence, the masters of the Black and Tans were putting into effect in Palestine a policy of colonisation similar to what they had done in Ireland at the time of Spenser and Raleigh and Cromwell and William of Orange. And yet—

"Both Israel and Ireland regained their independence during the course of the 20th century. To do so they had to fight a common occupier that has since become a close friend to both our countries"!!!

“*Israel*” was in essence a British construction. The *Balfour Declaration* gave it an existence in what passes for international law, but in 1917 the Jewish population of Palestine was only 10% at most. Britain organised massive Jewish migration into Palestine in the 1920s and 1930s in order to provide a population for the Jewish state, and held the Arab population down while doing so. In 1939 the British Government began to have doubts about the whole project, and in 1945 a Socialist Foreign Minister indicated that he was not willing to continue with it. The Jewish colony then launched a ferocious terrorist assault on the British administration, and the British surrendered. And then the assault on the “*occupier*” began, and has continued ever since. But the “*occupier*” was not Britain, but the indigenous Arab population.

The ethnic cleansing of Arabs, which was launched immediately after the UN General Assembly vote of 1947 supporting the establishment of a Jewish State, has continued ever since. And the ideological dynamic at the core of the Jewish State is committed to extending that State to include the whole of what is now called Palestine, and then crossing the Jordan to where Joshua came from.

Perhaps the accomplished facts of the Jewish nationalist movement are now so extensive, and the regression of Jewish culture into religious fundamentalism is so profound, that the possibility of a secular, democratic, bi-national Palestine has gone beyond recall. But that is no good reason for moral prettifying of Jewish colonialism in Palestine. And if an Irish Foreign Minister is precluded by diplomatic considerations from speaking the truth of the matter in Tel Aviv, he should at least observe Wittgenstein’s maxim: *Concerning that of which one may not speak, one should remain silent.*

But it is not just Brian Cowen who has been cowed by the Zionist lobby. The policy has been continued under Dermot Ahern, his successor: the Department of Foreign Affairs even tried to prevent the Oireachtas European Affairs Committee passing a motion criticising the Israeli Army for “severe human rights violations” in the West Bank and Gaza. This motion, while welcoming Israel’s stated intention to withdraw 7,000 settlers from Gaza, warned that this action must form part of a wider peace deal (which Premier Sharon is determined not to have). It also noted with regret Israel’s continued building of its Wall. It is reported that

Fianna Fail and Progressive Democrat backbenchers voted for this motion, moved by Michael Mulcahy (FF Dublin SC), despite pleas from the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Noel Treacy (FF). So much is the Irish Government out of sync with popular feeling on this matter that the only person to vote against the motion was Senator Feargal Quinn (IT 28.10.04).

Cowen appeared on RTE’s *Questions & Answers* a year ago, on 3rd November 2003 and spoke about Iraq. With him was Kevin Myers, the English Tory who writes the *Irishman’s Diary* for the *Irish Times*. Myers said:

“Most people in this country... were opposed to the invasion. I was in favour of it because I felt it was historically inevitable. Whether you were for or against the invasion is an irrelevance. The truth is the project has to be attended to. Iraq is in the centre of the world. It’s sitting on over 50% of the oil reserves. And the world has to get this right. Part of getting it right is getting the Americans out there as quickly as possible. They have not arrived with the state building apparatus that I hoped and thought they would arrive with. They didn’t have any sympathy or understanding of the Iraqi people. And the consequences of this we can see. However it’s not all gloomy... I do know that 2,000 BMWs a week re being imported by Iraqis, that the economy is growing, in much of the country there is law and order.”

Well, the Americans are still there, and in greater numbers. Their sympathy with the Iraqis is even less than it was. Bush has been re-elected to continue more of the same. And nobody has any better ideas than him about building a state in Iraq which serves the Western interest. The liberated people have to be put down and made to submit to a state which is a mere apparatus of the invading army.

Cowen ruminated: “*How does one arrange to hand over sovereignty to a stable and secure Iraq and a democratic Iraq?*” The way to do it is to make the Iraqis feel “*that this is not about occupation*”, and to “*decrease, if you like, the psychology of occupation*”. This was to be done “*through an incremental transfer of sovereignty, if you like, to the provisional authority*”. “*OK, they are not the democratically elected Government of Iraq*”—but the Iraqis can be made to get used to them. He continued:

“And I don’t accept that there are many of these ‘resistance fighters’, [dismissive quotation marks signified by a flick of the eyebrows] who are up there trying to get rid of American

influence in Iraq—that that’s their sole purpose. I mean, since when did the Red Cross become a legitimate target for resistance fighters? When did the United Nations itself, which is us by the way... What that points up is that there are elements who are violently engaged in Iraq which is being portrayed simply as an anti-American thing, which is in fact more fundamental than that. I mean, to attack the International Red Cross is just, is so far out of any spectrum of any type of activity that people want to, that one wants to get in this idea of resistance. It’s just unacceptable. The UN on the 19th of August, *we lost our* representatives. And too often the UN is spoken of as if it’s not our organisation. *It is our organisation.*”

Cowen did not indicate what he meant by “*more fundamental than that*”. Presumably he meant Islamic—though Myers, drawing on his vast fund of wisdom, said that Iraq was not Islamist.

The Bush administration, before the invasion, ridiculed the UN with well-founded arguments. The UN refused to authorise the invasion (which did not make it illegal) but, after the event, it tried to normalise the Occupation and it became unrealistic to treat it as anything but part of the entourage of the Occupation force. The Red Cross did likewise, thereby going beyond the function for which it was formed. (By the way, which branch of the Red Cross was attacked in Iraq? This organisation is run by autonomous national committees, one in each country, to which Government appoints members. The Irish Red Cross, for example, is not allowed to act North of the Border. In the Middle East the organisation is called the Red Crescent.)

The disarmed secular state of Iraq was invaded, and the state as an administration was systematically destroyed. Are there rules for what a people whose state has been destroyed on them are entitled to do? It would be useful if Cowen drew up a manual for them, since the Iraqi situation is likely to be reproduced elsewhere.

Neither the invasion force, nor the UN has made an estimate of Iraqi casualties. The latest estimate made by a medical source (published in the BMA’s *Lancet*) is 100,000 civilians killed. The informal comment from Whitehall is that ‘we’ had to kill them, because Saddam Hussein would have killed them if ‘we’ hadn’t, and that by killing them at least ‘we’ freed them from Saddam. And Cowen—his Presidency of the Security Council having gone to his head—has made us part of that ‘we’.

Europe In Crisis

continued

Rampant corruption in Santer's Commission was the excuse the last time. One case of possible corruption that is still to be legally finalised is all which that episode has amounted to and that particular case had nothing whatever to do with Santer. That was obvious at the time to anyone who troubled to go into the allegations. The Commission consists of people with long political careers. They will always have baggage and if they did not they would not deserve to have the job. The most corrupt member of the current Commission is Peter Mandelson who was sacked twice by his best friend from his Government for blatant, proven, written lying and skullduggery. But not a word is said about this. Instead all sorts of reasons for objecting to other Commissioners are made matters of political life and death for them—one for believing in his religion and another, for example, for being a farmer's spouse and therefore not trustworthy with the Agriculture portfolio. Anything will do for our EU parliamentarians while they continue to travel the road laid out by that spoofe *extraordinaire*, Pat Cox.

The fetishising of Parliaments means all they do must be a good thing. Parliaments can do no wrong. They are democratic. The Commission is not. QED. No contest.

However, the Commission is the instrument that made Europe what it is. A group of Europeans, proceeding from their own bitter personal experience of the first half of the 20th century, set out to create a new polity for Europe. It could not be voted on, as it did not exist in the present but lay in the future. It had to be created. But creating anything organic is a gradual process and the project they started is far from complete. Parliaments do not create new polities—they work within them when created.

War is the usual method of creating new polities, new political parameters that Parliaments then operate within. The Irish experience is a clear example of this. The 1916 leaders went to war as the representatives of a Republic that they were

determined to make a reality. They could not operate democratically as the polity they fought for was not yet in existence. Their arbitrary action was what enabled it to be formed in a tentative form in 1918. It took another war in 1919-20 to make the new polity a recognised reality and give substance to Irish democracy. The pattern of foundation of new polities by elites who then establish representative forms is the usual way new States come into existence.

The people who formed the Commission and the European Union knew that the establishment of a conventional Parliament with elected representatives guarantees nothing in itself, and certainly not a stable entity that could evolve in a peaceful and unified way. A structure was needed that would mediate the conflicts and tensions of the countries which had agreed to embark on the process of federation.

Democracy and Parliamentarianism are by no means guarantees of good behaviour in a country. Both World Wars were launched by democratic, parliamentary Britain, and Germany was just as democratic as Britain before the First World War. Even Hitler came to power quite legally and democratically. That is why the Founding Fathers realised that something superseding democracy was necessary to create a stable and progressive Europe—and they were more successful than they probably ever imagined. They used whatever levers of power that were to hand, but nothing of what they did was formally democratic in direct electoral terms. It was not anti-democratic, just indirectly democratic, or even ademocratic.

Unfortunately, the more the European project was succeeding by leaps and bounds, the greater the pressure became for increasing the powers of the European Parliament. Now it is claiming the right to have the Commission bow down before it. The Parliament is not demanding the right to take over the powers of the Commission—merely that the Commission should be its servant, should be accountable to it. This is called power without responsibility—the surest recipe for disaster—"The privilege of the harlot throughout the ages", as Stanley Baldwin put it.

The trouble is that Europe's delicate

tripartite structure—Commission, Council of Ministers, and advisory Parliament—was established by the Founding Fathers to allow for the tensions inherent in building a Federal Union. Decisions made by the Council reflect the power of members, while those of the Parliament reflect their size: it is the Commission which looks out for the interests of all participants and makes sure that a balance is kept which looks after the interests of countries and groupings which are weak and have little muscle. To prematurely empower the Parliament to become the major institution in Europe would lead to tensions which could break up the Union and even lead to war in no time. Majority Rule is a great slogan, but there are situations in which it can lead to disastrous consequences because the entity in which it is to be applied is not homogeneous. Majority Rule—simple democracy—could never work in Europe while it remains an alliance of disparate nation-states. It is not even part of the democratic system in the USA, which is a much more integrated political entity than Europe. Those who demand it are either simple-minded or have ulterior motives.

This Parliament does not have to concern itself with such matters or with making policy. It does not even dream of implementing a policy—but it now has the pretensions of becoming the judge and jury of those who make policy for Europe. The Republic of Ireland has just thirteen members in this Parliament—out of 732: just 2% of the representation. If the Parliament became the top institution in Europe, how long would the public continue to support membership of an institution that is gradually superseding national powers? Yet all the Irish media were unanimous in supporting the attacks made on the Commission under Mr. Santer and now under Mr. Barroso, even though the grounds for the attacks were trivial to say the least and though the assailants were spurred on by those with ulterior motives against Europe. And yet the *Irish Times* considers this a good thing and welcomes the downfall of the Barroso Commission. That displays either gross stupidity or quiet satisfaction at a Europe in disarray. The *Irish Times* is many things but it is not stupid.

Jack Lane

An Cor Cuatáil

Dómhnallán Dubh

Thúirt mí fin ri Dómhnallán Dubh,
Mo ghrádh díleas, Dómhnallán Dubh,
Rún mo chrídha-sa, Dómhnallán Dubh,
S mi nach iarradh idir air sgur.

S iomad caileag bhóideach bheusach
A tha nochd air sráid Dhún Éadaoin
'Thogadh a cóta 's a léine
Chionns gun éireadh Dómhnallán Dubh.

Chaidh mi 'n-dé far an robh sagart,
Rinn mi m'fhaosaid 's thuirt mi Paidir
'S rud eile nach faod mi aithris -
Coma leat, leig seachad e 'n-diugh.

Tha luchd briotais a' toirt beum dha
Air son cobhair air na feumach -
Nach eil té a bhios 'na h-eáinn
Nach faigh leum de Dhómhnallan Dubh.

Gun d'ráinig mi bhean bu ghlice
Chum 's gum faighinn tuille fiosraidh
'S thuir i gur e brochan lite
'M biadh bu bhrisge do Dhómhnallan
Dubh.

Nuair a fhuair mi fin an litir
'S a leugh mi gach ni mar thuiginn,
Nan cumainn air brochan tric e
Cha robh sgrid an Domhnallan Dubh.

Gur diúmbach mis' air a' chailllich
A dh'óardaich dha 'm brochan bainne
Gus an dh'fhas a bhuil cho las
'S nach robh math an Dómhnallan Dubh.

Feumar aran, feumar annlan,
Uisce-beatha 's bainne gamhnach,
Feumar peabar far na Galldachd
Dh'fhágas teann mo Dhómhnallan Dubh.

Nuair a théid gach ni mar gheall mi
A thoirt dha gu oidhche Shamhna
Chan eil cailleach an Cill Amhlaign
Dh'fhágas fann mo Dhómhnallan Dubh.

Wee Black Danny

I said myself to Wee Black Danny,
My dear darling, Wee Black Danny,
Love of my heart, Wee Black Danny,
And I would never ask him to stop.

There is many a lovely, well-reared girl
Who is tonight on an Edinburgh street
Who would lift her petticoat and shift
So that Wee Black Danny would rise up.

I went yesterday to a priest,
I made my confession and said the Our Father
And something else I cannot relate
Never mind, let it pass for today.

The gossips are blaming him
For helping out the needy -
That every damsel in distress
Gets a touch of Wee Black Danny.

I went to the wisest woman
So I could get more knowledge
And she said that oaten porridge
Would be the liveliest food for Wee
Black Danny.

But when I got the letter
And read everything I could understand,
If I gave him too much porridge
There would not be a breath in Wee
Black Danny.

I am disappointed in the woman
Who ordered milky porridge for him
Till his organ grew so weak
That Wee Black Danny was useless.

Bread is needed, sauce is needed,
Whisky and calf's milk,
Pepper is needed from the Lowlands
That will make my Wee Black Danny stiff.

When everything goes as I promise
Given to him every night till Hallowe'en
There is not a woman from here to Cill
Amhlaign
That my Wee Black Danny will not
be able for.

[Anonymous, 18th century Scottish. The anthologist Ronald Black suggests that the poem is a Protestant satire on Catholic mores (-superstition, gullibility etc.). But it is hard to see anything more than comic ribaldry in it.]

Tom Paulin and The Literati

Last year, in an article about the meeting in the ICA (Institute for Contemporary Art, London), about Norman Finklestein's book on the use of the Holocaust by the Zionists, *The Holocaust Industry*, it was reported that the Zionist claque got a very bad reception. The infallible formula for silencing opposition by reference to the Shoah/Holocaust, was no longer working—in the light of Israel's own appalling behaviour in the Occupied Territories.

Further confirmation of this trend comes in *The Guardian Review* (Saturday 16.10.04). It is in a *Diary* item, by Aida Edemariam. (This is a regular in the *Review*—and consists of snippets of gossip and London literary small talk). She reports a “*reading in honour of Faber's 75th birthday*”, by among others, Tom Paulin, a self-consciously ‘Ulster’ poet, (though his parents are from the English east Midlands). Some years ago he authored an attack on the behaviour of Israeli troops comparing them to the SS. Needless to say, there was a great deal of outrage expressed about his comparison, which did verge on the racist, and accusations of actual anti-Jewish, as opposed to anti-Zionist, feeling had a certain amount of credibility. The problem for the Zionists being that they have spent a very long time making the difference between the two matters problematical—to the detriment of ordinary Jewish people’s lives and interests.

At the Faber event, the audience turned on someone who tried to raise Paulin’s views: “*the room had... been in uproar*” [prior to the poet Jo Shapcott’s contribution] “*over the first question, an attack on Paulin’s views on Israel: “We don’t want to listen to it!” chorussed members of the audience, turning on the questioner. “Shut up!”*” If literary London, which enjoys feeling guilty about—well, practically anything—doesn’t want to hear about the Zionist spin on what is happening in Israel / Palestine, the Zionists are going to have to think hard about their approach to the publicising of their case.

The Zionists have put forward the argument that the industrialised killing of European Jewry was a unique event in the history of the world. But it was the industrialising of the process that was unusual—if not necessarily unique—not the massacre of an unwanted ‘out group’. The Prime Minister of Israel has described the Palestinians as ‘cockroaches’, and nobody needs to be told twice what happens to cockroaches.

Seán McGouran

Just Business!

There has been very little attempt to place the recent banking scandals in some perspective. The general thrust of the media reporting is that the system is rotten to the core. No distinction is made between the ‘scandal’ of the Bank of Ireland, and the more serious issues raised by the Allied Irish Bank and National Irish Bank investigations. And no distinction is made between the responses of the latter two institutions to investigations from the regulatory authorities.

The AIB appears to have given total cooperation to the Irish Financial Services Regulatory Authority. What has emerged is that AIB was charging more on foreign exchange transactions than it had notified to the regulatory authorities. However, the amount of the charges was no more than the amount advertised to the public and was in line with market rates. Although it has no legal obligation to refund customers for these overcharges it has rightly agreed to do so. These foreign exchange overcharges represented the bulk of the overcharges amounting to 25.6 million Euros including interest on the money owed. (The IFSRA doesn’t give the amount before interest.)

Following the initial investigation AIB, in consultation with the IFSRA, examined other areas such as student loans, variable rate mortgages and found more evidence of overcharges.

The total amount due to be refunded to customers for all of the above amounts to Euro 34.2 m. (This amount includes interest. The report doesn’t break down this figure either into the amount of the overcharge and the amount of the interest accruing.) The report also says that there were cases of customers being under-charged, but doesn’t bother to quantify this. The conclusion of the IFSRA progress report (The Irish Times, 24.7.04) is nothing more than a promotion of IFSRA itself and what a wonderful job its doing. No attempt is made to evaluate the evidence provided to it.

The period investigated was from September 1995 to April 2004. In my view the malpractice by AIB over an extensive period was relatively small in

terms of the overall turnover (amounting to billions) of the company. The investigation conducted by AIB and the IFSRA appears to have been conducted in a thorough and efficient manner. It started on 30th April 2004 and was able to come up with very substantial evidence before the end of July. In my opinion such a thorough report would only be possible with the one hundred percent backing of AIB senior management and in particular the Chairman Dermot Gleeson who is responsible for corporate governance.

The National Irish Bank scandal is a different matter. The inspectors took years to produce their report because of legal actions taken by the Australian owned bank. The report reveals a corporate culture that could almost be described as criminal. (Although the inspectors concede that there was a change in the culture after March 1999 when the courts found that criticisms made of the bank were wholly justified.) The NIB culture in the 1990s encouraged ordinary staff to impose spurious charges on customer accounts to meet management targets. One of its “products” was specifically designed to facilitate tax evasion.

And into this world dropped Beverly Cooper Flynn: young, fresh-faced and the daughter of a famous politician.

She was one of about half a dozen sales executives with the responsibility to sell, and train staff in the selling of, the financial ‘product’ designed to evade tax. Her boss was a Nigel D’Arcy who was once the General Manager of an Investment Advice firm owned by the notorious Tony Taylor who fled the country with his clients’ funds.

Who knows how any of us would have behaved in such an environment? I would say that only a small minority of people would have kicked up about it. Unfortunately, Flynn was not in that ‘small minority’. No one in NIB was in that ‘small minority’.

When the story broke in RTE, of course Flynn was ‘hounded’. That comes with the territory. If you’re the daughter of a famous politician you have to learn to take

the rough with the smooth. And there are far more ‘smooths’ than ‘roughs’. But what was she thinking about when she attempted to seek legal redress in the High Court and then the Supreme Court?

Technically, she may not have broken any laws, but she was facilitating the breaking of laws. The Irish people have in the past shown themselves to be remarkably forgiving of far worse than Beverly Cooper Flynn ever did. However, it’s one thing to forgive her; it’s quite another to have to proclaim her as a new Joan of Arc fighting against the Courts of the land. That was too much.

I gather from media reports that she is a formidable media performer. So we have a formidable media performer who is so lacking in judgement that she has placed herself under the charity of legal advisors. You can see from Fianna Fail’s point of view that that spells big trouble. Who knows where such a personality could drag the party? Better get rid of her now than later.

Reports of the Fianna Fail parliamentary party indicated that no one spoke in favour of her expulsion or against it. Everyone knew the score. It was an embarrassing matter to be got over as quickly as possible.

No hard feelings, Beverly. Just business!

John Martin

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All-Ireland Labour In All-Ireland Politics

The Irish Labour Party's Northern Ireland Labour Forum which has been active in a pre-natal kind of way for nine months and better was formally launched on October 18th at the Linenhall Library in Belfast. The public aspect of the Launch was a speech by Labour Party leader Pat Rabbitte which was followed by a press conference. In his speech Mr Rabbitte said:

"The Northern Ireland Labour Forum was set by the Labour Party to create a political home and platform for those on the centre left, as well as to create political space and widen political debate beyond current narrow confines. I am impressed by the practical and progressive way in which the Forum has approached its submissions to the Review of Public Administration, and to the Railway Review Group. It sets down a marker for the seriousness of our intent and is an auspicious start to our fledgling Forum in Northern Ireland. No one will pretend that these are auspicious times to launch a political initiative on the left of centre. It is understood that, ten years after the ceasefires and six after the Agreement, that Northern Ireland is a highly segregated society. There is evidence to suggest that geographical polarization is more stark than at any time in recent history. In these circumstances, there will be no fanfares or false hopes, merely a determination to develop a public political presence on the centre left—a presence grounded on practical politics, broad based, grounded and orientated on practical governance."

"The Labour Forum has been set up in an inclusive way and is open to dual members—those members who are also members of our sister Parties in Europe and the wider international socialist movement, the SDLP, British Labour or other European Socialist Parties. Labour is also cognisant of the current movement, or balance of power, amongst political forces within Northern Ireland. We aim to contribute in whatever way we can to the consolidation of the peace process and to the restoration of democratic and accountable institutions in Northern Ireland and between North and South.

"Labour are very serious about this development. At one level, we are creating a political home for those in Northern Ireland who have a political contribution to make but do not feel they

fit within the current communal political set-up. At another level, whilst it may be too early to speak of radical political realignment across the island, we are looking to create a structure which could respond quickly to any political fluidity or change in the future.

"We did not establish this Forum to be electorally focussed. It will, in a society increasingly polarised on communal lines, seek to create space for debate on the centre left. It will have a public presence; will encourage its members to take up public appointments; will respond to relevant consultations and will develop and publish political policy positions. Socialist education will be an important part of the Forum's work. The Labour Forum will take responsible, practical positions, will be interested in governance and will present not as a protest lobby, but as a proud part of an established political party, based on deeply rooted values, and committed to serve the people of both jurisdictions in this island in whatever way we can." (Taken from the Labour Party website, <http://www.labour.ie/northernireland/speech.html>)

Mr Rabbitte was properly very modest about Labour's electoral ambitions in the current polarised state of Northern Ireland. Nonetheless, the most interesting sentence of his speech left modesty far behind:—

"At another level, whilst it may be too early to speak of radical political realignment across the island, we are looking to create a structure which could respond quickly to any political fluidity or change in the future".

That is thoughtful, it is well-considered; God help us, it is downright visionary. (And if I hadn't seen it in black and white I wouldn't have believed Pat Rabbitte capable of the same, which is as they say what makes the game of it.)

The *Irish Times'* report of the speech and subsequent press conference, by Northern Editor Gerry Moriarty, was uncommonly straightforward:

"The Labour Party leader, Mr Pat Rabbitte, has opened up what he described as a 'de facto' branch of the Irish Labour Party in Northern Ireland.

"Labour effectively now has elected representatives in the Republic and in

Northern Ireland but, said Mr Rabbitte, it had no intention of putting forward candidates to run under the Irish Labour banner in the North.

"Mr Rabbitte travelled to Belfast yesterday to formally launch the Northern Ireland Labour Forum which will send delegates to the Labour Party conference and whose members will be able to vote in internal Labour elections, including the party's ruling executive.

"There are about 50 members in the Labour Forum, two of whom are elected councillors. These are Mr Mark Langhammer, on Newtownabbey Council, and Mr John McLaughlin, on Omagh Council.

"Under current numbers, the Northern Ireland element of the Labour Party would not have sufficient strength to elect one or more of the party's 22-member executive but it could influence the outcome of executive elections..."

"He did not expect the creation of the forum to trigger any strains between Labour and its fraternal party, the SDLP.

"This was confirmed by the SDLP leader, Mr Mark Durkan, who said he had no objections to the forum and had been consulted about its creation.

"Mr Rabbitte said people could be members of the forum as well as members of other parties such as the SDLP..."

"He indicated that he expected the Forum to have influence within the party.

"Recent changes to the Labour Party constitution have allowed people resident in Northern Ireland to become members.

"The Northern Ireland Labour Forum is, de facto, a Labour Party branch.

"It has the same constitution, rights and obligations as other Labour branches, including rights to submit resolutions to conferences, and to stand for party office", he said.

"It will have a public presence, will encourage its members to take up public appointments, will respond to relevant consultations and will develop and publish political policy positions. Socialist education will be an important part of the forum's work", the Labour leader added" (Irish Times, 19.10.04).

Between those extracts from Mr Rabbitte's speech and Mr. Moriarty's account of his press conference, I hope the overall picture is clear. *Caveats* about not wishing to add to the distress of the SDLP to one side, its Northern Ireland Forum is a fully paid up, properly functioning part of the Irish Labour Party. The Forum is not, and in the current state of the political game, cannot be primarily focussed on elections. But it already has elected representatives, albeit only two of them. Should electoral opportunities present themselves (even, God forbid, in the wake of the SDLP's fraternally terminal collapse)

they will hardly be ignored. Mr. Rabbitte's vision of the political fluidity which may possibly be coming suggests he would be disappointed if such opportunities were ignored.

So, bang the big drums, let the trumpets sound, Sinn Féin is no longer the only all-Irish party around!

The Shinners know that and, speaking on their behalf in the *Irish News* on October 19th., Pat Doherty (I think it was) expressed some satisfaction with that result. As well he should. The logic of the Sinn Féin project of the past twenty years or so has been not so much the unlikely prospect of immediate unity as the realisable objective of forcing the development of all-Ireland party politics.

It must have satisfied Pat Doherty particularly that while the launch of the Labour Forum advances that project it does not in so doing challenge Sinn Féin's dominance of the new all-Ireland geopolitikon. For the moment his bread is buttered on both sides.

Having said which, the Labour Forum is not Fianna Fáil. Were the soldiers of destiny to come North Sinn Féin's all-Ireland party political project would be advanced with a vengeance. It would then have a fight on its hands that it couldn't be too sanguine about the winning of. But Bertie Ahern's Fianna Fáil seems to have restricted its challenge to Sinn Féin to a belated recognition of the likelihood of someday soon going into coalition with it.

The other Ahern's [Dermot Ahern, Irish Foreign Minister] waltz around the daisies of coalition is really a coward's way of not dealing with the political substance of Sinn Féin. For a few years now Fianna Fáil has had two choices with regard to Sinn Féin; either to take it on in its substantial aspect as an all-Ireland party, with the prospect of winning to become Fianna Fáil the Really Republican party, or of surrendering its own shadow to the substance of Sinn Féin in a coalition which can only end in the end of Fianna Fáil. For the moment Bertie's bouncing bounders would seem to have chosen to end it all. Ah well, perhaps they'll reconsider. Unless they really are suicidally stupid they will reconsider.

An electoral contest in the North between Sinn Féin and Fianna Fáil would be a very close run thing of very great significance. It would, in the time-honoured phrase, change the face of Irish politics.

There is an idea about, mainly in the

South but also on this northern side of the Black Pig's Dyke, that Sinn Féin has the thoughtful vanguard of the Northern Catholic vote sewn up, that its position in the heartlands of Fermanagh and Tyrone, Derry, West Belfast and South Armagh is unassailable. That is true enough here and now, in this precise place at this precise time. But it hasn't been always and everywhere true. And the status of its truth in the here and now is that it is a truth by default of any alternative.

Telescoping eighty eventful years of history, I think it would be fair to say that the Catholic vote in Northern Ireland has been unwaveringly anti-partitionist but that within that anti-partitionism it has been all along split between a sentimental all-Ireland Republicanism and more practical six-county nationalism. And both sentiment and practice have all along aspired to all-Ireland politics and Fianna Fáil.

De Valera abandoned Northern Catholics to six county nationalism when in 1925 he split Sinn Féin along the border and then built Fianna Fáil solely to the South of it. But the best of that six county nationalism—as exemplified by the old IRB man, Sinn Féiner and serial internee who was its real, if never its titular, leader—Cahir Healy, continued to aspire to the party from which de Valera had disbarred it.

Cahir Healy's comrade as a Sinn Féin electoral organiser and in establishing Republican Courts in the North, Armagh-man Eamon Donnelly, went South to join Fianna Fáil but, unlike MacEntee and Aiken, only so as to continue to represent the disenfranchised of the fourth green field. Until his death (in 1943 or so, I think) he made de Valera's life a misery with constant agitation for Fianna Fáil to organise in the North and legislate for the Dáil to accept northern representatives.

Donnelly's correspondence with six county nationalist representatives evidences a constant aspiration to, if not exactly an underground tradition of, Fianna Fáil in the North.

When Sinn Féin in the eighties abandoned the sentiment of its abstentionism it tapped into that aspiration and in so doing found a ready-made constituency that both spanned and superseded the sentimental republican and practical nationalist wings of Northern Catholic politics. There is an element of Sinn Féin's vote which is a salute to its war record, and it will hold that element of its vote

come hell or high water. But there is that other element which has ever longed for all-Ireland politics and in the past has aspired to Fianna Fáil. That element of Sinn Féin's current vote is up for grabs, but only in the context of all-Ireland politics.

Having said that about Sinn Féin and Fianna Fáil, I must say that it is an element of the developing all-Ireland party politics that only has to do with Northern Catholics. I do not imagine that all-Ireland party politics as they will be likely to impact upon Northern Ireland will necessarily develop any non-sectarian or anti-sectarian or supra-sectarian aspect there. Left to their own devices I am perfectly sure that they will do nothing of the sort in the short to medium term (and, in the long term in which they may, we are all, of course, with Keynes in that long and narrow place and the privacy thereof).

The job of the Irish Labour Party's Northern Labour Forum is therefore to see to it that the development of all-Ireland party politics within Northern Ireland is usefully complicated by a working class Protestant presence within it.

Somewhat further along the line it can reasonably be expected that Fine Gael will join the dance and dancers of the Protestant middle class, in dribs and drabs to begin with, will join Fine Gael. But somehow I can't see that making any great difference to the substance of Irish political life. Fine Gael might want Trimble's Unionist Party. Ireland needs Paisley's DUP.

There is no prospect whatsoever of Protestant working class voters ever joining or voting for Sinn Féin or Fianna Fáil. That is an enduring impossibility. There is no immediate likelihood of them joining or voting for all-Ireland Labour, but it is in no way such an enduring impossibility. Old traditions of trade union affiliation which the NILP squandered and the SDLP was impervious to may just provide a way back to the working class political diversity which still existed (if only barely) thirty-odd years ago.

That's where the political fluidity to which Pat Rabbitte referred comes in. That's where an enormous amount of work over however many years comes in. And that is as they say what makes the game of it.

Joe Keenan

POSTSCRIPT.

The online version of the *Sunday Business Post* on October 31st, in an article by Pat Leahy, reported that:

"Fianna Fáil has decided to admit members from the North for the first time in its history, paving the way for the party to organise in the North or establish a strategic alliance with the SDLP.

"The party's National Executive meeting in Dublin last Thursday amended the party's rules to open up membership in the North, a departure seen as a milestone by many in the party. Previously, people in the North who wished to join Fianna Fáil could only be classed as 'registered supporters'.

"Under the amended regulations they can be classed as 'individual members', although they cannot yet form a cumann,

or local branch.

"Several senior party sources have indicated that they believe that a large number of SDLP members, including public representatives, wish to join Fianna Fáil. "If we organise there, we'll get a lot of SDLP members," said one senior Fianna Fáil source. "To be honest, we think the vast bulk of the SDLP's membership would come to us." The significance of that can't really be brought to mind until the SDLP leadership has delivered itself of a considered response, or cried its eyes out, in the *Irish News*. Then or thereabouts this magazine will comment appropriately.

de facto—the British constitution. Unionist themselves have closed the British Road. As a consequence, "Unionist" policy is barely Unionist at all. It amounts to supporting communal politics within Stormont, with the Brits paying.

On the Nationalist side, many SDLP voters are content with the position of the Catholic middle class, in particular, within the UK. And Sinn Fein shed tears at the loss of Stormont

That Protestant versus Catholic politics is incapable of any evolution is the core problem.

NORTHERN IRELANDERS Vs GOVERNMENTAL POLITICS.

However, another important division is being to emerge, and it is not quite as straightforward as Prods vs Taigs. Increasingly, there is a division between Northern Irelanders and those who want to develop Governmental politics. Of the so called "major" parties (parties who have never formed a Govt at the level of State) only Sinn Fein are evolving towards Governmental Politics.

I would be someone with no time for Sinn Fein's social policy—its social policy is always secondary to its Nationalism. It was socialist in the early 30's, Fascist in the 40s, Corporatist in the 50s, Communist in the 60s, Vocationalist in the 70s, back to socialist in the 80s to woo the Ken Livingstones of this world, and they are now in a Thatcherite phase, supporting the Reform and Regeneration Initiative and actively implementing the Private Finance Initiatives.

However, Sinn Fein were serious and proprietorial about the Stormont institutions. They took most of the few hard decisions taken in the latest failed version of Stormont—on acute hospitals and on school selection. They take a long view. And it is likely that Sinn Fein will be in Government in the Republic within 10 years, if not before.

All the others, DUP, UUP, Alliance and SDLP are Northern Irelanders, wedded to the treacle of communal politics.

The divisions demonstrated at Leeds Castle have shown this. Sinn Fein seek maximum fluidity in the institutions, to enable an island wide Governmental politics to develop. The DUP seek to develop Stormont into a blocking device, an instrument to internalise the solution to Northern Ireland.

THE AGREEMENT:

The distinctive characteristics of the Agreement, i.e., those essentials which allowed it to be agreed in the first place, were threefold.

REPORT

Cllr Mark Langhammer
(Labour Party)

"State Funded Sectarianism And Pandering To Paramilitarism!"

Speech to the conference, *Interpreting ongoing crises in the Northern Ireland peace process: Civil Society Dimensions* on 30th September 2004 at the Queens University School of Politics and International Studies.

I want to talk today about the corrosive effect on civil society that the state funding of communal politics has had in the post Agreement period. I should, however, introduce myself first. I've been a community activist, a Labour representative and an elected councillor in Newtownabbey for the past 20 years.

I'm very proud to have played a role, in the past three years, in establishing the Labour Party (Irish Labour Party) in Northern Ireland, and consider that to be a political achievement of some significance. With Pat Rabbitte TD due in Belfast next month to undertake the formal launch of the Labour Party, it is an achievement which may be more important in 20 years time than it appears today. It is, in effect, the fledgling development of governmental politics, and I will say more on this later.

I am in favour of the Peace Process, but consider the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement to be a very poor political return for the process. Indeed, that we have to call this the Good Friday-stroke-Belfast Agreement—like Derry/stroke/Londonderry, says it all.

I am in favour of devolution, localism and the maximum degree of subsidiarity in decision making, but am against the devolution of any power to a single entity at Stormont, which I consider a wholly destructive and dangerous institution. In the post Agreement period, my constitu-

ency has been one of Northern Ireland's principal killing fields.

FIRST BASICS:

The first basics of political life here is that there is a settled will on the part of both the British political establishment and, to a lesser degree, its Irish counterpart, to keep Northern Ireland 'at arm's length'. The British 'arm's length' policy dates from the home rule crisis of 1912-14, and it is this policy which has seen the machinery of a separate "Government of Northern Ireland" kept in place whether a devolved administration is in place or not. The Irish arms length instinct probably dates from the 1974 Monaghan and Dublin bombings. This arms length policy has been difficult to shift, leaving Northern Ireland a semi detached entity to stew in its own juices—leaving politics as Protestant Versus Catholic.

There is no internal dynamic to NI politics. With "Prods Vs Taigs" the only functional division, there is no internal dynamic to Northern Ireland politics. "Prods vs Taigs" is incapable of evolution, except towards bloodshed.

And politics is only barely Unionist versus Nationalist.

On the Unionist side, there are no Unionists left. All Unionist parties have rejected the normal politics of the Union. They've rejected Labour, rejected Conservative, rejected British politics rejected—

Firstly, the provision through ‘confessional’ designations of two autonomous electorates whose parties must be represented in Government as of right. It might have been more honest to follow this logic through to the natural conclusion of creating separate electoral rolls for the three designated groups, but there you go.

Secondly, the provision that Northern Ireland Governmental Departments are ‘party fiefdoms’, essentially independent of the Assembly. The First Minister (or Ministers) were not head of a Cabinet. Indeed, the fact that there was no Government, only Ministries, was what allowed the DUP to participate.

Thirdly the provision, known as “parallel consent”, that measures adopted require a threshold of support amongst the representatives in the Unionist and Nationalist electoral blocs but no threshold of support whatsoever in the “Other” bloc. This is the thing that makes the Alliance and Womens Coalition vote worthless.

Cabinet government, with or without a weighted majority may be desirable to the DUP or the Alliance Party, but it would also be a complete abrogation of the Agreement. The sectarian discrimination at the heart of the Agreement is not a ‘design fault’—it’s the conscious design. And a system better suited to stimulate communal politics is hard to envisage. But that’s not all.

SINCE THE AGREEMENT:

This confessional Agreement has had consequences on the ground—in civil society. Since the Agreement, there has been an explosion in what I would call ‘dog leg’ activity. Through flags, murals and bunting, territory has been ‘marked out’ as belonging to one side or another. The Housing Executive, and other agencies, report an increase in housing intimidations. A litany of pipe bombings, attacks on schools, attacks on village and Orange Halls and the like contribute to a daily tightening of sectarian demarcation. Engineered confrontations are hosted at a growing number of interfaces. In my constituency, sectarian gangs travel almost a mile along a railway line to confront each other at an ‘interface’. There are interfaces in the middle of public parks, hundreds of yards from the nearest house, even on railway lines! And the marching issue provides ample opportunity for more territorial staking out. As I say, like a dog pissing round its territory.

By any standard or measurement (and people like Brendan Murtagh of Queen’s University and Peter Shirlow of the University of Ulster have undertaken

fascinating spatial studies to map a lot of this), we live in a more segregated, demarcated, ghettoized and polarised society than we did ten years ago. Indeed we are more segregated than at any time in history. Worse than the 1920’s, worse than the 1930’s, worse than the 1970’s. Worse than any time, ever!

But is this surprising? The Good Friday Agreement has formalised the ‘two tribes’ view of society as never before. It is a form of institutionalised sectarianism *par excellence*.

STATE FUNDING SECTARIANISM:

One aspect of the Agreement package is the generous state funding of sectarian politics through the Assembly. The 108 MLAs is deliberate overkill—aimed at getting Loyalist representatives “in the tent”—the equivalent of some 4000 MPs at Westminster. With their £70,000 plus MLA packages, through party office grants and party “research” grants, there is direct financial interest to subsidize an array of people paid to represent “*their side*”

This has had a number of consequences. There is a rich local newspaper tradition in Northern Ireland. Most of these are driven by advertising, and bought for the photos of all manner of community events: school fetes, Womens Institute reports, pages and pages of sports, perhaps a page on the stuff the local Council is doing. These papers have been transformed. They contain page after page of sectarian bile, mainly from state paid communal protagonists representing “*their*” side. State funded politicos with nothing to do other than play the communal zero sum game. “*The Prods are getting this, the Taigs are getting that*”—page after page after page of this sectarian diet. And this has a corrosive effect.

Civil servants will openly tell you that the MLAs and their machines are forever firing Questions at the administration. In many cases the sole purpose of the Question is to act as the basis for a press statement. In some cases the Press Statements lands at the local newspaper before the Question arrives on the Permanent Secretary’s desk! And all because the state has state funded the capacity of communal parties ability to generate this nonsense.

In the area where I work, Vocational Education, there was massive money pumped into ICT Learning Centres for the disadvantaged in England, Wales and Scotland through the Capital Modernisation Fund. Gordon Brown ring fenced this money for the disadvantaged. Where did Northern Ireland’s CMF money go. Not to the disadvantaged, but to feed the

setting up of the Assembly, the salaries, the office costs, the wives and spouses who worked as MLA assistants and the ICT systems for MLAs. Scandalous!

How this works out on the ground is instructive. A few years ago, when Stormont was going, I had to attend two tenants association meetings in my constituency in the same evening, one in a largely Protestant estate, the other in a largely Catholic estate. In the first, the issue was “*Why are the Taigs getting an option of Gas Fired Heating and we’re only getting an Oil Fired option*”. In the second meeting, the issue was the reverse “*Why are them Snouts (Protestants) getting three foot board fencing when we’re only getting two footpicketfencing*”

You couldn’t make it up. A sense of grievance is manufactured from nothing, and stoked up by representatives keen the “lead” *their* people. No issue is too small or trivial for communal politics to find an angle.

And I am immovably of the view that, with regard to local sectarian politics, the old adage holds true, that “**Less is more**”.

FIRST DUTY: “TO DO NO HARM”

It is the first duty of the two Governments is to “do no harm” Cajoling, bribing, arm twisting towards another Assembly will only increase the capacity of communal protagonists and increase sectarian tension and enmity communal. And this “benign apartheid” flows throughout Government and society.

Human (group) Rights: When I presented a solid case to the Human Rights Commission to contest the Assembly’s discriminatory voting system, the Commission (itself a child of the Good Friday Agreement) wasn’t interested. And recent events show the Commission under pressure to move, even more, towards an apartheid style “group rights” perspective —a perspective which last enjoyed an outing in apartheid South Africa..

Census: In the recent census, nearly 15% designated themselves as neither Protestant, nor Catholic. But that couldn’t stand, could it? By applying unexplained secondary mechanisms this 15% was whittled down so that all but 3% were allocated to either Protestant or Catholic camps—never mind what they themselves stated!

In education, supply of integrated places nowhere nears meets demand. In housing, increased demand for integrated public housing is failing to roll back increased segregation on the ground. In employment, “group rights” has long been established. From international statute,

right throughout the administration, we have legislated for a segregated, apartheid society.

HOLY CROSS—THE HIGHEST EXPRESSION OF THE AGREEMENT

And then we look at grass roots level. In my constituency the last few years have the Red Hand Commando and other bigots have organised a demonstration against the Catholic Cemetery Sunday “Blessing of Graves” ceremony at Carnmoney Cemetery. This year was quiet, but the few years before that were raw, primitive, brutal “*in your face*” and moronic. But was it an aberration? I believe that Carnmoney, like Holy Cross and Harryville, was an inevitable outworking of the politics of Good Friday. Carnmoney, far from an aberration, was the highest expression—the logical outcome—of the Good Friday Agreement.

And then, having elevated sectarianism into a system of Government, we feign surprise at Holy Cross. We get shocked at Harryville. We condemn Carnmoney. We need to get real. It’s simple cause and effect. You can’t turn on a kettle and then blame the water for boiling over!

OTHER BRIBERY:

The other bribery contained within the Agreement settlement have been a determination to “keep the paramilitaries onside”—mainly on the Loyalist side, as Loyalist paramilitaries are not really involved (at least on the UDA side) in politics. There are broadly two poles, or two “spheres of influence” in Protestant working class life, the Churches and the Paramilitaries. Everything, post Agreement, has been done to bolster the paramilitary sphere. And, with the two main civilising influences within the Loyalist community—the Labour movement and the Churches—both in decline, the omens are not good.

In grass roots social and community life there is a less active “civil society” in Protestant areas than in Catholic districts—that is, the layer of collective activity in Tenants Associations, Credit Unions, single issue campaigning groups, cultural activity, publishing, community arts and the like—all below the level of politics, but nonetheless feeding successful active politics. Leadership is not found, within the Protestant community, in self organising or issue based community activity. Civil society, outside of the Churches, barely exists (unless one counts paramilitary drinking clubs). It is that aspect that suggests that **representative** forms of organisation are more likely to be successful in Protestant Ulster, rather

than collective or **participatory** fora.

In most predominantly Protestant districts today, most of the “social cement” is provided by, or within the sphere of influence of Churches. The Boys and Girls Brigades, the Scouts, the Mother and Toddlers groups, Senior Citizens lunch clubs, bowls clubs and tea dances are typically run by Churches or in Church premises. In sporting life the Old Boys (ie former Boys Brigades) league and Churches League arrangements in soccer are replicated across a number of sports. In many districts over the past twenty years, Churches have acted as intermediaries for Government training schemes such as Action for Community Employment (ACE), the Job Training Programme, community Jobclubs, Worktrack and so on.

Yet the approach of Government, and of the European Union in the distribution of peace monies deliberately engages, not on the basis of representative leadership (which favours local democratic politics and church) but through “participatory” or “bottom up” initiatives (which favours paramilitarism).

There isn’t really time to do this aspect justice today, but the approach of Government is deeply misguided, and feeds the cynicism within the Protestant community that gangsters and sectarian thugs are subject to special favoured status. The sight of successive Secretaries of State entertain sectarian gangsters has had a corrosive effect on decent leaderships within Protestant civil society. And, from a position where Paisley was jeered out of the Kings Hall in 1998 by paramilitaries, this corrosive bribery is part of the reason why the DUP has been buoyant in recent years.

DO WE NEED STORMONT?

After all this, apparently, what we urgently need, is the restoration of a Stormont Assembly. That, apparently, would “move the Agreement process forward”. Am I the only one unconvinced?

Stormont doesn’t work: Since Stormont was prorogued in 1972, every solution proposed has been predicated on the restoration, in some form or other, of a Stormont Parliament. Yet Stormont failed in 1972. Then Whitelaw’s power sharing Executive ran out of power in 1974. Rees’ Convention failed to convene in 1975. Prior’s 1982 rolling devolution rolled out and rolled up in 1986. The 1996 Forum moved away from Stormont but failed nonetheless. And the latest “confessional” Assembly has failed four times since 1998. By my count that’s nine failures out of nine in thirty years.

I’m a Tottenham Hotspur supporter,

and last week Ruud Van Nistelroy won the game for Manchester United with a penalty. But if Ruud Van Nistelroy missed nine penalties out of nine for Manchester United, would he still be Alex Ferguson’s spot kick taker? We all know the answer to that one.

We just need to wake up and smell the coffee—Stormont doesn’t work! Never has, never will.

The short facts are that there’s no need, and no demand for another Assembly. I’m a busy politician at local council level. I get constituency complaints about all manner of things—from housing to benefits, from consumer affairs to neighbour disputes, thousands in the course of any given year. But not one person has raised the need for Stormont. Ever! It’s not wanted. It’s not needed. It passed no laws that wouldn’t have been passed by a Direct Rule Minister. And, given its head, it is only likely to be reactionary. It’s sole significant contribution has been in raising political temperature needlessly, stimulating communal antagonism and stoking up sectarian enmity.

The last thing Northern Ireland needs is another Assembly “*When you’re in a hole, stop digging*” It’s time to stop digging.

GOOD SIGNS:

I hope I haven’t depressed you all. I’d like, finally, to say something of several good omens in the offing. Some good signs arose from the Leeds talks—not least the Government joint statements, which finished “*We are determined to move ahead ... If Agreement cannot be reached, when it is clear it should be, we will find a different way to move this process forward.*”

Throughout this whole process whenever the Governments have their hands to the tiller, progress can be made—when it was left to the “parties” the “process” gets caked in treacle. If the two Governments take centre stage, and assume responsibility, that will be a good thing.

THE RPA:

The other good sign is in the Review of Public Administration, with the prospect of a smaller number of more powerful Councils as one of the outcomes. The trade off will be political fairness (in the form of some form of proportionality) in return for more powers. The sting will be drawn from politicking over positions. These Councils will have sufficient critical mass to act as an important grounding for politics. And they will be “workaday” institutions. And, particularly in border areas, the potential for cross border

collaboration in range of areas will be significant.

Some 581 councillors will reduce to less than 200. Taken together with the “loss” of 108 MLAs, that will be a massive blow to the capacity of local communal politics. And that is, unambiguously, a very good thing.

So, there are positive signs. If the two Governments take centre stage, if we avoid Stormont, and embed a new Council system, those will be real signs of progress.

Although political punditry is usually best avoided, it seems likely that the Westminster election sometime next year will alter radically the balance of powers between the local parties, such that a realignment in Irish politics, dynamic is a possibility. The political dynamic is moving towards an island wide (not necessarily Nationalist) consensus.

My guess is that more people, perhaps less so in the relatively apolitical Protestant community than in the Catholic community, will start to develop an interest in **Governmental** politics. And then, with Governmental politics gaining a foothold in political argument, the game will start to become interesting. Politics, for so long frozen in sectarian forms, can look forward to a thaw, and to the interesting mess of who governs and in who’s interest.

Thank you.

Letter to Editor

Captain Kelly's Detractors

In the article *Captain Kelly: Posthumous Revenge*, Angela Clifford mentions Liam Ó Comain, (whose web-autobiography is called *Memoirs And Thoughts*). Ó Comain seems eager to agree with the smearing of Captain James Kelly by former OC (Officer Commanding, IRA) Johnnie White and former IO (Intelligence Officer) Peter Collins (of the Derry Brigade [Official] IRA). In the interview with *The Starry Plough* (formerly their ‘own’ paper) White and Collins claimed that, in 1969, the Dublin Government wanted to physically “eliminate” the Left in the Republican Movement, and that Captain Kelly offered them £50,000 to do the job. This would have led to the formation of a “right wing and Catholic leadership that would have been willing to dance to the tune of the Dublin regime”.

The implication of this interview is that the “*Dublin regime*” got its way without any assassinations. This is something with which the IRSP (now

More On The Irish Times

Gageby And McDowell

What makes one leader a success and another a failure? Napoleon was supposed to have preferred lucky generals to competent ones. I suspect that he meant that the really successful leaders create the illusion of ‘luck’ by being able to prevent crises rather than having to deal with them albeit in a competent fashion. It is very often the case that a competent number two, who assumes a leadership position, finds that the effortlessness of his predecessor was an illusion and that the job was not quite as easy as he had thought.

It is much easier to recognise success than to explain it. There is no doubt that Douglas Gageby was a ‘lucky’ Editor of *The Irish Times*. In his first period in the job (1963 to 1974) he doubled the sales of the paper and in his ‘second coming’ (1977 to 1985), he reversed the slide that occurred during Fergus Pyle’s tenure (1974 to 1977).

It is not easy to explain Gageby’s success. The simple explanation is that he

was better than other editors; that he surrounded himself with able people such as Donal Foley who in turn recruited talented journalists including many women journalists.

Talent, of course, helps but is rarely enough.

The *Irish Times* itself would like to think that it adapted to changes in the 1960s better than other newspapers. In its more lucid moments it even claims to have pushed out the frontiers.

All of the above may be true, but is not the whole truth. The *Irish Times* had a commercial interest in change. Its traditional Protestant readership was in decline and it could hardly detach readers from either the *Independent* by being more Catholic or the *Press* by being more nationalist, so it had to find a new constituency.

It is a myth that Ireland was a closed introspective society before the 1960s. The fall of China in 1949 was felt keenly by Catholic Nationalist Ireland. Irish

publishers of *Starry Plough*, and in many ways still a ‘splinter’ group of the Stickies) probably agree. The ‘Provisional Alliance’ (according to the Officials’ strange designation of the early 1970s) in its personnel was not especially “right wing”. Insofar as the Hannaway and Shannon families (main founders of the Provisionals in Belfast) were concerned their ‘politics’ were geographically, so to speak, fairly sharply Left (Labourite as opposed to fancy stuff like the ideological gibberish introduced by Anthony Coughlan and Roy Johnston).

The Coughlan / Johnston / CPGB (Communist Party of GB) infusion led Official SF, and its various aliases, to oppose entry into (then continued membership of) the ‘Common Market’ for essentially Soviet strategic reasons. (The Provisionals also opposed the EEC for essentially the same reason, until they actually applied some thought to the matter, and gave it guarded support.) The self-conscious left-wingery indulged in by elements in the Stickies and the Erps (the IRSP’s nickname; Divis Flats were known in the mid-1970s as ‘Planet of the Erps’) looks a bit sick now that Sinn Féin is an effective party of the working class

on an all-Ireland basis. Sinn Féin is capable of doing the things the WPI and IRSP could only fantasise about.

This ideological fantasy-trip is the major reason (apart from Johnnie White’s macho self-image) why the Official IRA killed Ranger Best. It also explains why their response to the working class women who went to their offices to complain about the shooting, was to describe them as “*slobbering liberals*”. In a sense it is satisfying that these people are reduced to scandalising the name of Captain Kelly. They are on the proper side in this campaign: the wrong side.

Seán McGouran

**Nearly one thousand
have now signed the
Petition to clear Captain
Kelly's name.**

You can do so
and obtain information about
his life and work on the
dedicated website at:

www.captkelly.org

missionaries had a presence throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America. And apparently the *Skibbereen Eagle* kept a close eye on Moscow. But in the 1960s Ireland ceased to just influence the world, the world began to influence it. The opening up of the economy to foreign capital encouraged consumerist values. However, this economic liberalisation would have had limited effect if the spiritual centre of Catholic Ireland was not in crisis. Vatican 2, which was a response to problems elsewhere, cut the ground from underneath Irish culture. It exposed the weakness of a religious culture with its source outside the society.

Perhaps the most destabilising element was the outbreak of war in Northern Ireland. All the evidence (e.g. The Arms Trial) suggests that this caught the political establishment in the South completely unawares. The brittleness of the official '*One Nation*' ideology was cruelly exposed.

It was in this era of flux that Gageby became Editor of *The Irish Times*. It is not surprising that the newspaper with the most tenuous roots in the society should be the one best adapted to change. It had the least to lose and the most to gain. Foreign journalists such as Mary Maher could look at the society with fresh eyes and reflect interestingly on matters that escaped the notice of native journalists because they were so obvious.

Gageby was only in his mid fifties when he decided to retire in 1974. The windfall of £325,000, which he received following the sale of his shares, meant that he didn't need to work. But it is still difficult to understand why he resigned.

The most substantial article I've seen on *The Irish Times* is one by Gene Kerrigan in the December 1979 issue of *Magill*. The title of the article is: *The Life And Irish Times Of Douglas Gageby*. But despite running to about fourteen thousand words, there is very little about either Gageby or *The Irish Times*. It is not easy to penetrate either the individual or the institution. But it is very informative on Gageby's successor Fergus Pyle.

Pyle was not a 'lucky' Editor. His editorship coincided with the recession following the oil crisis in 1973. He left just before the economy recovered.

Talent, of course, is rarely enough, but it helps.

Pyle's appointment was surprising and was not popular among the staff. There was nothing in his career which indicated his suitability. However, he was the journalist reporting from Northern Ireland before and after it erupted. The newspaper's success in the early seventies was

in part attributed to the resources it devoted to the North.

But Pyle's Northern Ireland reports appear to have been quite long-winded. There was a famous quote from a Unionist politician of the time who said: "*I prefer Hansard to Pyle. It's much shorter!*" (Business and Finances, 11.7.74). Kerrigan in his article says that Pyle devoted a 13,500 word report to the firing of Bill Craig by Captain O'Neill.

The most obvious choice to succeed Gageby was Donal Foley who had been the retiring Editor's right hand man for many years. Kerrigan says the following concerning Pyle's appointment:

"What, in the liberal *Irish Times*, seemed an almost heretical suspicion, began to grow among the journalists, both Catholic and Protestant.

"Could it be that Foley was denied the job because he was a Catholic? Despite all the changes in the paper might the old sectarianism be alive at the heart of the paper which had presented itself as the champion of liberalism?"

Whatever about the truth of this, Pyle was the first Editor appointed following the establishment of The Irish Times Trust Ltd. His position in relation to the Board of Directors of The Irish Times Ltd, and Major McDowell would have been completely different to that of Gageby's. Gageby was a joint managing director of The Irish Times Ltd (1959 to 1963) before he became Editor. He was also a substantial shareholder. He had been in *The Irish Times* before McDowell and it was only following the sale of John Arnott's shares in the late nineteen sixties that McDowell had the same amount of shares as Gageby (20% each). So the relationship between McDowell and Gageby was not a boss/subordinate one.

Pyle on the other hand was not his own man. He was there to do as he was told. As readers of this magazine will know, Major McDowell was the dominant influence in his appointment (see July 2004 *Irish Political Review*). It also appears that he was there to make sure that the journalists of The Irish Times Ltd did what they were told.

Kerrigan says that lengthy memos were issued to staff outlining how each story was to be covered. Unlike Gageby who had a desk in a large open-plan office, Pyle withdrew into a small office for privacy.

Lengthy editorial meetings replaced the snappy twenty minute affairs of the Gageby era. Often the newspaper missed production and distribution deadlines resulting in a loss of readers outside the Dublin area.

But it was not just Pyle. McDowell decided to appoint Peter O'Hara as Managing Director in 1975. O'Hara was originally one of the Board of Governors of The Irish Times Trust Ltd. It appears that he introduced a crude regime of cutbacks which hastened the downward spiral in the circulation figures.

Whatever claims *The Irish Times* had to liberalism in the first period of Gageby's editorship, Kerrigan says that under Pyle the paper experienced a retrenchment. On the north its position was that the violence was caused by mindless thugs. When the Peace People phenomenon emerged in 1976 they were enthusiastically supported. Pyle organised a booze-up between *Irish Times* journalists and the Peace People in Hunters Lounge near Leinster House.

In his obituary of Douglas Gageby, Conor Brady gave the impression (intentional or otherwise) that Pyle's editorship was more liberal than Gageby's (*The Irish Times* 28.6.04). Brady revealed that Gageby had said to him that he would not have published the series of articles alleging Garda brutality by the 'Heavy Gang'. But Kerrigan gives a completely different perspective on the publication of this series in 1977.

The Irish Times had become dull and was losing circulation. Pyle was beginning to lose the respect of his staff. Although he was aware that *Irish Times* journalists were investigating allegations of Garda Brutality he didn't have the explosive details until two days before publication. His response was to demand that the journalistic sources for the story sign sworn affidavits. Kerrigan says that the staff's response was to suggest contemptuously that he employ lawyers instead of journalists to write his stories. Pyle had lost all authority. The publication of the story reflected an abdication by the Editor rather than approval.

Understandably but unjustifiably, in later years Pyle took some hesitant pride that the story was published and might have done some good.

But within a few months of 'his triumph' Pyle was forced to resign. Kerrigan implies that the Board of Directors were responding to the journalists, but I suspect that they were merely allowing the journalists indulge themselves. The real reason for Pyle's resignation was pressure from the banks (the London Times obituary of Gageby confirms this view, 7.7.04).

The newspaper made a £100,000 loss in 1974 and the losses continued in 1975 and 1976. Towards the end of Pyle's tenure the loan from the Bank of Ireland had escalated to £2.5 million.

Pyle's resignation as Editor automatically resulted in his resignation from the Board of Directors, but significantly McDowell used his powers to reappoint him to the Board. O'Hara, on the other hand, had no further involvement with the newspaper after his dismissal.

It is likely that the Board of Directors and McDowell had limited influence over Gageby in his 'second coming': he was not their man, he was the Bank's and the Bank was only interested in recovering its money.

Gageby's 'second coming' was greeted with joy unconfined among the staff. According to Kerrigan there was dancing in the newsroom on the return of the conquering hero. But what Gageby brought on his return was competence rather than adventurousness. The paper became more commercial. £100,000 was spent on promotion in Gageby's first year after his sabbatical. Stories were written to facilitate sales of the paper. In an attempt to expand beyond its urban market there was a series on rural issues. The paper quickly returned to profitability. Gageby had not let the Banks down.

By 1985 Gageby was a wealthy man in his late sixties. However, it may not be a complete co-incidence that his retirement was in the same year as the repayment of the bank loan. From 1985 onwards the Board of Directors and McDowell would have been in a stronger position to assert their authority.

The period from 1974 to 1979 that Kerrigan wrote about is interesting, but not as interesting as the previous five year period. In August 1969 the British Ambassador wrote his notorious '*white nigger letter*' indicating that McDowell wished to place the newspaper under British State influence. In 1974 we know that McDowell became the dominant influence in the paper. Three of the other 'Pre Trust owners' had resigned (the Walkers and George Hetherington) and the remaining one, Douglas Gageby, had resigned as Editor and retired from the Board of Directors the following year.

McDowell was left with a free hand. But why was he given such extraordinary powers in 1974? The *Irish Times* had achieved commercial success by then and it would be understandable for the Bank to give the credit to McDowell, the Chief Executive from 1962. But why institutionalise his powers in the Company's Articles of Association and make it almost impossible to get rid of him? And then there is the secret 'Oath' contained in those Articles. The above elements cannot be explained by commercial considerations.

If the Bank ever had faith in

McDowell's commercial acumen in 1974 it must have had second thoughts by 1977. The newspaper was on the verge of bankruptcy and this period of decline coincided with McDowell's heightened powers. It looks like the Bank made a reassessment and concluded that the substance behind the newspaper's success before 1974 was down to Gageby all along and not McDowell.

The *Sunday Times* did a profile of McDowell (18.11.01) in which there is the following rather curious quote from a fellow member of McDowell's Kildare Street Club:

"He looks like a man of affairs; he talks like a man of affairs; but is he one?"

The term "*man of affairs*" is a euphemism for a businessman (the French word is "*homme d'affaires*"). But it is

interesting that the speaker doesn't wonder whether he is a good businessman or a bad businessman, but whether he is a businessman at all.

Elsewhere in the article there is the following opinion about Major McDowell's relationship to the newspaper:

"The Major has always tried to preserve its British essence".

It has never been explained by *The Irish Times* itself what McDowell's role was. Nor has it ever been explained why he was given such extraordinary powers and retained them for so long after he had disposed of his capital in the company.

Was he good; did he receive help; or maybe he was just 'lucky'?

John Martin

Irish Establishment Steals The Presidency

At 12.30 pm on Friday, 1st October, in the Custom House in Dublin, Mary McAleese was, as she (a lawyer) put it, 'elected' President of Ireland (again, as she put it, rather than *Úachtaran na hÉireann*). There was no election in the country supposedly because there was no viable candidate to oppose the sitting tenant of Aras an Uachtair. Mary McAleese, had been prepared to fight an election, and had an 'election team' which consisted of Seán Barrett, described in the *Irish Times* for Saturday, October 2, as a former Fine Gael Minister, and Pat Farrell, described in the same article as a former "*secretary general*" of Fianna Fáil. (FG and FF are the Establishment parties of the Irish Republic.) Other political parties represented at the Custom House (which is government-owned and has not been an actual custom house for a very long time) were the Progressive Democrats, in the person of Michael ('If your Irish—show me your skin-tint') McDowell, Minister for (cough) Justice, and Mary Harney, *Führerin* of the PDs, Tanaiste (Deputy Prime Minister and now Minister of Health, a position in which she may have to make some really hard, unpopular, decisions). The PDs are, in essence, a breakaway from FF, and now appear to have the leadership of that party under their collective (if that word is allowable in discussing the 'Progos') thumb. The SDLP, in the persons of John Hume and Mark Durkan, the current leader, sent congratulations to McAleese on her 'election'.

Notable by their absence from this cosy ceremony were Sinn Féin and the Greens, presumably the former were not even invited. These two parties constitute, along with the large number of independents, a 'Technical Group' (for parliamentary purposes) in the Dáil. The Labour Party stood aloof from the 'Technical Group' and insisted that it was the third element in the Dáil, though it has fewer TDs than the others combined. The parliamentary authorities agreed with the Labour Party, in a deal to save Taoiseach Ahern from the second Question Time appearance which was customary. Despite that dubious deal, the Labour Party was not represented in the Custom House, nor did it send congratulations to President McAleese.

On Saturday, 2nd October, the *Irish Times* carried a letter from a Paul Dalton of Dublin 7, which it headlined *Politics Of The Presidency*. Mr. Dalton expressed "disgust" at the political parties in "*this so-called democracy*", and said that he was not aware of anyone who had been canvassed by opinion pollsters on the alleged lack of interest in a presidential election. He said that McAleese had carried out her duties "*without fault*" but "*no other eligible citizens are allowed to offer themselves for election to the people of Ireland*". And "*I say to Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, Labour, Progressive Democrats, Greens and Sinn Féin: Shame on you. It is a sad day when the people have been denied a democratic*

constitutional right by their elected representatives.”

It is also not quite accurate, in that Michael Higgins was prevented from standing by Labour Leader Pat Rabbitte; and one Green TD, Éamon Ryan suggested that the Greens put up a candidate, if only to get some sort of discussion “*about where Ireland is going, about what kind of country we have and about where we want to be in the wider world*” (*IT* 02.10.04). He also suggested that the Oireachtas Constitutional Review Group look into sitting Presidents nominating themselves—though Mrs. McAleese, a former member of Fianna Fáil—presumably nominated herself because the political establishment told her to.

Another aspect of this matter is that there was a candidate for the Presidency who was quite determined to fight an election. This person was ‘Dana’ (Rosemary Scallon née Brown), she stood against the Establishment candidates in the last presidential election and gave them a run for their money, and then was an MEP for four years. That was for the erstwhile Ulster / Connacht constituency which has been done away with. This was Dana’s heartland in the presidential election, though she did well all along the Western seaboard, and even in the Midlands, and in the area around Dublin.

Dana got onto the list in 1997 by using elements of the Constitution and the rules on the election of the President which had not been utilised before. (This was due to all former such elections being party fights, usually between FF and FG candidates.) The Brown family canvassed Local Government bodies and Dana was sponsored by a number of County and City Councils—mainly in the West. (The reference to ‘the Brown family’ is due to the fact that in essence that is what her team consisted of in 1997 and for the Euro-election. The Dublin press are so lordly these days that her brother, spokesman, and presumably potential election agent, was described by an *IT* columnist—Joe Humphreys—as “John Browne”. But the Browns are very sharp political operators, as Éamonn McCann noted in his column in the Irish (effectively Dublin) edition of *The Big Issue*, in 1997.

A man called Harry Rea from Cork city went to the High Court, over the same few days. He was attempting to force an election for the office of President. He was attempting to get more time for Dana to gather nominations. What the *IT* described as “*Mr Justice Butler*” (an English rather than an Irish legal locution) said that the correct way of nominating a presidential candidate was laid down in the Constitution. He rejected Mr. Rea’s application. The latter reacted very sharply and said that the people of the Republic

were now living in a “tyranny”. He also echoed John Brown, claiming that Senators, TDs and Councillors from Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael were warned that they would be expelled from their parties if they nominated a candidate for the election: the candidate in question being, presumably, Dana.

The *Irish Independent* (aka *Indo*) for the same day (02.10.04) gave more background on Harry Rea. He is the founder, organiser (and probably only member of) an invigoratingly reactionary anti-feminist (and nearly everything else that has happened since the Second Vatican Council) group. But the interesting thing about the reporting of his intervention is that the *IT* and *Indo* both described him in headlines as a “*Cork plumber*”. And there is very little doubt that we were being asked to sneer at a mere plumber intervening in such important matters. Modern ‘revisionist’ journalists are forever asking their readers to sneer at ‘De Valera’s Ireland’—but Dev’s Cabinets were full of carpenters, former draper’s assistants and similar persons. But they were the bad old backward days, weren’t they? before we re-became an intellectual colony of England, where even (or especially) the pinko-liberal ‘quality’ press is quite unrestrained about abusing working class people and their behaviour.

Dana / Mrs. Scallon fought on a number of other fronts right up to—and past—the official cut-off point for nominations (Mrs. McAleese ought to have become President on the dot of midday). She had nominations from Senators Shane Ross and David Norris (which shows them in a good—democratic—light, as Dana’s politics must be anathema to both of them. If for somewhat different reasons.) Michael Ring, a Mayo Fine Gael TD, and Finian McGrath an Independent, also leaned partially to Dana. But they both demanded that she should get a ‘critical mass’ of other nominations before they put their own names forward. McGrath, in particular, was adamant, speaking to the *Indo*’s Senan Maloney (Sat., 02.10.04), he made the proviso that there had to be nineteen signatures on Dana’s nomination form before he would add his own. John Brown seemed (according to the *Indo*) to be suggesting that Ring and McGrath were in the bag. Mr. Brown also seemed to be claiming that Labour and Green TDs and Fianna Fáil Senators were interested in signing up for Dana’s nomination.

These people did not actually publicly back Dana. She, and her team (herself, her husband Damien Scallon and John Brown) then deployed other tactics. They were closeted with the President of the High Court, Justice Joseph Finnegan, and the returning officer, Maurice Coughlin—and Brian McCarthy, the secretary to the

President (Mrs. McAleese). They engaged in what the papers simply called “*technical*” matters with Messrs. Finnegan and Coughlin. Dana also suggested to Mrs. McAleese, through Brian McCarthy, that she “*voluntarily stand down so that an election could take place*” (Alison O’Connor, *Indo*, Sat., 02.10.04). O’Connor reports Dana, rather wryly saying, “*I didn’t get an answer to that one*”. She, and her team, left the building as the political Establishment were congratulating themselves on (at the least) stitching-up the Presidency.

The *Irish Times*, (Sat., 02.10.04) had an editorial titled *Platform For The President*: it was a very odd piece of writing. It did not mention Rosemary Scallon. But Mrs. Scallon is of the essence of this matter. She represents a very substantial element in society in the Republic. The editorial claims the “*outcome*” of an election would have been “*the same*”—as last time, presumably. But, apart from any other consideration, it is a questionable assertion. In 1997 Dana and Mary McAleese were, in many ways, putting forward the same general point of view. McAleese’s being somewhat more guarded and politic, but the public knew her and her opinions. In 2004, in a run-off between her and Mrs. Scallon, all sorts of matters would have come into play. McAleese probably would have been deserted by the people who, last time, took her stance on traditional Catholic-Nationalist values at face value. Dana might well have been supported by the people who support the smaller parties, for anti-Establishment reasons.

The President has very little volition in what she or he is required to do, which is why this editorial’s praising of Mary McAleese is nonsensical. The *IT*, characteristically, congratulates her on “*attending a memorial service for Ireland’s (sic) first World War dead...and...the funeral service for the British Queen Mother*”. If Dana were elected she would have to do what the elected representatives told her. And that might, soon, include welcoming the Queen (of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) to Phoenix Park.

The above matter may even be the crucial point in the major parties stealing the presidency. There can really be very little doubt that the presidency was stolen—and specifically—stolen from Dana. She was not able to canvass the Local Government authorities because they did not meet in time to endorse her candidacy. This may have been by design: a fair number of TDs in an arc from Donegal to Wexford might find themselves being asked ‘searching’ questions by their constituents and even party colleagues over the next few months.

Seán McGouran

**Readers may be interested in the following exchange
which is part of a debate on the *Indymedia* website**

Peter Hart Responds

Peter Hart wrote on Thursday, Oct 21 2004, 9:17pm:

"I normally never respond to these sort of attack pieces—they are insubstantial and politically motivated and if I made a habit of it I would be it at forever."

"However, since so many people I know took the trouble to respond, for which I'm grateful, I thought I should make a statement.

"1.) I will not be responding to the substantive historical points mentioned here. They originate with Brian Murphy and Meda Ryan, both of whose contributions to Irish history I respect, and I will respond to them (and to critics in general) in full and in an appropriate form. Apart from anything else, there isn't space here. But in any case, why respond to Jack Lane and Niall Meehan on these matters when they have nothing original to say and say it in such an objectionable way?

"2.) Meehan and Lane—and others—have a political agenda and probably belong to specific Irish political organisations. I do not. Nor do I have any religious affiliations. I am not an Irish or British unionist, nationalist or socialist. I am not a Protestant or a Catholic. I am a Newfoundland and a Canadian. As my friends can attest after our many many conversations on world politics, I am neither conservative nor right-wing.

"3.) Yet, proceeding from their strong bias, M and L assume I have some countervailing politics or prejudice that must have driven me to write on the Irish revolution. This is simply false, based on the false premise that my work is somehow partisan.

"4.) Readers should note the method used by Meehan, who apparently teaches journalism. I wrote something he thinks is antithetical to the IRA's historical reputation so I must be anti-IRA, therefore anti-republican, therefore anti-nationalist and even anti-Irish, therefore pro-British. My conclusions cannot simply be derived from a study of the evidence—there must be a hidden motive.

"5.) I am accused of using evidence selectively (as can every historian ever of course) to further this agenda. Yet M refers, at best, to only 2 chapters of my 1st book (out of 13 in total) and not at all

to my many articles and two other books, the latest being *The IRA at War, 1916-23*.

"6.) To readers of this discussion: if you want to know what I think about the revolution, read my work for yourself—you may be surprised to find how little space in it Tom Barry and Kilmichael occupy, and how much evidence is presented on a wide range of subjects.

"7.) I am further damned by association. With Roy Foster, with the Ewart-Biggs award, with Newfoundland, with Canada, with wargamers. This of course has nothing to do with the argument but is so blatant a smear that it prompted most of the earlier responses.

"8.) How can anyone take such a level of argument seriously? What unbiased reader would accept these insinuations and accusations as relevant?

"9.) As already noted, such methods are not used by serious critics of my work. I disagree with almost all their substantive points and stand by my work completely, but I by no means reject criticism in general. My last book was written as a call to debate, and rational debate is what develops better understanding. I have responded to many of the points raised by Murphy and Ryan already in print and I will do so again.

"10.) If readers are interested in reading a relevant debate between myself and another historian, in a few weeks one will be posted at www.history.ac.uk/reviews in a few weeks (sorry, don't know exactly when).

"11.) When the book or whatever it is on Kilmichael and all that comes out, I hope you all will read it and that the debate will continue."

Niall Meehan made the following reply to Peter Hart on Friday, Oct 22 2004, 1:23pm

"Dear Peter,

"1. You say you issued a "call to debate". Is it directed solely at others and not at yourself? You say you will not respond to the substantive issues. But why, if you are so confident about your methodology and your evidence? A basic principle of historical scholarship is a willingness to debate substantive historical issues.

"2 You say that you will respond. I congratulate you, though the timescale is still a little indeterminate. Would it be

a matter of weeks, months, or possibly even years? Perhaps you might clarify.

"3 You say you respect Dr Brian Murphy and Meda Ryan. Ryan's book on Tom Barry has been in the bookshops since December 2003. You have not responded as far as I can see in any way to the challenge it has posed for your analysis.

"4 Dr Murphy has been waiting for six years for a response to his criticism that you refused to cite relevant evidence from one part of a document, while quoting liberally from other parts. Murphy's position is that the information you omitted was highly relevant. It contradicted a substantive point you were attempting to make.

"5 While it is apparently a "smear" to mention you in connection with Canada, Newfoundland, wargamers, the Ewart Biggs Prize and Roy Foster, it is somehow legitimate for you to write without evidence of any kind that I "probably belong to [a] specific Irish Political organisation". I leave others to judge a possible double standard. Your suggestion is without substance, as I do not – were I to be, it would be without relevance to the debate over analysis of what happened in West Cork during the War of Independence.

"(It may be a slip of the pen, but when you write that you "do not" belong to a "specifically Irish" political organisation, I assume you to mean you do not belong to a political organisation in any country.)

"6 Your analysis of my criticism of your work is as flawed. Your suggestion that Tom Barry and Kilmichael form only a small part of the overall body of work you have produced omits the fact that it forms a major part of one book, your first. That is only one aspect of the debate. Ryan and Murphy have raised other issues. I have read some of your work, but not all. You write well, but my criticism stands.

"7 To sum up: you say there is not "space" here to respond. But that is one thing about the Internet; the space is fairly much unlimited. As Dan Quayle said about 'Space': it is a big area. You could fill some of it up here for the benefit of your friends and critics (and the interested neutral) on the points in contention.

"8 However, as you confirm that you will, at last, respond (in the near future hopefully) my role in this matter is now finished and I look forward to your reply to Meda Ryan and Dr Brian Murphy on the substantive points in contention between you.

Yours sincerely, Niall Meehan"

http://64.4.53.250/cgi-bin/linkrd?_lang=EN&lah=7bd1fd13d0e944e7f14ef0&id=109486730&hm=%3a%2f%2fwww%2eindymedia%2cie%2fnewswire%2fphp%3fstory_id%3d66994

A Right To Return ?

It is not often that a state turns against itself, judges itself not worthy of existence, and yearns to crawl back into the womb—but that would be the condition of the Irish State today if its academic life were taken to be an expression of its general life. A movement has been formed to carry it back where it came from. It calls itself *Reform* but it could be more aptly called *Return*. On 18th September it held a meeting on the site of the great national movements of the past, the Mansion House. It was patronised by the British Ambassador, organised by Geoffrey Roberts (formerly of the British Communist Party and now of Cork University), and addressed by Bruce Arnold (the Englishman by birth and culture who has been the chief columnist on the *Irish Independent* for thirty years), Roy Garland (whose political origins are in the Loyalist paramilitarism of the North and who was involved with the “*Tara*” episode of the late seventies), and a series of minor academics, including Emeritus Professor John A. Murphy of Cork University, who has been associated with the vagaries of “*Official Republicanism*” over the decades. It was not attended by the leading Protestant in the life of the State, Senator Mansergh, whose absence was noted, and was taken as an indication that he was not actually part of the Irish Protestant community.

But the star of the show was former Taoiseach, John Bruton—for whom Mansergh refused to act as adviser when he became Taoiseach unexpectedly when the Labour Party, in a lunge to the right, ended its alliance with Fianna Fail and turned towards Fine Gael and the political wilderness. Bruton needed a crash course in being Irish, and was refused it. And now, as EU Ambassador to Washington, and with no possibility or inclination of returning to the small time, he has no further need to dissimulate. So he was the star turn at the *Return* Conference, went along with the claim that the State which he had governed oppressed its Protestant citizens, declared that the 1916 Rising was unnecessary (and therefore wrong, of course), and said that he was a Redmondite.

He did not spell out what Redmondism was. Leaving aside Redmond’s youthful political extravagance which gained him

the leadership, what he stood for in the culminating years of his life was sectarian hostility towards the Ulster Protestants (the secret Catholic organisation, the Hibernians, became the directing force in the apparatus of the Irish Party under his leadership) and active participation in the apparatus of the British State as a world power, including military participation.

Bruton was misunderstood as saying that an independent Irish State might have been established without the use of force, which is absurd in the light of the clear British position on the matter, and this misunderstanding provoked an unexpectedly strong rebuttal in correspondence in both the *Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent*. It is more reasonable to assume that what he meant was that an independent Irish State should not have been established, and therefore the means by which it was established were wrong. (That the end justifies the means is the universally applied maxim of political practice. Not even Tony Blair thinks that killing 100,000 Iraqi civilians was a good thing in itself.) The substance of Bruton’s argument, as a Redmondite, can only be that Ireland got more independence than was good for it, and that it should have been content to be a regional structure with domestic self-government under British supervision, which is what Redmond’s *Home Rule Bill* provided for.

Unfortunately Redmond jumped the gun in the Autumn of 1914, and committed nationalist Ireland to a great deal of violence in the British Army without first setting conditions, while the *Home Rule Bill* was only on the Statute Book and the altered political situation in Britain made it very unlikely that it would ever take shape as an administration in Ireland. In other words, he bought a pig in a poke, which was a very unBritish thing to do. This was bad for Britain in the long run, and British historian, Professor Nicholas Mansergh, later censured Redmond for it.

Was Bruton the first swallow of a *Return* Summer? It seems doubtful. The immediate effect of the Conference was to disrupt revisionist harmony. John A. Murphy could not bring himself to go along with the pretence that Protestants were an oppressed minority in the Republic

and he issued a statement to that effect, making it necessary for his colleagues to denounce him as a backslider. Perhaps one should say a Recusant, because Bruce Arnold’s denunciation takes us back over the years to a mental world for which secular terms are inadequate. John A., he says in a letter in the *Irish Times*, lacks “*the more rigorous discipline of the Protestant mind*” (28th October 2004).

This seems a suitable moment to reprint an *Irish Times* editorial on the importance of Freemasonry in Ireland. The occasion was the defeat of the Free State Government on a pensions issue because some Independents withdrew support from it:

Irish Times
18th January 1929

“Freemasonry In The Free State

“*The Star*, ‘a national weekly devoted to politics, economics and social affairs’, is published in Dublin. It is the official organ of the *Cumann na nGaedheal* Party and is maintained by that party’s funds; and since *Cumann na nGaedheal* is the Free State Government’s political organisation, we assume that *The Star* twinkles under the Government’s aegis. Unless and until we are corrected, therefore, we must suppose that *The Star*’s references to the Masonic Order, in the leading article of its current issue, are at least a semi-official expression of the Government’s views. The article is an attack on the Masonic Order in the Free State, but we must explain that it is an indirect and qualified attack. *The Star*’s main concern is with some project—of which we know nothing—for the establishment of ‘a Catholic organisation of the Masonic type’. It condemns that project on grounds of private and public morality, and then draws analogies from the alleged methods of the Masonic Order. The article pretends to be scrupulously fair to the large company of Freemasons in the Irish Free State. It refuses to believe that they are outside the pale of Christian salvation, and dismisses as “patently absurd” the charge that they take part in a blasphemous and obscene ritual. The Masonic Order’s real offences are less theatrical, but, perhaps more mischievous, since, after all, devil-worship—the thought is our own, not *The Star*’s—has no economic reactions. ‘It is impossible’, says *The Star*, ‘not to accept the view that one of the main purposes and achievements of Freemasonry in this country as in Great Britain, has been the perpetration of graft’. That view, it adds, ‘represents the only hypothesis upon which the existence and persistence of Freemasonry amongst the classes who

are connected with it can be explained'.

"Here again, however, *The Star* professes a studious moderation. It grants, in the first place, that the Free State's Freemasons practise 'not crude or criminal graft', but 'subtle, respectable graft', and, in the next place, that their opportunities for graft have been curtailed severely by the operation of national self-government. 'Public administration in all its branches, is directly or indirectly under Catholic control, and a Freemason here and there is powerless to do any harm. Every one of them who is in a position of any importance or influence is known and watched. If he attempted to play any tricks, the effort would be detected and frustrated, and he himself would suffer for it'. Nevertheless—such is *The Star's* conclusion—Freemasonry is contrary to the national interest, injures the public, and 'sends to every nostril a disquieting odour of corruption'. Perhaps we have quoted enough. The Masonic Order, as revealed by the quality of its membership, its high standards of citizenship and its

magnificent benevolence, requires no defence from us; and *The Star's* attack, a sorry compound of ignorance and prejudice, would be negligible if *The Star* were not the official, or at least semi-official, organ of the Free State Government. If, indeed, it speaks here for Mr. Cosgrave's Ministry, how does that Ministry reconcile its loathing for Masonic principles with its grateful acceptance of Masonic services? The Order's substantial contributions to the two National Loans were not spurned. Some of the 'Independent' members whose votes now keep the Government in office are leading Freemasons. What will they think of *The Star's* disclosure that, even while they are hurrying into the division lobby, they are 'known and watched'? Has the strain upon the conscience of the *Cumann na nGaedheal* Party become intolerable at last, and, when the next general election arrives, will it proclaim, *Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis?* We shall wait and see."

Brendan Clifford

THE CLONBANIN COLUMN

"They were waiting and watching at ten minutes to Two when the signallers on the left flank indicated that five motor vehicles were approaching from the West. The first of these came into view almost immediately. Commandant Moylan had ordered that the first lorry was not to be engaged until it reached the more Easterly positioned Sections. His object was to ensure, as far as possible, that all the vehicles would be in the ambush before firing started." (Rebel Cork's Fighting Story by Pat Lynch-Anvil Press, Tralee)

"THE terror was that England was going to back her soldiers and police no matter what they did. For fifteen years they did everything they could, then they caught on. That was 1986 and the Anglo/Irish Agreement; up until that it was state terrorism all the way. They got frightened when the Provos started to hit home. I'd say the Brighton bomb scared the Brits; when they saw that the Provos could bomb England, they soon shut up and started looking for peace. They thought they could crush the Irish with terrorism; it was a very wrong, illegal and immoral procedure. Now is the time for peace and reconciliation, respect for

everybody's rights and the healing of the hurts of the past." (*Unfinished Business—State Killings And The Quest For Truth*, Bill Rolston, Beyond The Pale, publishers; 2000).

"THERE was surprise in union circles last night when it emerged that the Irish Congress of Trades Unions has hired a third executive from the Concern charity organisation.

"It was confirmed that the agency's press officer, Macdara Doyle, has been offered the position as media manager of the trade union umbrella group. He was appointed by Congress Deputy General Secretary, Sally Anne Kinahan who, up to two years ago, was a marketing executive with Concern.

"Ms. Kinahan, in turn, had been recruited by Congress General Secretary, David Begg, a respected former Chief Executive of Concern for five years up to 2001. Mr. Doyle is expected to start within two months." (Irish Independent, 5.8.2004).

DAYS LOST THROUGH STRIKES:
Last year saw 37,482 days lost to strikes.

* Disputes in the health service made up close to half of that total with almost 16,000 days lost.

* The public administration and defence sector accounted for more than

12,000 lost days.

* The year 2003 saw just 24 industrial disputes compared to 192 in 1984.

SIPTU is planning to extend a small credit union run by union volunteers to all its 70,000 members in the Dublin area.

The new look Jim Larkin Credit Union was officially launched on September 7, 2004, and if it proves successful, it is likely to be extended to other cities such as Cork and Galway.

"THE development of closer links between the three main teaching unions, which may eventually lead to a single union representing 47,000 teachers, is to be considered at a meeting of union leaders next month." (Irish Times, 31.8.2004).

The Irish National Teachers' Organisation has 20,000 members; the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland 17,000 members and the Teachers' Union of Ireland over 10,000 members.

Despite an amount of good will for closer links there are significant obstacles to teacher unity, not least the ASTI's decision to leave the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

There would also have to be special provision for the INTO's 5,000 members in Northern Ireland.

SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP: "THE social partnership experiment at work has suffered a setback with the collapse of the flagship management-worker group at the U.S. Bausch and Lomb factory in Waterford" (Irish Independent, 9.9.2004).

The Waterford project had been hailed by the National Centre for Partnership and Performance as an example for other private companies.

"The collapse was attributed to the union members' disillusionment with partnership at the Waterford contact lens plant, even though the joint management-union partnership has functioned for six years."

With SIPTU representing 1,450 workers or 85% of the employees, the workplace partnership experiment is effectively dead.

"According to 'Industrial Relations News', the SIPTU members said: 'The company was just using the partnership process to float issues on its own agenda'."

Pat Brennan of County Laois has written the following to the Irish Independent:

"...The National Anthem was written as A Soldier's Song by Peder Kearney in 1907. The Irish translation by Liam O'Rinn, first published in 1923, has since become the version generally sung.

"In 1924, the chorus of Amhran na bhFiann became the de facto anthem of the Irish Free State, officially confirmed in July 1926, in Clontarf." (29.9.2004).

TRUTH WILL ALWAYS OUT:

"TRAIN drivers at the centre of the controversial rail dispute in 2000 have been awarded thousands of Euros in unemployment benefit in a landmark finding that has provoked fury at Iarnrod Eireann.

The drivers were members of the former ILDA union, and the ruling supports their contention that the 10-week industrial action was an unreasonable lock-out by the company.

"The Social Welfare Tribunal, the state body which rules on cases where social welfare is refused due to involvement in a trade dispute, has found in favour of the 104 workers, who at the time were members of ILDA, and against Iarnrod Eireann.

"It is estimated that the total pay-out to workers from the state could be close on 300,000 Euros." (Sunday Tribune- 26.9.2004).

The finding is a major embarrassment to Iarnrod Eireann and something of a vindication for the former ILDA leader, Brendan Ogle, says the "Sunday Tribune".

Brendan Ogle stated: "*We always felt we were right. But it is important the public know that the company was found to have acted unreasonably*". He added that ILDA had always felt it had done "*everything possible before and during the dispute to prevent and resolve it*".

The Story Of ILDA by Brendan Ogle, Currach Press, 2003 is still for sale at 18.99 Euros. 352 pp. Index. The book was reviewed over the last two months in Irish Political Review (August and September, 2004). It is a book every trade unionist should read, especially younger workers.

On Friday, October 29, 2004, Brendan Ogle took up duty as ATGWU Regional Organiser within the ESB, responsible for its 3,000 members. It is the largest union in the state's national electricity company.

"Earlier this year the ESB group of unions made repeated threats of disruption in a bid to secure a special 18.5% wage rise above the national pay agreement and be given a 20% stake in the company." (Irish Independent, 28.10.2004).

The Scarlett Pimpernel: Congratulations to Eoghan Harris for seeing through Jack Lane's heavy disguise at the Reform Movement's public meeting on September 18th. No one else spotted that the short balding rather articulate gentleman with the Dublin accent was in fact the ubiquitous member of the Aubane society. *They seek him here. They seek him there. But Eoghan Harris sees him everywhere!*

Letter To The Editor

Carryduff And 1798

I was invited recently to give a talk to the Carryduff Historical Society about the area as I remembered it from 1938-1946. Parts of Carryduff in Mid-Down is rapidly being built on and has already been roped in as a Belfast suburb and those who remember it as it was are beginning to die off.

What is interesting about the area is the reclamation of Protestant history, the taking back of 1798. I wrote a letter some time back to the *Irish Political Review* concerning a work by two Carryduff historians which brought in something of 1798 and how it affected the area. I thought Brendan Clifford summed up very well in the September 2004 issue of the *IPR* what 1798 meant in reality to both Protestant and Catholic.

Now 1798 is becoming alive again in Carryduff. This was once a subject which couldn't be mentioned in this area because of its hijacking by Irish Nationalism. Now you get lectured on it everywhere you go. After speaking to the historical society I was asked by the Principal of Carryduff Primary School to speak to the children and their teachers. After that I was given a tour of the area and visited the old Killynure school which has been converted into a small church by the Free Presbyterian Church. The minister in charge told me about the history of the school and how it first opened during the 1798 Rebellion.

Driving back through Killynure with the Principal, the retired caretaker of the school accompanying us constantly asked for the car to be stopped a number of times in order to point out the farms of the Protestant families whose forebears had fought in 1798. His family has lived in the area during that period. He spoke of the 1798 fighters as revolutionaries.

- A large area of Killynure, within Carryduff, remains somewhat remote and the Free Presbyterian Church is rapidly expanding there. They now find the old Killynure school too small and have already bought land nearby in order to build a much larger church. There is no doubt that the Free Presbyterians are beginning to overshadow the traditional local Presbyterians by their optimism and vibrancy.

Personally I see this renewed interest in 1798 by sections of the Protestant population as a warning to Whitehall to keep the Ulster dimension. How ironical and naïve of Catholic Nationalists to think that when the Protestant re-awoke to his/her past history that the United Irishman (woman) would be re-born to create a unified country.

It was interesting to hear a local Catholic in Carryduff realise that he had once saw the Protestant as an interloper. Now he insisted that the Protestant is as part of that area as the very soil itself. I also felt that the Irishness of the Protestant in this part of Mid-Down is such that people from Cork would feel at home among them.

In talking later to some other Catholics in the area about 1798 one of them said they supported its history in the past because the Protestants had abandoned it. But now that there was renewed interest in it by the Protestant community they had handed it back because it had ceased to be a Catholic myth. The Catholic community there appear strong and confident in their identity and have introduced Gaelic football to the area. This is a great change from how the few mixed and whole Catholic families in Carryduff had to skulk about in the past. They were reviving the old Irish place names such as Ceathra Aodha Dhuibh for the anglicised Carryduff on their notepaper and websites. The mainly Protestant Carryduff Historical Society in their literature has also helped to stimulate interest in the old Irish placenames.

Catholics tell me their population has risen in numbers and that Carryduff has become a peaceful place for many mixed Catholic/Protestant families. I had a last look around and except for one small area in Killynure, Carryduff is politically and religiously free of graffiti. No flag or bunting flies and no kerbstones are painted.

Wilson John Haire

WORK ? continued

were once freed from the tentacles of capitalism with the power to chart his own economic structures, then drudgery and suffering would be abolished and all man's time-honoured aspirations for a better world would come to full fruition.

We cannot, however, as Marx does, subordinate all other human aspects to the economic one, important though it is. Labour, whether noble or sordid, is rather the social situation in which human activities are performed. Man lives not by bread alone and it would be spiritual homicide to sacrifice all other values. Labour cannot explain the essential characteristics of human existence because they precede and supersede it. To reduce man simply to "the animal that produces" is to deny him his real nature. It is salutary once in a while to suspend total absorption in our task here and now, and consider how it relates to the whole of life. The subordination of all other values to economic domination is the threatening evil of our times. We can, for instance, organise charity but this is no guarantee of love. In a society obsessed with material success, charity could lose its fundamental inspiration. The old dream of mankind that, in a worker-orientated world, life would be idyllic is illusory because man is incorrigible and Utopia still as far away as ever.

THE AUTOMATON:

But we must not arraign Marx too severely or blame him for twentieth century failure. Marxism would not pose any threat if it did not contain certain real values. We must learn from the systems we reject by correcting the mistakes which they produced. Marx saw clearly how the worker was being exploited and that industrialised, mechanised toil cannot, by its very nature, give meaning or satisfaction. Highly routinised work in industry served only to 'alienate' the worker. Although it is unprofitable to apply all the precepts of Marx to our vastly changed world, it would seem that some of his insights have still relevance today. Work often appears as something unnatural; a disagreeable, meaningless, and stultifying condition of getting the pay-check, devoid of dignity and importance. A pay-check alone is not enough on which to base one's self-respect. The mass-produced product no longer reflects the artistic skill of the artisan. He is concerned with a small, repetitive, isolated intervention in a complicated and highly organised process. He is never confronted with 'his' product, at least not as a producer, nor consulted as to its design or social merits. Nothing more than the proper performance of his allotted task is expected or wanted of him. There

is perfect routinisation but no spontaneity. Aversion to work becomes natural and only money, prestige or power make any sense. The more complex the labour unit, the more the power of the individual decreases. Even among the workers his voice is lost in majority sway which is generally spearheaded by the most vociferous but not always most principled.

THE FUNCTIONARY:

We live to a great extent according to the social status of our functions. Some potentially interesting jobs are given such negative social and income rating that they are avoided if possible. There is no guarantee that the current evaluation in the social status and remuneration of our job pyramid is the most desirable or the most just. We accept a situation but we must not let it engulf us. There is the danger that, when immersed in a labour situation over a long period, we become totally identified with our function. This may be highlighted at retirement when one finds oneself with empty hands. It is as bearers of functions that other people encounter us and it seems that our functional being is like some kind of artificial dress which we don at certain hours, obliterating our personality. Employers sometimes encourage this kind of self-effacement as in hotels. The function pursues us into our private life outside the workplace and inhibits us in developing our true vocation as men. Teachers are sometimes observed to carry their teaching manners outside the classroom but of course this trait is not the monopoly of teachers. In the process many other interesting avenues of one's personality remain unexplored.

THE REMEDY:

Although the great confrontation between employers and workers of the past are not now a feature of the contemporary scene there is still much industrial disruption in the free world. While worker participation has been accepted in principle in the management of certain enterprises, the process has been slow and fitful. The worker must be provided with reasons and reasonable motives for full commitment. Conversely the position of employers is no longer smug as heretofore and projects require the full co-operation of management and staff to keep afloat. Job satisfaction seems to be often lacking and work situations might be improved if the social context of enterprises were different. Ill-will and resentment thrive where there is a serious and deep-rooted reaction to the boredom and apparent absurdity of work. This put

a premium on slovenly work, slow-downs, and other tactics to get the same pay for less work. Where forceful methods are used, workers use the time-honoured practices of self-protection which antedate any time-study formulae. It is an indictment on both sides of the industrial field that, despite the establishment of the most sophisticated processes for containing and solving disputes, the strike weapon is resorted to as much as ever before. Employers are too slow to grasp the realities facing them and the work force often act 'on the drop of a hat'. A recent approach which referred to the "*human problem of industry*" was turned on its head by Eric Fromm who said that the tendency should be rather to consider the "*industrial problems of human beings*".

THE "TAKE-OVER":

Modern labour owes much of its success and expansion to scientific development. Science has been embodied in practice and we can now speak of 'the scientification of labour'. A humanisation of labour has taken place as many inhuman, soul-destroying, mechanical jobs are removed from hands. We may say that any act that can be performed by automation is inhuman and better left to the machine. But recent technology has been so bewildering in its versatility that Trade Unions are apprehensive about its possibilities for decimating the work-force overnight and consigning many workers to the scrap-heap.

The problem is indeed a strange and unnatural one; production can be increased drastically by far fewer hands. Society, it is feared, may not be able to cope with the burden of a large number of unproductive workers.

This latest technology could radically change our way of life, for good or ill, depending on how we approach the problem. Many changes take place in manufacturing industry and this is one of the troublesome areas unless proper planning is enforced. Governments will have to take decisions but these should not be left to the experts alone; the stabilising participation of an informed and responsible public is required. With proper decision-making, careful planning, and astute direction this latest threat may well result in higher standards of living and more leisure hours. Nothing is to be gained from sectional confrontations. This latest hazard to man by a product of his own inventiveness may well appear to future generations as pitiable as the obsession of the seventeenth century religious beliefs.

Robert Cotter (1981)

WORK ? continued

society's entrance fee (waived only for children, the infirm, the aged and some others). Work is necessary if one is to survive with any kind of dignity in today's world. It is demanded of all able-bodied people as, without it, life in this technological age could not advance. And that is why the deliberate choice not to work is itself a renunciation of society; and not to have work to do can be humiliating and counts for many as a rejection by society itself. Having a function is an important element in self-affirmation. Long periods of idleness and exclusion from the mainstream of social activity seem to provoke subversive tendencies.

THE PAIN:

In primitive societies, the necessity for work was obvious to all but, ironically, in this age of feverish activity it is not always so. There are those who do not share the social aims or views of life of the group in which they find themselves. They feel they cannot conform to society's demands and decide to make the great contracting-out—by idleness, crime, drugs, or pseudo-religious grouping. Some feel that to sell their labour is tantamount to selling part of themselves, or their self-expression, and this can be an essential misery. Adaptation and adjustment to a new situation may be distressing. This is commonly felt as an affront to one's individuality and dignity as a person. The realisation that quite obviously the world or the work situation was not simply tailor-made to one's particular satisfaction can be rude. The new operative may feel resentment if he does not readily bend to the norms of management and workers alike. The job disappoints; in a sense it is bound to fall short of expectation, simply because it was not designed to satisfy the worker but for some other end. There is more poignancy still for those who through no apparent fault of their own fail in their work. They feel that not only was the world not specifically designed for them; it was not designed for justice.

THE CONTRACT:

There is undoubtedly some restriction of freedom caused when an individual binds himself to the labour contract but most people see this more than counterbalanced by the security and benefits of social living. Work is an advantage and a burden; we gain an advantage by assuming a burden. So normally the truth seems to be that work is a necessary ingredient of a meaningful existence, if one is to pursue social aims, the arts and sciences or perhaps most important of all, to marry and raise a family. For many there is very little option in the choice of worthwhile work (for some even no work). We may consider carefully the options open to us but we

cannot go on deliberating indefinitely. So at some stage and perhaps on very incomplete evidence, we make our choice, much the same as at some particular time we decide to marry some chosen partner. ("Wives are the only heavenly bodies whose orbits are as yet uncertain"—David Hume). In both cases, the first choice may be for life; it may be a life of providence or endurance.

THE VOCATION:

Many people hope they will find satisfaction in their work, especially if they have chosen it themselves. If work means what one chooses to do this may be very closely related to what gives meaning to life. Does work in itself, no matter what sort, give direction to life? Is a man better off with work than without it? Most people, it seems, believe so but for varying reasons and it is significant that one reason quite often given is that it keeps one from thinking. Some are obviously driven to work to avoid an unbearable boredom. It answers to man's sense of aloneness and isolation. Work helps 'to kill time', that time which is man's all too brief and precious life-span on earth.

In some cases work can be a means to some end or mission in life. If they believe life has an end, they may want their whole life to contribute to the success of that end. People with high social or religious ideals have motives for working which transcend the ideology of profit. For some work brings a great bonus when it involves the exercise and perfection of their own skills, projects, and ideals. John Stuart Mill thought of his book on Logic as a task of paramount importance which gave point and justification to his life. He believed he was fulfilling the work which was ordained for him to do, not by God but by circumstances. Isaac Newton was more sublime still when he regarded his great works on the Universal Laws of Gravitation as undertaken for the greater Glory of God. Ironically he was later given a post in the Treasury as Master of the Mint where the problems of Mammon and not of harmony were to occupy his great mind.

THE ROUTINE:

For men of lesser talent and limited opportunity, work may not be so enthralling. Some kinds of work are obviously more satisfying than others and those with the dullest jobs may find it impossible to understand why they need to be done at all. A pointless job seems to deprive life of all meaning. Or is it not enough that the work would be necessary? Necessary to what? If the wheels of industry cannot turn without coal, does this not bestow importance on the work of a coal-miner? If the collection of refuse is vital in order to maintain the hygiene of a city, is not refuse collection a necessary function?

But it is likely that neither worker would say that he was put into the world to do just his particular job. There must be occasions when they look for some deeper meaning that will give some substance of idealism to their lives. Many reap the manifold benefits of gainful employment and yet lead monotonous lives. We have only to consider the daily tediousness of a worker in an industrial city, where men and women work together in profusion. They stream into the offices and plants; they work according to a rhythm measured by specialists of time and motion. In the evening, they flow back like the tide to their newspapers and their television screens. They produce, consume, and seek amusement in step, without asking questions. This is the rhythm of their lives. It is probably that work represents a man's most important function in society; but unless there is some sort of integral social background to his life, he cannot even assign a value to his work.

THE DOCTRINE:

The ills and drawbacks that would haunt mechanised labour were foreshadowed by Marx in the last century. As the Industrial Revolution with its 'dark satanic mills' began to change the economic face of Europe, Karl Marx appeared as the champion of the exploited growing workforce. His doctrine radically changed the notion of work and awakened man's consciousness to the work dimension of his existence. For centuries the craftsman had enjoyed profound satisfaction in his work and his craft infused his entire mode of living as work, leisure, and culture were inextricably fused. But with the coming of the modern means of production, the nature and function of work changed fundamentally. For the middle class it became a duty and even an obsession; a pure means to the ends of wealth and success. But for the majority, without property, it became nothing less than forced labour. Money represented the abstract expression of work. A man if he did not wish to starve had to sell his energy to those who had the means to exploit him. Marx, more than any of his contemporaries, trumpeted these changes and the consequences that would flow from them. Because of Marx's astounding insights we can now speak of 'a civilisation of work'. Marx considered the economic order the heart of human life and this heart determined the whole of life. For him, the modern world was essentially a labour world and labour was the true role of humanity. Labour was the absolute centre of human living. The economy was no longer a sector of human life but economic factors alone determined the life of society. Marx firmly believed that, if the worker

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To Work Or Not ?

FUNDAMENTAL to the moral law of ancient Judaism as expressed in the *Torah* were, among other things, the right to live, the right to liberty, the right of possession, and the right to work and to leisure. St. Paul, though a Rabbi, was a tent-maker by trade and preached the central therapy of work, the one Jewish concept he triumphantly transmitted to Christianity. There was a traditional religious assumption that man was born to labour; that God meant man to be punished for his transgressions by work; and presumably it is for the sake of paying the just penalty that man must work. Labour, then, may well be a necessary good rather than a cursed evil. But man's enthralment in work needs some explanation. It is hardly in itself a sufficient account of man's presence on earth although Marx came very close to this view at times. Some Greek thinkers deemed work to be unworthy of man. Some civilisations thought work improper for man but natural for woman. Greek and Roman slaves had no civil rights. Medieval menials had to accept the political decisions of their feudal lords. The religious attitude towards work as a duty was still prevalent in the 19th century but has changed radically since. What was a moral and religious obligation is now essentially an economic necessity.

THE NAME:

There are no longer labour-free classes. Management and labourers share a common concern in a labour situation in which human activity is involved. Work is no longer regarded as an inescapable necessity, nor a status which prevents us from living on a truly human level. Now labour engages man's best talents and even those with inherited means or more wealth than they can ever spend still don the mantle of work. Although work is so elemental in our lives, it now encompasses such diverse activities that it is difficult to circumscribe it in a neat definition. What

once meant little more than back-breaking drudgery has now come to designate not only manual work but the whole range of human endeavour, including scientific, moral, and even speculative engagement. In a proper environment man can, through work, develop his skills and creativeness as well as his powers of co-operation, reason and a sense of beauty. It can liberate man from being a slave to nature to being its master.

"TO WORK OR NOT?" first appeared in the trade union journal of the Post Office Workers' Union (now the Communications Workers' Union-C.W.U.) in 1981. It was written by the late Bob Cotter, who died shortly after publication. Bob was a remarkable man who was dogged by ill-health for many years. He spent a long time in Sarsfield's Court T.B. sanatorium, Cork. The infection led to the removal of a lung.

He was a life-time, unpaid trade union activist at a time when such involvement carried with it the extra stress of dealing with the activities of an unrecognised organisation called the Post Office Officials' Association. Bob Cotter was a regular contributor to his own union journal. His mild, timid manner disguised

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a steely integrity which was greatly admired by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

We are indebted to Jerry Condon, himself a postal union activist and former President of the CWU for bringing the article to our attention.

Bob's article, written in 1981 predates the rise of Social Partnership in 1987, the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, and the rampant march of Globalisation into the new century.

Common human needs create a system of provision in society to cater for the demands of its citizenry. This entails an order of rights and duties. We make only a very small proportion of the things we need so we depend on the services of others. Work normally produces some useful product or provides a service. As society evolves the service aspect is more pronounced. The ideology of profit sought to ignore the service motive which was not a natural attitude but a perversion. Society now consists of a system of services and functions in a sort of labour network. Where formally one class served another elite class, now every citizen renders a service to the community and service no longer implies just domestic service.

THE NORM:

In our society, obtaining and holding a job is the fate and the hope of most school-leavers. Their whole education and upbringing conditions them for a role in society. In our labour world, a person is mature, adult, and independent when filling a place in the labour pool. The majority work for somebody else and so are dependent on an employer. This fact seems to suggest that the work is essentially a means of earning a living, and not necessarily a meaningful activity. If work is taken to mean earning a living, then it is