

# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

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Haughey's Legacy  
Sinn Fein Speaking Rights In Dáil  
John Redmond vs Benedict XV

Irish Ferries: Choppy Waters ?  
(Back page: Labour Comment)

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## A Visionary Republican?

On the day the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning—the real one, set up within the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, which has acted independently, as distinct from Lord Alderdycy's 'Independent Monitoring Commission' nominated by the two Governments, which acts as their agent—on the day when the real Monitoring Commission announced the completion of arms decommissioning by the Provisional IRA, the Acting Taoiseach, Michael McDowell, made a curious statement in an interview on Channel 4. Asked about his response to General de Chastelain's report, he said:

"It is of significance, but it's not the end of the road by any manner of means"

*Question:* "What worries you most? The robbery of the Northern Bank, the 26 millions?"

*McDowell:* "Well, what worries me is that the Provisional movement in its entirety would seek to have the IRA remain in abeyance and apply the proceeds of criminality to its campaign to win seats North and South of the Border. That's not acceptable to me. But, in the meantime, it is, as I say, an important day that the largest separatist movement in Ireland has in a way destroyed its arms and put them beyond use to-day, and that it has said to the majority community in Northern Ireland: From now on we propose to carry on our politics by entirely peaceful and democratic means" (26th September 2005).

The curious thing is not the assumption that democratic means are possible in a political entity which is not a democracy. That misuse of language is commonplace. Northern Ireland is not itself a democratic state (or any kind of state), nor is it a democratic part of the democratic state which holds it. It is something unique in the history of the world: a deliberately arranged undemocratic enclave within a democratic state which is systematically excluded from the political life of the state. Democracy is

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## A Revelation In The Dail

There is a neat little theory that our globalisers tell us about the world: protectionism is a bad thing because it inevitably leads to national conflicts and war. This is now accepted as such a truism that it would be regarded as almost lunatic to deny it. However, a moment's thought could not but conclude that there is no logical connection whatever between protectionism and war. In fact the very opposite is the only logical conclusion. Why would any country committed to looking after itself through its own resources automatically resort to war? History confirms this. Ireland did not develop a warlike attitude to any country when it was implementing a protectionist policy. On the other hand, its nearest neighbour has been and is now the greatest promulgator and practitioner of free trade and has initiated more wars than any other state—indeed as many as all other modern states combined. This basic fact in itself should cast doubt on the suggestion that

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### Doonesbury Flashbacks



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something which cannot exist in it, if the word is used to mean the election of the Government of the state by the adult population. An actual system of democracy of that kind (and there isn't really any other in modern times) has a multitude of effects on the general functioning of society, and brings about a situation which could not be caused by any other means. The condition of society in the North, which is so piously deplored by the righteous, is proof that there is no effective substitute for actual democracy in bringing about the situation of which the righteous approve. But the righteous—and Acting Taoiseach McDowell is the most righteous of the righteous—are usually locked in to a kind of moral posturing which inhibits thought, and they dare not trace the deplorable condition of the North to its cause—because it is not permissible that Britain should be held responsible for it—and so they ignore causes while indulging in vehement denunciations of consequences. And they use “*democracy*” as a synonym for “*pacifism*”.

The curious thing about McDowell's statement was his description of the Provos as “*the largest separatist movement in Ireland*”; and that there was not an immediate repudiation of it by his Government ally, Fianna Fail, or even by Fine Gael.

Sinn Fein is certainly larger than McDowell's party, having about four times the support of the Progressive Democrats.

But it is not yet bigger than Fine Gael, and we were not aware that Fine Gael had renounced the separatist ideal which led it to withdraw the State from the British Empire and Commonwealth and to declare it a Republic. However, McDowell, Fine Gaeler though he is in essence, has no brief to speak for that party. But he must be taken as speaking for Fianna Fail. Within the governing Coalition, the tail has been speaking for the dog since the beginning of the year and the dog has allowed him to. So we can take it that Fianna Fail gave him permission to remove it from the ranks of the separatists. A few years ago it deleted “*the Republican Party*” from its title, and now it lets us know through McDowell that it has ceased to be a separatist party as well.

But this use of language is quaint, antique. Separatism as a distinct political position within nationalist Ireland became obsolete more than 80 years ago, when all other positions ceased to exist. Until about 1920 there were Home Rulers and Separatists. The Home Rulers were dominant until the 1918 Election but, when they lost that Election, they ceased to be Home Rulers. The Local Government Elections of 1920 confirmed the 1918 result, and in the 1921 Elections there were no Home Rule candidates. The Home Rulers were only Home Rulers out of fear of what the British Empire would do to a separatist movement, and they went over to separatism *en masse* when

the independence movement took off. After that (aside from Kevin O'Higgins' flirtation with Imperialism in the mid-1920s) separatism was taken for granted as the general political medium within which political differences developed.

But now the Acting Taoiseach reveals that Sinn Fein is the largest separatist movement in the country, which can only be true if Fianna Fail and Fine Gael have reverted to some pre-1918 position.

Perhaps the word “*separatist*” is fused with the word “*physical force*” in his mind. That would be understandable on the part of somebody who dwells so much on the political lineage of his family, going back to the days when Britain governed Ireland and treated the mere advocacy of separatism as seditious. The advocacy of a separate state, let alone the achievement of it, could only be undertaken by people who were prepared to maintain themselves as an organisation in a relationship of warfare with the Government. Separatists were compelled by British policy to set themselves up as a secret state within the State—as were similar groups of people in the Tsarist Empire at the same time, and under the Nazi State a generation later. The separation of Ireland from the British Empire was something which the undemocratic British State declared that it would not concede to peaceful agitation, and would prevent by the use of military power. There was therefore a close practical association between the Irish separatist ideal and the organisation of a physical force movement to achieve it. And that remained the case, even when the British State raised 200,000 soldiers in Ireland to make war on the Germans and the Turks by declaring that its purpose was to establish democracy and the rights of small nations as foundations of a new world order, and gave an apparent sign of earnestness by democratising its own electoral franchise by the Reform Act of 1918.

But, when the Irish electorate took the war propaganda in earnest and *voted* for the establishment of a separate Irish State, it found that the newly-democratised British Parliament took no heed of its vote and that it would have to *fight* in order to gain what it had voted for. The practical equation between separatism and physical force was still maintained by Britain. But the terms of the relationship had changed within Ireland, by reason of the vote. The people had not come out in support of Young Ireland in 1848, or of the Fenians in 1867, but in 1919-21 they came out in

### Atom Bombs On Japan

Editorial Note: On 26th August 2005 Michael Keary, in a letter to the *Irish Times*, defended the American atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 on the grounds that “why should a single American soldier lose his life to protect those of the Japanese citizens who so maliciously and aggressively began the war in the first place?” The following reply was submitted on 26th August, but not printed:

Michael Keary (Aug 26th) states Imperial Japan and its people “brutally crippled the US navy and destroyed the harmony of the Pacific and American life in general” (at Pearl Harbour). The Japanese are condemned for not overthrowing their government during the four years of war. Because of these things they deserved no mercy from the US.

There are a few problems with this point of view. Firstly it was only obsolete battleships that perished at Pearl Harbour as the aircraft carriers and newer vessels had already been moved to safety. Roosevelt had his “this day will live in infamy” speech prepared in advance.

The Japanese naval task force arrived on schedule to play its part in an intrigue long planned, to goad the neutrality minded US population into war. It was the American imposition of a complete ban on the importation of oil products to Japan that backed the Japanese government into a corner where the choice was between economic collapse or war.

The US had wanted to enter the European war for a long while, where it saw the future direction of world power politics was to be decided. Japan had a treaty of mutual military support with Germany and Italy; the tripartite pact. After Pearl Harbour Germany declared war on the US, in accordance with the pact. Roosevelt was to concentrate the main war effort in the European theatre. Japan had provided the ‘back door’ to American participation in the war. A great US military and naval build-up had been under way since 1940.

The Japanese served mainly as pawns in a wider game. This view of the Pacific war once belonged on the fringe but now resides comfortably in the mainstream. The most comprehensive and most recent treatment comes from *Pearl Harbour—Day of Deceit* by Robert B Stinnett (2000).

**Ted O’Sullivan**

support of what they had voted for in 1918. Britain had gained their support for its Great War in 1914 by means of a confidence trick—a spurious commitment to democracy and the rights of small nations—but the Irish refused to accept the confidence trick as a good practical joke, and in 1919-21 they fought Britain for the same thing that in 1914-16 they thought they were fighting Germany for. And the 1921 Election showed that the entire national community had become separatist and was prepared to bear the physical costs being inflicted by Britain. And Irish national politics has been separatist ever since. At least we cannot recall that a party committed to restoring British rule, or even British hegemony, in Ireland has ever won a seat, or even contested an election.

Granting that there was once a practical equation between separatism and physical force, and that the one word might be used for the other, that still does not explain the Acting Taoiseach’s description of Sinn Fein as the largest separatist movement in Ireland on the day when it was confirmed that the IRA had disarmed, having previously made a commitment to pursue its aim by non-military means. Sinn Fein is now a separatist movement dissociated from physical force. It is therefore a movement of the same general kind as Fianna Fail and Fine Gael (at least, as they used to be prior to McDowell’s revelation), with the difference that it operates in the North as well as the Republic. It is also a Northern party which has successfully entered the political life of the Republic, whereas the other two are 26 County parties which over the decades have tried without success to influence Northern affairs for the better from the outside. Through the 1937 Constitution they asserted sovereignty over the North, and yet they remained substantially disengaged from it—and there are other forms of engagement than military invasion. And they are now greatly disturbed by the fact that a party generated out of the Northern situation has put down roots in the politics of the Republic. They do not know how to deal with a party which means the things that they only say.

One of their expedients is to declare that Provo Sinn Fein does not recognise the 26 County State as legitimate, and considers itself to be the legitimate government of all Ireland. But that is patently not the case. The Provos are a highly practical and resourceful movement, generated out of Northern realities, and unrestricted by anti-Treatyite taboos.

There is of course a traditional Republican organisation which keeps alive the spirit of anti-Treaty Republicanism and disputes the legitimacy of the Free State, even as amended by Fianna Fail in the 1930s and by Fine Gael in its revivalist Republicanism of the late forties and early fifties. And it is in the circumstances a good thing that a Republican body of that kind continues to exist, and to act as the conscience of the project that was launched on the basis of the 1918 Election. That body aligned itself with the Provos 35 years ago, but parted company with them a generation ago, recognising that the Provos were something else.

Back in 1998 we reviewed a review by Martin Mansergh, in the [London] *Times Literary Supplement* of a biography of General Maguire, the last surviving member of the original Dail, by Rory O’Brady. Mansergh’s article brought it home to us that O’Brady was performing a useful function in the ideological life of the Free State/Republic by continually harping on fundamental matters. Though he is Fianna Fail’s intellectual, Mansergh said things in that article which

undermined the historical basis of Fianna Fail, and he has done so again in recent weeks in letters to *The Village*. Like his father, Nicholas, he takes the Treaty to have been a democratic settlement, which raises great problems about the origins of Fianna Fail. But what it is was reasonable for his father to do, as a highly-placed servant of the British Empire, is not reasonable for Martin to do as a highly-placed member of Fianna Fail. And, since those statements have not been taken issue with by other highly-placed members of Fianna Fail, we concluded that Rory O’Brady had a useful function to perform in the life of the State whose legitimacy he disputes.

With regard to the physical force movement (in the sense of a military organisation not under the control of the Government in Dublin), we would say that it has had no real function in the political life of the 26 Counties since 1945.

The Treaty was not a democratic settlement in any reputable sense of the term. Even Professor Foster concedes that it was signed under duress, in response

to the British ultimatum about immediate and terrible war. A case can be made for submitting to the British ultimatum, but it is not a democratic case. The Treaty system was imposed by force *after* the spurious election of 1922, though not by the Parliament returned by the electorate. The anti-Treaty Party was defeated by a Free State force authorised and supplied by Britain. The British political system started to fall into confusion in the Autumn of 1923, just as the Free State was becoming operative. This led to a return of the electorate to the 1918 position, from which it had been driven by the threat that the infinite military resources of the Empire would be deployed against it if it voted wrong. The Treatyite Government spun out its existence until 1932 by authoritarian measures of its own, not dictated by Britain. When it lost the election in 1932, the great question was whether it would relinquish power peacefully. It did. But the condition in which it did so was the presence of a strong military force which it did not control and which backed Fianna Fail.

De Valera had created Fianna Fail out of a secession from Sinn Fein in the mid-1920s, but he had kept up an informal relationship with the IRA—which had met defeat in 1924 by dumping arms and ceasing to fight, but had not surrendered or disarmed. It was therefore not within the authoritarian discretion of the Treaty Party in 1932 whether to admit the electorally victorious Anti-Treaty Party to the power of government or to deny it on the grounds that its objects were in breach of the Constitution. Denial would have resulted in a genuine Civil War (unlike the affair of 1922-3). And the Treatyite power across the water was not in 1932 what it had been in 1922. Those were the circumstances of the peaceful transition of 1932.

With the IRA in the background, Fianna Fail gained effective control of the apparatus of state, as well as the formal offices of government, and held in check the Fascist movement developed by the Treatyites.

The final use of the physical force movement in the political life of the 26 Counties was in the World War launched by Britain in 1939. Battle-hardened Republicans, who could not quite accept the Free State, even in its amendment by de Valera into a “*dictionary republic*”, placed their experience at the service of the State for the duration of the War for the purpose of deterring, or meeting, a British invasion.

(Under the Treaty, the army of the State, the Defence Force, had the function of suppressing internal dissent and enforcing British policy. It was disabled from becoming an Army capable of meeting an external enemy in war, because the only external enemy was Britain. De Valera tried to overcome this disability but was thwarted by British influence in the world. Churchill, who demanded that the Irish State should make war on Germany, was one of those who had ensured that Ireland should not have an army capable of making war on anybody. Insofar as there was in nationalist Ireland an actual capacity for waging war, it lay elsewhere than in the Defence Force. (And that was a potent factor influencing developments in 1969-70.)

The credible Emergency preparations for meeting force with force (secretly reported to Churchill by his spy, Elizabeth Bowen) saw the State through the World War in safety, and there has never since been a function for a physical force movement in the 26 Counties.

Fine Gael reverted to a strong Republican position during the war, and when it returned to Office in 1948, in Coalition with the Labour Party and recently-retired Chief of Staff of the IRA Sean MacBride, it declared that the State was a republic and took it out of the Empire and Commonwealth (in whose affairs it had played no part since 1932), and it launched a great Anti-Partition agitation at home and around the world. That agitation helped to reinvigorate the IRA, and the invasion of the North followed in 1956. (That event was a formal invasion from the South, with little or no element of insurrection accompanying it in the North.)

Fianna Fail could not stand idly by while the 1948 Coalition worked up an Anti-Partition agitation. It joined in the agitation, and De Valera went on a speaking tour in Britain. At a meeting in the English Midlands he was asked if he thought the IRA had exhausted its historical function. He replied that he did not think so. This comment was ignored by John Bowman and others when making up a sanitised version of Dev in the 1970s.

Dev did not expand or explain his opinion. He did not need to do so. Not many years earlier he had broken, within the 26 Counties, the Republican section which had declared war on Britain in an anti-Treaty spirit. He had dealt with the Treaty as much as it was necessary and practical to deal with it, and he would not tolerate the IRA as a rival to the official

state. But he would not say that its existence in the North was unnecessary and should be ended. (At least that is how we recall it.)

Dev had an acute sensitivity for political realities, and therefore he would not say that the IRA had no proper business in the North. He neither encouraged it nor denounced it: he simply made a realistic observation relevant to the political condition of the North: undemocratic, unstable and unworkable. And that is how we saw it twenty years later. Having enacted partition, Britain devised a catastrophic mode of political existence for the North. And there is little sense in making moral judgments on the basis of democratic norms, and issuing denunciations accordingly, for a situation which is not ordered by the powerful democratic structures of the state, and which is inherently catastrophic.

We went further, and tried to get the 6 Counties incorporated into the democratic structures of the state which held them. Dev did not do that. But, only on the basis of an excessive rationalism, beyond the scope of practical politics, could he be criticised for not doing so. Statesmen cannot rise above the interests of the states which they lead. They are tied to their states, whatever altruistic postures it might be fashionable for them to strike. They either serve their states well or badly. It is hardly conceivable that Dev did not see that the 6 Counties might have been governed in a way that did not generate communal antagonism as a matter of course, but it would not his business to urge that they should be integrated politically into the British state. And, if he had done so, his proposal would have been rejected by all parties in the 26 Country state, without being heeded by Britain, which had set up that atrocious system in the North for an ulterior purpose, and not because it did not know what it was doing. Dev concentrated on the affairs of the State of which he was leader, and he achieved its independence.

Primary responsibility for the condition of the North rests with the British State, which set up the ‘Northern Ireland State’, which nobody in the 6 Counties had demanded, instead of governing the region within the structures of the British democracy. Secondary responsibility lies with the Unionist Party, which settled down to a routine of communal dominance within the system which it had opposed in the first instance. The Catholic community bears no responsibility for failing to engage in ‘normal politics’ because there was no normal politics for it to engage in. Insofar

as a third party bears substantial responsibility for exploding the situation in 1969, that party is the Taoiseach of the time, Jack Lynch, with his inflammatory speech in mid-August, with its hint of invasion, and his crude *volte face* under British pressure the following Spring.

The cycle of events set off by Lynch in 1969 has now come to a kind of conclusion. The net outcome in the 26 Counties is the political demoralisation and disorientation of the parties which were there in 1969, and the re-appearance in a new form of the oldest party of the State, Sinn Fein, which was thought to be obsolete in 1969. So, like it or not, the Republic is at a point of new departure. And all the old parties can do is denounce the new party, declaring it to be a force of evil.

McDowell is Acting Taoiseach on the basis of a 4% electoral vote for his party. But he deserves the position which he has usurped. If he did not deserve it, he would not be able to sustain it. What he says is incoherent, but at least he tries to say something, while his colleagues in Government and Opposition cannot even rise to the most modest level of pretentious incoherence on the basic issue regarding the fundamentals of the State which the re-emergence of Sinn Fein has sprung on them. He speaks for them all, since they have nothing to say.

He speaks as a Prophet: *“Even if I were born of different parents, I believe I would nonetheless hold to the same vision of Irish republicanism that I have, in the course of my public life, sought to realise for my country”*. He is what he is, and he would be what he is, even if to the outward eye he seemed to be somebody else. Some higher force, beyond the ordinary course of events, shaped his destiny. His parents had nothing to do with it. And yet he lists his earthly antecedents in all their Republican rig-out: parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, uncles (both Treatyite and Anti-Treatyite). And *“All of them were nation-builders”* (see *Monochrome Vision Of Irishness Is Unhistorical*, Sunday Independent, 5.9.05). He asserts that:

“there is a radical and fundamental difference between Irish separatism on the one hand and Irish republicanism on the other”

although

“Republicans in Ireland since the time of Wolfe Tone have been separatists”.

But Republicans

“have been much more than separatists. They have believed passionately in a concept of Irishness that is not simply Catholic, Gaelic and Nationalist. The

true republicans’ concept of Irishness includes the Protestant people of Ireland—the Anglo-Irish and the Ulster Scots... Irish republicanism necessarily implies a correlative duty of respect on the part of Irish republicans towards the Anglo-Irish and Ulster-Scots people on the island... The central vocation of Irish republicanism today... is the project of reconciliation of Orange and Green... There was, in the past, at any rate, a curious tendency among some romantic, Irish Catholic nationalists to refer to the Tricolour as the flag of “Green, White and Gold”—as if... to airbrush out of the portrait of Irish republicanism anything other than Green, Gaelic, Catholic nationalism... There is nothing republican about the project of Green against Orange. Nor is there anything republican about driving forward the process of polarisation and segregation of the two communities in Northern Ireland... Reconciliation is a vocation that calls for civic virtues that are not to be found in the actions, words, tactics and strategies of the Provisional movement... I believe in a united Ireland not as a means of completing the nationalist conquest but as the optimal outcome for all the people of the island and for each of the communities in Northern Ireland. From the point of view of the Protestant, Unionist majority, I believe that a United Ireland makes sense... I believe that the mindset of siege and being beleaguered in one’s own country is deeply destructive. It is bound to produce an ever-growing introversion... It must also be said that adjustment in the South of our concept of Irishness to accommodate the Orange tradition is also a pre-condition for any type of genuine Irish unity. And creating a warm place in our State for those of the Orange tradition is not capable of being achieved overnight. A society which is in denial over its Anglo-Irish and Ulster Scots heritage and which doubts the role of those traditions and communities as integral parts of its personality is incapable of genuine unification with Northern Ireland. The project of Irish unity is too important to leave to those who have betrayed the real values of an Irish republic.”

Roy Foster has a liking for the term *“visionary republicanism”*, and here, for once, is a political proclamation which justifies it—a piece of wild imagining about the *“historic Irish nation”* which parts company with social reality at the outset.

A realistic case can be made that Ireland should have been dealt with as a single political entity, as the historic territory of the Kingdom of Ireland, regardless of the

national diversity within it. But there is no basis in social reality for the view that the Ulster Scots and the Anglo-Irish formed parts of a single Irish nationality, but were alienated by the *“Green and Gold”* conduct of the Provos, (McDowell does not mention that the Gold was said to represent the Papacy), or by the precursors of the Provos who are not specified by McDowell.

The historic sequence is that the Irish, as a political body, were broken by the conquest of William of Orange, and that the regime based on the conquest was not even an apartheid system. Its purpose was the obliteration of the conquered people, not their separate development on an inferior level. The Anglo-Irish were not rejected by the Irish. They rejected the Irish and sought to squeeze them out of existence, and then, having failed to do so, they held themselves apart as a superior people—an attitude frankly stated by Hubert Butler in an election address 36 years after the Declaration of Independence.

The Ulster Scots lived substantially apart from both the Irish and the Anglo-Irish for most of a century after the Battle of the Boyne, excluded from the official power-structure in Ireland by the Church of England monopoly, but left to their own devices. Their clergy and gentry were mostly educated in Scotland where their Church was the Established Church. In the 1780s they were active in the Protestant Ascendancy movement which established the independence of the Protestant Ascendancy Irish Parliament, and in the 1790s they launched the United Irish movement with a view to incorporating the Irish into an Irish state as part of the British Empire. When the Irish Parliament outlawed the movement, it became a revolutionary conspiracy. But, when the moment came to enact the revolution, most of them backed away from it, and they supported the ensuing campaign for the Union of Parliaments, either overtly or tacitly, while the Orangemen opposed it. The antagonism of Orangeman and United Irishman withered away in the course of the 19th century on the ground of a common Unionism, and a merger between the two took place in the Ulster Unionist alliance to oppose, by fair means and foul, the establishment of a Home Rule Government—not a separatist state but a devolved component of the British State and its Empire.

Separatism played no part in generating the antagonism between the Irish national movement of the 19th century and the

Ulster Scots. Insofar as any Nationalist leader contributed to the development of that antagonism it was Daniel O'Connell, who was neither a Separatist nor a Republican—if a meaningful distinction can be made between the two. And, after O'Connell, in order of responsibility, comes John Redmond, who by the time of the great Home Rule conflict of 1912-14 had discarded Republicanism and Separatism and become a Home Rule Imperialist. But the political complexion of the national leadership really had nothing to do with it: O'Connell, John Mitchel, Gavan Duffy, the Fenians, Isaac Butt, Parnell, John Redmond, De Valera, Collins, Cosgrave—they were all one to the Ulster Scots.

That antagonism was structured into a pseudo-state by Westminster in 1921. And the pseudo-state was blown apart after it had aggravated the antagonism for half a century and all the Queen's men have not got it together again. The Provos are a product of that structured antagonism. It would therefore not be surprising if they were as narrow as McDowell alleges. But, as far as we have observed, they are more advanced in the matter if "*civic virtues*" than any other party in Ireland today, and that is why they are such a problem for the other parties.

The Acting Taoiseach needs to go back to the drawing-board. We hope that he does. In the country of the blind it would be of great advantage if he could get one eye. And he might explain what is meant by "*completing the nationalist conquest*" by extending it to the North-East. Did the Irish in the rest of the country conquer themselves?

Long ago, when we were still trying to democratise the 6 Counties within the British State, we tried to explain our view of the matter to him at a meeting in Dublin. It was obviously not acceptable to him. He really is a one-nation man.

His efforts to include the Ulster Protestants in a genuine Republican embrace seem to have consisted of attacking the Provos at a couple of Unionist meetings, while turning a blind eye to the Orange tradition of the nation which was running riot on the streets expressing its heartfelt feelings about Papists, attacking Catholics, and showing general disgust at the fact that peace has broken out.

Not many things in politics are predictable, but the present condition of Ulster Unionism was entirely predictable to anybody who had taken the trouble to

understand it on its own ground, and to understand the dynamic of "the Northern Ireland state".

And, if it is under siege, the siege is inherent in its world outlook, and has little to do with the existence of a besieging force. It was under siege when the IRA was defunct in the 1960s; before the Irish Volunteers were formed in response to the UVF in 1913; and before there was any Irish nationalist movement worth speaking of in the mid-19th century. It placed itself under siege by reverting to the mentality of the conquest after more than century of another mode of existence; by de-politicising itself in 1859; by willingly accepting exclusion from the political life of the State and accepting its own pseudo-state as the reward of rebellion; and by ruling out a return to British politics (in which it participated briefly in the mid-19th century) when its pseudo-state was blown away in the 1970s by the insurrection it had provoked.

We proposed 35 years ago that the Orange Order should be regarded as a kind of folk culture, and should be treated with tolerant good humour. It had simmered down in the 1960s into something that might be called a 'tradition'. Our proposal was seen as outrageous by the broad spectrum of nationalist opinion. But establishment politicians in Dublin, at their wit's end, want to treat it as a 'tradition' today, even though it has clearly ceased to be such and has reverted to the militancy of 1689, and has conjured up for itself the realities of 1689, though without the saviour in the offing who will soon arrive and relieve the siege.

The besieging army has disarmed, and the result is consternation.

Professor Bew was David Trimble's political adviser during the years when Trimble was subverting the Good Friday Agreement through pretended participation in it. Trimble warded off the danger that the Agreement would take root, and then made way for Paisley as an outright opponent of it. And now Professor Bew appears as apologist for the DUP. He was on BBC Radio 4 (10 pm News) on 26th September to explain why the DUP's rejection of de Chastelain's report, and its refusal to contemplate negotiations for an unspecified period, was reasonable. He said that, last December, the DUP was supported by the two Governments in setting conditions on Provo disarmament, which would have made decommissioning a humiliating event for the Republicans

and a Unionist triumph which demonstrated the effectiveness of Paisleyite firmness as against Trimble's equivocation. But things have happened in a very different way. The Provos have disarmed unilaterally, outside the negotiating process. And the two Governments, who a short time ago were describing the IRA as the greatest criminal organisation in Europe, were now prepared to move forward on the basis of the act of decommissioning and write off the past. And there was nothing in that for the DUP. Indeed, it would be the humiliated party if it accepted the accomplished fact of non-negotiated, unconditional decommissioning and resumed negotiations. It must therefore reject de Chastelain, let a lot of time elapse, and see if it can start again when all this has been forgotten.

Professor Bew had said before this that humiliating conditions should be placed on Provo decommissioning. He has a Sticky outlook. And the Stickies are incapable of learning by experience that the Provos, because they are the resourceful representatives of an actual community, cannot be trapped by schemes like that.

## A Revelation In The Dail

continued

there is a relationship between protectionism and wars, with a corresponding one between free trade and peace. In fact the very opposite is the case historically.

Events in the 1930s culminating in World War II are cited as proof positive of the relationship between war and protectionism. Protectionism was prevalent during the 30s, there was war at the end of the 30s, *ipso facto*, protectionism caused the war. But the declaration of war by Britain had nothing whatever to do with economic issues. All the issues that caused that war were clearly political.

But, if we accept for the sake of argument that protectionisms did cause WWII, how can we then explain World War I, where there was no element whatever of protectionism among the antagonists? The pre-WWI era was one of blissful free trade. That free trade was so free that we have not yet achieved the same 'freedom' in the present century, despite the best efforts of the World Trade Organisation. Just look at the mobility of labour alone in that era: millions traversing



the globe looking for work. The current migrations have nothing on that. They are only trotting after their predecessors. Ireland is a good barometer of this. We have a long way to go before as many millions migrate here as left here in the decades before WWI.

Did the behaviour of human nature undergo such a somersault whereby one type of behaviour, free trade, led to one war and then its opposite behaviour, protectionism, led to another war about 20 years later? This is not really credible.

If all our economic determinists are determined to be such, then they have to make up their minds about the economic causes of both World Wars of the 20th century and be consistent about them. Why did they both arise—despite the participants being engaged in two opposite forms of trade relations before each war?

Enter Ruairi Quinn. I think he must have been struggling with this conundrum of trying to establish an economically consistent argument that explains the 20th century and its major wars. He revealed his conclusions to Dáil Deputies on the 21st June 2005, but they do not seem to have been fully appreciated by his audience. His conclusions were unique as far as I know; the singular intellectual achievement was that he established (to his own satisfaction) that WWI could also be blamed on protectionism. It would go without saying that he believes this is obvious in the case of WW II, so he only refers to WWI. This Dail event should be noted, at least. Even applauded, whether it's right or wrong, as such a radically new idea is a rare thing to occur there.

Quinn's declaration came in response to Bertie Ahern's report on the Council of Europe meeting, which Tony Blair did his best to wreck in mid June. The scales appeared to fall from Ahern's eyes about the British premier after he saw him perform at that Council meeting. The fact that it took a blatant attempt to wreck the EU for Ahern to see the light says a lot about him, but maybe it was a small light on a long road to Damascus. The farmers of Ireland immediately saw a blinding light and hopefully they will not allow Ahern to forget Blair's antics, even if he dearly wished to do so.

Quinn said:

"If we open up our markets as the neo-conservatives in the United States would like us to do without any type of *quid pro quo* or without any safeguards in regard to the income distribution effect of that decision, in five to ten years' time we will have a totally skewed income distribution derived from the wealth

generated by those selling into our markets but no redistribution of any significance in what are currently Third World countries. In such circumstances, there will be a massive reaction in Europe to the point where there may well be a protectionist backlash. This has happened before in 1914. We came into the 20th century with an international currency, modern communications, new technologies such as steam and motor transport and a totally open trading system. Within 14 years that open trading system had largely disappeared and only re-emerged to a significant extent at the end of the last century. Protectionism and the reaction to domestic political forces have not gone away and it is vital that we can understand people's fears in this regard. If people agree to trade away, give away or have taken from them certain protections, such as those enjoyed by many rural farm producers in this country, and the consequential effects are not those that were promised, there could be a serious backlash. I wish the British Government well during its Presidency" (Dáil Debates, 21.6.05).

As this was a very curt explanation for the history of the past century we need to tease out the argument a bit further. Hopefully Quinn will do so at some point so this is to help him along. So the First World War was a protectionist backlash against the free trade of the era and this led to about a century of war and protectionism that we are only now emerging from. This is the only logic behind the declaration by Quinn. This begs a lot of questions. What sense does it make in relation to the actual events of World War I? Where do the various alliances come into the picture? Were they alliances about different trade policies? How does the conflict in the Balkans fit into the free trade/protectionist scenario? Why was the Ottoman Empire attacked? Because it was so keen on free trade that it caused a protectionist backlash in that part of the world led by Britain! That's the logic of the argument. I have never heard it claimed that these conflicts were over two different trade policies. But never mind.

If the war was a backlash against the free trade of the pre-WWI era, it is reasonable to assume that the participant that was most protectionist launched the backlash in August 1914? But does Britain fit the bill? There is the little difficulty that the Great Liberal Party that launched the British Empire into the war had made itself 'Great' over a decade earlier precisely because it thoroughly defeated a protectionist policy by the Tories in England—that of Tariff Reform—and that policy was never heard of again.

And I think we must assume on Quinn's

logic that the alleged protectionism that emerged after the war was initiated and maintained by the victors in the war, i.e. Britain. The defeated did not determine the outcome or the future of the 20th century, with its allegedly dreadful protectionist policies. If protectionism was the result of the war, it was the victors' policy, surely? So the Versailles Treaty must have been a settlement based on protectionism? If this was so, it helps confirm that nice little story we began with because the protectionism of Versailles could then be seen as being in conflict with, and being overthrown by, the protectionism of Nazism and, *voilà!*, there is the cause of WW II. QED. All neat and tidy. Take a bow, Mr. Quinn, you have squared the circle for economic determinism and the cause of globalisation, and made protectionism the basis of the world wars of the 20th century.

There is a difficulty in knowing where to start in trying to refute all this.

There were hundreds of millions of people involved in these wars but where exactly are those who fought and died by the million for protectionist economic policies? Where are the battalions dedicated to protectionism? Where are its propaganda, songs, slogans etc. that usually celebrate the causes which people fight and die for? I have not come across any. Obviously there were plenty people with protectionist policies and ideas but they had them for a purpose and that purpose was clearly more important to them than any particular policies such as protectionism. Therefore the purpose behind the policy is what matters. But all this has to be ignored by economic determinists, as it does not really matter what people think about, what they believe, or what they say. People don't really know what they are thinking as they are the unconscious agents of economic forces and therefore totally unaware of what they are really doing. So, if you can wipe away about 99% of reality (i.e., what people actually thought, said, planned and did), Ruairi Quinn's assertion might be right—but on that basis so could a hundred and one other assertions about the cause of WWI. The alternative explanation can only be found after the hard work of sorting out and dealing with all those damned facts of actual history.

But just as a clue to the cause of WW I in the maze of facts, how about looking for the strongest Empire in the world at the time that wanted to be even stronger and wipe out by any means possible all that could possibly be regarded as a challenge to its dominance? An Empire which declared war in August 1914. Should not be too difficult to find that out?

**Jack Lane**

# Shorts

from

## the *Long Fellow*

### SINDO SUPPORTS VANDALISM AGAIN

The *Sunday Independent* has continued its campaign in support of vandalism. At the beginning of the year Ruth Dudley Edwards's column wished "A Happy New Year to the patriots who last week de-commissioned the statue of Sean Russell" (2.1.05).

"De-commissioned" is one word; "vandalised" is another word to describe the paramilitary destruction of the Russell statue last year.

Last August Gene Kerrigan had this to say about the recently erected statue of Charlie Haughey, which was financed by fisherman from An Daingean, Co. Kerry:

"There is in this country an age-old, and rather regrettable, custom of vandalising public statues.

"In the spirit of that custom, let me point out that there is nothing wrong with a brass bust of Charlie Haughey that a small tin of glow-in-the-dark paint won't fix. (*Sunday Independent*, 7.8.05)

For the benefit of Sindo readers/browsers with literacy problems, a cartoon accompanied the article depicting a man throwing paintballs at a statue of Haughey.

### LAND OF THE BRAVE?

The most powerful country in the world has shown itself unwilling to respond competently to disasters. Its response to Hurricane Katrina has been well documented. But the dust has not settled following the September 11th attacks.

Thousands of New Yorkers contracted serious illnesses following the collapse of the Twin Towers which released asbestos and thousands of tons of toxic chemicals in its wake. The rescue workers, the heroes of *nine eleven*, were told that there was no danger. And yet months later, in April 2002, fire engines were still found to be contaminated with asbestos (*l'Humanité*, 10.9.05).

### WHO GUARDS THE GARDAI?

This column is a virulent opponent of Michael McDowell and almost all his poms and works. However, it is difficult to object to his Garda Bill even if the manner of its passing was rushed and showed scant respect for the Dail and Seanad.

There is no doubt that the Garda Siochana has a funny relationship with the

State. The *Village* magazine (1-7 July) tells us that the Barron Report on the Dublin and Monaghan Bombings commented that the Minister and his officials in 1974 were not fully informed about the investigation. The amount of documents that have gone missing relating to politically sensitive investigations is also disturbing.

One of the reasons why the Fianna Fail Government's import of arms in 1969 following the pogroms in the North was a fiasco was that the Garda Siochana was acting independently of other institutions of the State (the Army, Minister for Defence, and the Minister for Finance).

The revelations by the Morris Tribunal suggest that the relationship between the State and the Garda Siochana should be reconfigured in the State's favour.

It is reasonable, especially given the Gardai's track record of filing problems, that the Minister for Justice should have access to all Garda documents. The Bill also requires the Gardai to account for their movements on duty when directed to do so.

The *Village* report says:

"Increased powers and a greater involvement in Garda affairs by the Minister for Justice is the thread that runs through the Garda Bill."

It is difficult to know how else democratic accountability can be brought to bear on the Garda Siochana.

### MORE EU ARROGANCE

It seems that that the European Commission has learned nothing from the French and Dutch rejection of its free market orientation. It has decided to interfere in the controversy over the Risk Equalisation Scheme (RES) applying to Irish Health insurance. The RES was designed to ensure that the young and healthy would continue to subsidise the treatment of the old and sick. Insurance companies would be discouraged from cherry picking by having to compensate other insurance companies (in practice the VHI) which had older and less healthy policy holders.

A letter from the Commission, which has the full backing of Internal Market Commissioner Charlie McCreevy, recommended:

"... that a requirement to pay under the RES an amount so significant that it would force an operator to exit the market would seem to discourage other operators from entering the market and does, in any event, seem disproportionate" (*The Irish Times*, 17.8.05).

But the Health Insurance Agency has said that there is no risk of this happening. BUPA has been creaming it in the Irish

market. Its IRISH net profit margin amounts to 16.9% compared to a more modest 4.7% in the UK (see Bill Murdoch, *The Irish Times*, 5.8.05). VHI, on the other hand, is losing money as a result of carrying the burden of an older population. But let's not let the facts get in the way of free market ideology!

### MEDIA COMMENT

Could the national bourgeoisie have finally woken up to the sheer awfulness of the Irish media? Dermot Desmond recently responded aggressively to Bruce Arnold's pompous Open Letter regarding the Abbey Theatre. And an interesting letter was also published in *The Irish Times* (1.9.05) from Brian O' Cathain, a former Managing Director of *Enterprise Energy Ireland*, responding to Fintan O' Toole's ruminations on the Oil and Gas industry. The letter opens:

"Fintan O' Toole's column of August 30th ("Giving our Resources to Norway§") is absurd. It shows no understanding of the basic economics of oil and gas exploration and development, and a cavalier disregard for the historical facts of Irish hydrocarbon exploration." O' Cathain gets to the nub of the issue towards the end of his long letter when he says:

"The Irish State is not willing to bear the risks which the Norwegian state has by creating and funding a national oil company to explore for oil and gas...

"To suggest, as Mr O' Toole does, that we should implement Norwegian levels of taxation, without Norwegian levels of success and inward investment, is economic madness."

### INFLATED EGOS

It seems that O' Toole's campaign on Executive pay in *The Irish Times*, which began with a bang, has ended with a whimper. Its letter to the Governors of *The Irish Times Trust Ltd*, the oath-bound politburo of the newspaper, makes the point that:

"...inflated salaries being paid to those at the top make a mockery of the paper's very identity."

But in a later letter to their colleagues, the campaign leaders suggest:

"...the real issue... is the disproportionate distribution of bonuses to the executive directors compared with the profit-share allocated to the rest of us" (*Sunday Independent*, 21.8.05).

So it's really about how the loot should be shared out. But the letter just can't leave it at that; it goes on to declare pompously:

"...the letter is not the beginning of the end of this campaign. Rather it is, to quote Winston Churchill in another context, only the end of the beginning."



Four years ago *The Irish Times* was in the process of making a third of its workforce redundant. The then chairman Major McDowell and his daughter were rumoured to be pulling over 1 million Euros per year in total out of the company (*Sunday Business Post*, 18.11.01); and yet there was not a word out of O'Toole and his comrades.

Could the reason be that, unlike McDowell, Maeve Donovan (Managing Director) and Geraldine Kennedy (Editor) are 'natives'? Their basic salaries (320,000 euros each) are modest in terms of the recent Ascendancy traditions of *The Irish Times*.

## Keeping It Real

It's not easy being the editor of *l'Humanité*. The excellent French Health System means that there are plenty of old communists still around ready to pounce on the smallest of errors. The following letter appeared in the edition of 24th September 2005 from a René Thoirain in Paris.

"The article published in *l'Humanité's* history page of 6th August under the title "The inventor of the Popular Front" upset me because it contradicts the history of that time which I lived through. It was not Georgi Dimitrov, nor the Communist International—of which he was the general secretary since 1933, after his trial at Leipzig and at Berlin where he showed immense courage and remarkable intelligence. It was the French Communist Party and itself alone which was the originator of the Popular Front.

"Although I personally know the process of the development of the United Front (French CP and Socialist Party), the signing of the unity pact on the 27th of July 1934, I prefer to support my views by referring to *Memoires* by Jacques Duclos (Volume 1, Pages 420-421).

"The radical party focussed attention of political observers on its congress held in Nantes on 25 to 27th of October 1934. On the eve of this most important congress our Party unveiled its views on the alliance between the working class and the middle class to combat fascism. It was in these conditions that Maurice Thorez made his speech in Nantes on 24th October in which he proposed in the name of the Central Committee of the French CP, the achievement of unity and the creation of a Popular Front for Bread, Liberty and Peace. This creative initiative did not entirely correspond

to the views of the Communist International, which at that time believed in the essential unity of communists and socialists. Elsewhere our position had received so little support that one of the leaders of the Communist International intervened to suggest to Maurice Thorez to give up the proposals for a Popular Front which he had made in Nantes."

"The International at this time (October, 1934), was against our initiative, I would say against our political line and this time as later we said 'No'. It is a fact that at the 12th Congress of the International we were congratulated and shown as an example by the General Secretary, Georgi Dimitrov, who I quote from memory:

"The French Communists, with the Popular Front, have found a new key to open the lock of history."

"That is what I know from that period and all French communists can be proud of it."

In 2005 the French Communist Party has been trying to create a new Popular Front against the ravages of Globalisation. It achieved a spectacular success with the defeat of the European Constitutional Treaty last May, the reverberations of which were felt a few months later in Germany.

John Martin

## A Question For Mr. Mansergh

**Editorial Note: The following letter appeared in *Village* on 30th September"**

In his response to John Horan (*Village*, 23-29 September) Martin Mansergh refers to the historic Irish nation in terms of "Whatever nebulous meaning that may have today".

This can only mean that he does not hold a one nation view of Irish history as I assume he sees no virtue in holding nebulous concepts of any sort. He has also consistently rejected the two nations view of Irish history. His attitude therefore appears to be that there is an Irish people but with no obvious national identity or identities.

I think a person in his position is obliged to be clear with us on what exactly his view is on this matter. Does he believe that there are one, two or maybe no nation among the Irish people? Maybe we are just British provincials that need to be humoured?

As all the relevant facts of the matter are as well known to him as to anyone else I do hope that in any response he will not be in the least nebulous about his position.

Jack Lane

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# Casement Melodramatics

In *The Village* (3-9 June, 2005) under the heading *Dramatics At The Birth Of The State*, Catriona Crowe "looks at a new book that focuses on five famous controversies at the birth of the State". The book is *The Irish Art Of Controversy* by Lucy McDiarmid, about the period from 1908 to 1916, and it deals with "culture, religion, language, welfare, and politics". They include the Lane Bequest (of Impressionist paintings), and the Abbey's production of a Shaw play, "banned under England's ridiculous censorship laws". England's censorship laws, "ridiculous" or otherwise are rarely mentioned in the Dublin media.

We get the dismissal of Michael O'Hickey from his position as Professor of Irish at Maynooth, because he took the attitude that knowledge of the language should be compulsory for entrants to the National University (in essence a university for Irish Catholics, under the thumb of the bishops). A further controversy is "the 1913 battle between feminist socialists and the Catholic clergy" over sending the children of "locked out workers" to safety and security in England. The contending parties were not that clear cut, but Catriona Crowe seems to be on the side of the angels.

She moves on to "the issue of Roger Casement's "black diaries" and the disquiet they have caused for many years". There are two problems with that formulation. Melodrama about the "black diaries" is standard—but silly. Casement's personal diaries were ordinary Letts pocket diaries with black covers. The "white diaries", which he produced in Peru, were written on Consular Service-issue foolscap paper. The Diaries did not cause 'disquiet' for years, mainly because the UK Government disclaimed all knowledge of them. The question was dragged out into the open in 1937, when the question of whether or not elements were forged was raised.

Catriona Crowe encapsulates the controversy rather well:

"The Casement controversy is still with us, a small number of people still convinced that the explicit "black dairies", which provide accounts of a large number of homosexual encounters, were forged by the British authorities to stifle the movement to seek clemency for him when he was sentenced to hang for treason in 1916."

We then get a couple of paragraphs claiming that the authenticity of the diaries has been proven beyond peradventure, which is not the case.

Ms Crowe writes, "She tracks the gradual defusing of the issue, to the current situation where hardly anyone has a problem with Casement's sexuality". There may be evidence that some, even most of those claiming that the sexual elements in the diaries were forged 'had a problem with Casement's sexuality'. That's why the diaries were forged. Not having a problem with Casement's alleged [homo]sexuality has nothing to do with whether or not the diaries were used to get him executed (the fancy word for ritual State killing). And even that has nothing to do with whether or not they vital bits of the diaries were forged, and why they were forged.

Seán McGouran

**Roger Casement: The Crime Against Europe.** With **The Crime Against Ireland** Introduction by B. Clifford. 184pp. Index. ISBN 0 85034 101 9. AB, 2003. E 13, £ 9.99.

## The Casement Diary Dogmatists

Edited by *Brendan Clifford*. 68pp. A Belfast Magazine No 22. ISBN 1 874157 09 X. October 2004. E 5, £ 4.

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(From addresses on back page)

## Report

### Irish Press Royal Honour: Food For Thought!

#### "OBE for veteran Irish journalist

"Veteran London-based Irish journalist Aidan Hennigan is to be awarded an OBE for services to journalism. Mr Hennigan (79) has been included on the Foreign and Commonwealth list and will receive his award in the new year.

"Mr Hennigan, originally from Ballina, Co Mayo, was London editor of the Irish Press between 1962 and 1995 and is now London correspondent for the Examiner newspaper.

"He said he was very gratified by the award and put it down to his coverage of the IRA bombings in England and the subsequent wrongful imprisonment of suspects. "One had tried to achieve a balance between the undoubted grief caused by the bombings and the apparent innocence of the people," he said.

"Mr Hennigan said he had been surrounded by excellent staff in the Irish Press and had maintained "a substantial and continuing interest" in his work." (Irish Times 21.9.05)

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# Haughey's Legacy

Charlie Haughey was, without doubt, the greatest Irish politician since de Valera.

From the mid 1960s he established his reputation in the Justice, Agriculture and Finance portfolios. The *Succession Act*, guaranteeing that a surviving spouse would inherit at least a third of the deceased's assets, tackled a problem whereby widows were left destitute following bequests to the Church. The tax exemption to Artists and free travel to old age pensioners were other visionary measures. But he will probably be best remembered for being the architect of both the Celtic Tiger and the Peace Process.

## THE CELTIC TIGER

Even for those who lived through the 1980s, it is easy to take our current prosperity for granted. Back then there was a sense of despair which was reflected in the half serious joke suggesting that we should return the country to Queen Elizabeth and apologise for the way we had left it. "*Would the last person leaving the country please turn off the lights*" was a common sentiment referring to rampant emigration and unemployment. The National Debt had reached over 130% of national income and the possibility of walking away from the debt was openly considered. The 1982-1987 Fine Gael/Labour Coalition collapsed with exhaustion and a sense that the problems which the country faced were insurmountable.

The Haughey-led 1987-1989 Government provided coherence and hope. The public finances were put on a sound footing and the economy started to grow. The Irish Government began to punch way above its weight in Europe. Haughey's close relationship with Mitterand and Delors helped win billions in European money. The right-wing economist Sean Barrett referred to EU subsidies to Ireland as the "*largest foreign aid programme in the world, with about 7% of GDP*".

Another factor which contributed to the success of that Government was social partnership. Labour TD Liz McManus in a recent letter to *The Irish Times* claims that Labour was in favour of such a policy in the 1990s. But by then its success was well-established. *Labour Comment* was in favour of this policy in the early 1980s and it was a voice in the wilderness within the Labour Party. Fine Gael, particularly

John Bruton, was a very late convert to social partnership.

The Haughey Government of the late 1980s managed to have the best of both worlds. It received money from Europe and at the same time a policy of low corporate taxation attracted American capital undermining Continental European jobs. The success of the Irish Financial Services Centre was an example of this.

It could be said that Haughey's solution to the economic crisis was not a socialist solution. (It could also be said that there were even more right wing options available). But he never claimed to be a socialist. Also, there was no socialist political solution available. The Labour Party under Dick Spring took a moralistic stance in relation to Haughey and refused to support him under any circumstances. The 1987-1989 Government was dependent on Fine Gael and the 1989-1992 Haughey Government was a coalition with the Progressive Democrats.

There are, of course, other people who contributed to our prosperity, most notably Alan Dukes who supported the 1987-1989 Government and who was promptly deposed from the Fine Gael leadership. But the key person was Haughey.

## THE PEACE PROCESS

I've heard it said that the Peace process was a continuation of FitzGerald's Anglo-Irish Agreement. This, of course, is rubbish. The key difference was that Sinn Fein and the IRA were brought in from the cold. This was consistent with Haughey's philosophy on Northern Ireland from the outset. Northern Ireland was a failed political entity and therefore the British were not in a moral position to exclude paramilitary groups. Albert Reynolds deserves a lot of credit for continuing the work of Haughey, but Haughey was the key figure enabling the process to start.

## THE SCANDALS

The above are substantial achievements and represent the core of Haughey's legacy. However, historians will no doubt pick over other aspects of his career. In my view they will be kinder to Haughey than to many of his critics. The first and most substantial scandal was the Arms Trial in 1970.

In 1969 there were pogroms against the Catholic population and thousands of refugees pouring into the South. The Irish Government did not have the military capability to declare war on the UK, but the least it could do was to organise the covert supply of arms to enable the Catholic population to defend itself. When its plans were discovered by the British, the Lynch Government's response was to pretend that the operation was not authorised. Haughey, Captain Kelly, and two others, were brought before the courts to satisfy the British. If Haughey was the greatest politician in the last 40 years, Lynch was the worst.

There is little doubt that Haughey lied in court when he said that he knew nothing about the arms importation. However, there is a big difference between perjury by a defendant and perjury committed by a prosecution witness. Lynch and Jim Gibbon knew about the importation. About five years ago a jury member was interviewed by RTE television and he said that all of the jury at the trial were surprised that the case was brought by the Government in the first place. It was obvious to all concerned that the importation was authorised by the Government. The Government must have thought that the very fact that it was the Prosecution would be enough to intimidate the jury.

When all the defendants were acquitted, a Dail Committee was set up to investigate matters relating to the Arms Trial. One of the members of the Committee Justin Keating resigned after the Committee was refused access to Army intelligence documents. Years later Keating concluded that the Committee was designed to give the impression to the Public that the jury in the Arms Trial had got it wrong. It was, in effect, intended to overturn the verdict of the courts by political means.

It could be said that Haughey should have used the same defence as the other three defendants and said that the importation was authorised by the Government. This would have avoided the necessity to lie, but it would also have finished his political career and embarrassed the State. In my view the fact that the case was brought and then pursued was disgraceful. Jack Lynch bears the responsibility for this.

## OTHER SCANDALS

The other scandals relate to actions in Government or his personal tax affairs. Most of the governmental scandals relate to the minority Government of February

to November 1982. And most of these relate to his disastrous Justice Minister Sean Doherty. When he became an enemy of Haughey, all Doherty's sins were purged by the Haughey critics.

The most substantial scandal in that era was the tapping of Geraldine Kennedy and Bruce Arnold's phones. Nobody, not even Doherty, has claimed that Haughey authorised the taps. The most that is said is that Haughey was aware of the tapping after it was initiated and did nothing about it. Haughey denies this.

That whole era has never been dealt with adequately. Sean Doherty claimed that he was offered 50,000 pounds to overthrow Haughey (T. Ryle Dwyer, *Irish Examiner*, 2.7.05). According to *The Boss* by Peter Murtagh and Joe Joyce, Haughey's advisor Martin Mansergh believed that MI6 had been plotting against Haughey since 1979 (page 267). The other point is that the tapping of phones of journalists had been done before. Vincent Browne and Tim Pat Coogan's phones had been tapped by Fine Gael Governments, but no Fine Gael minister was ever called to account for such actions. In my view the right to privacy of journalists is not absolute, particularly if they are able to eavesdrop on Cabinet meetings in breach of the principle of Cabinet confidentiality.

Following the recent death of Doherty, there was very little attention to the bugging of Martin O Donoghue by Ray McSharry. McSharry felt it necessary to do this because of rumours that he would be offered a bribe. And, in fact, O Donoghue indicated to him that, if there were anyone who felt obligated to Haughey for financial reasons, money would be made available to release such a person from such obligations. One wonders if any capital acquisition taxes would have been paid on any such donations! At the time it was suggested that the distinction between what O' Donoghue was suggesting and a straight forward 'bribe' was a very fine one.

Other scandals relate to donations received by Haughey from wealthy businessmen. There is little or no evidence that any of this influenced policy decisions by Haughey. The 'scandal' merely amounts to Haughey's personal tax affairs. It would be interesting to know how many people would voluntarily declare a gift of a million or more pounds to the Revenue Commissioners. I suspect very few. Taxes on gifts were introduced to ensure that wealthy parents could not hand over their property to their offspring before death to avoid inheritance taxes. The McCracken

Report found that there was no evidence that any gift received influenced Haughey.

The Report also investigated payments received by Michael Lowry. In my view the tax evasion by Lowry was much more blatant since it involved evasion of income tax. McCracken also exonerates Lowry of the charge of corruption. However, in the case of Lowry the evidence is less clear-cut. It was found that he did try to influence a Fine Gael TD in Meath to drop his objections to the building of a new Dunnes Stores supermarket on the grounds that the Dunnes were generous contributors to Fine Gael. McCracken rather generously gives Lowry a clean bill of health on the grounds that there was no evidence that Ben Dunne exercised any direct influence on Lowry.

The Moriarty Tribunal found that Haughey used his influence to arrange a meeting between the Chairman of the Revenue Commissioners Seamus Pairceir and the Dunne family. The Dunne family agreed to pay 39 million pounds in taxes arising from a Family Trust. Pairceir must have been delighted that the business had been expedited and the trifling sum (in the circumstances) of 52 thousand pounds was written off relating to interest on the amount due. So, as a state official, there is no evidence that Pairceir was influenced by Haughey to give the Dunnes special treatment. All Haughey did for the Dunnes was to facilitate access to Pairceir. Sometime later after Pairceir retired he was able to advise the Dunnes as a private individual how to reduce their tax liability (it was reduced to 16 million pounds), but this had nothing to do with Haughey.

Recently, Vincent Browne revealed (*Village*, 17-23 June, 1995) that in the mid 1980s he could not gain access to Pairceir who was about to wind up the *Sunday Tribune* for tax liabilities. The Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald intervened to facilitate a meeting with Pairceir. I see nothing wrong with either FitzGerald or Haughey's actions.

#### THE LIBERAL AGENDA

Haughey has been criticised for not being a 'liberal'. But he never particularly claimed to be liberal. It was not Haughey who launched a "Constitutional Crusade" in the 1980s. In this connection there has been a re-writing of history, deliberate or otherwise, in relation to the emergence of the "Pro-Life" campaign. The impression given is that Haughey facilitated this campaign for purely electoral reasons. The facts of the matter are rather different.

The "ProLife" movement was a fringe campaign until one of the leaders of the major parties of the State signed a commitment for a constitutional amendment on abortion. But that leader was not Haughey. Haughey initially refused to sign such a pledge. It was Garret FitzGerald who was pressurised into doing so following a pro-abortion declaration by a leading Young Fine Gaeler. Once the issue had entered the realm of party politics, Haughey felt he had no option but to support the amendment to cover his conservative flank. But it was FitzGerald who opened the Pandora's box.

Haughey has also been criticised for his "*Irish solution to an Irish problem*". This allowed contraceptives to be made available for "bona fide" family planning reasons. When asked about this in recent years he replied why shouldn't the Irish have Irish solutions to Irish problems? After all the French have French solutions to French problems.

One suspects that many 'liberals' particularly in *The Irish Times* would prefer British solutions to Irish problems.

The 1979 Planning Act was a minimalist response to the Supreme Court judgement in the McGee case. But the McGee case was in 1974. The Fine Gael/Labour Coalition failed to even provide for a minimalist response before it left office in 1977.

#### CONCLUSION

The legacy of Haughey is far more substantial than any of his contemporaries. His achievements since 1979 were in the face of virulent opposition. Any examination of his flaws will have to consider the role of the media and the fact that no other politician of his time or since has received such close scrutiny.

John Martin

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# The Politics Of Criminality

## The Other 'Armed Wing' (or, Sticky Amnesia?)

The 'Official' IRA recently appeared in the Irish media in the form of a letter from Brendan Dowling (Irish Times 5.8.05). This was in response to Máirín De Burca of the Workers' Party, who had claimed that the WPI had taken "a path other than the bomb and bullet in 1969..." and asked of the Provisional IRA what the deaths had been about (30.7.05). This was a question or designed to promote the 'revisionist' image of the PIRA as criminal gunmen.

The Provis by no means did all the shooting and bombing, and emphatically did not start the shooting and bombing. The Ulster Volunteer Force started the cycle of violence in 1966, and the Defence Associations were in existence by the Summer of 1969—months before the IRA split. The IRA was under the leadership of what became the 'Official' rump.

Mr. Dowling writes of Ms De Burca's claim, "This is simply not true". He was a member of the Official IRA "up to 1977/78 (despite a supposed ceasefire called by the officials in 1974)". (He has been crudely sub-edited, or has fallen into the habit of mind fostered by the Dublin and London Governments, to the effect that 'ceasefire' equals 'capitulation': it doesn't.)

He noes some matters unwelcome in cold print by the WPI (or the current leadership of the Irish Labour Party). Including (post-ceasefire): "the Official IRA... importing AK47s... shooting and bombing the UDR and British soldiers, robbing banks... forging bank notes... punishment shootings and beatings, shooting Provos, IRSP/INLA members ...". He claims it is disrespectful to the OIRA's victims, and to the Volunteers who were killed or served long terms in prison, for Máirín De Burca to come out with baloney about a 'peaceful path'.

## Officials' 'Criminality'

Another outing for the Official IRA was in the *Belfast Telegraph*, in *The Stage Is Set For A Squalid Re-run*, by "award-winning journalist and author, Ed Moloney". He claims

"the Provos have ended up as a mirror image of their rivals, the Official IRA... [They] ended their 'armed campaign' against the British and, like the Officials,

[are involved] in criminal racketeering... on a scale that makes the Officials look like schoolboys." (There is a quotation at the foot of the page reprising the same sentiments, in 25 point Arial.)

Moloney does not make a case to go with the loud headlines: it would have been useful (including to Sinn Féin) if he had been able to point to defects in their position. (It is of no political worth to throw allegations of chicanery at Sinn Féin, especially from the Labour side of the house. In the '80s, some *IPR* people remarked that the Provis 'deserved to win' because they were able to breast the waves of nonsense which engulfed them.)

Moloney writes "...journalists who persist in trying to expose [PIRA criminality] will be isolated as... politically-motivated oddballs". He may not be 'an oddball' but Moloney is 'politically motivated'. He was one of the cabal that ran the allegedly libertarian PD (People's Democracy) in '68 / '69, when it helped bring down the Unionist 'statelet'.

He accuses "...the media in Belfast and Dublin" of ignoring Sticky criminality, but does not explain why. The WPI domination of the media was allowed because it suited a re-Anglicising establishment.

Moloney had a '60s New Left 'ideological' problem with the Brezhnevite Stickies. Now he feels "*déjà vu*" because he envisages a repeat "*on a much larger scale of one of the most disgracefully dishonest episodes in the history of the Troubles...*". This was the fiction that the OIRA had been disbanded and that the WPI "*had become entirely peaceful and constitutional*", while involved "*in all sorts of criminal activity*". This might shock some WPI voters; but nobody in the Northern Catholic community, or *IPR* readers anywhere. Twenty years ago Eddie McGrady, SDLP MP for Down South, told De Rossa to "*get the Official IRA off the building sites*" before daring to attack the SDLP's credentials. This was at a WPI sideshow at the (British) Labour Party Conference. The 'rinky-dinks' are still stealing money out of building workers' wages.

Moloney claims the IRA will not be disbanded, and that "*those involved in lucrative cross-border smuggling, counterfeiting, cigarette sales, robberies and the like will [not] give it up...*".

Moreover "*the IRA's chiefs smuggler... the IRA Chief of Staff...*" will not be put out of business "*for fear of weakening Gerry Adams*". Presumably the allusion to "*robberies and the like*", hardly the most precise phrase, refers to the Northern Bank 'heist'. We know the PIRA did it because a Big Peeler told us. There have since been two money robberies in the Republic, using exactly the same *modus operandi*, but they were not PIRA operations (a Big Guard said so). Moloney's article flounders about in innuendo and partial interpretation of facts (such as they are.)

Cross-border smuggling will go on until the border is rendered meaningless in commercial terms. Borders incite people to smuggle. The RUC did not excite itself about the odd bit of smuggling, or even quite widespread smuggling. It was guns and the makings of bombs that they tried to stop. The Dublin Government, when the Irish pound took a dip in comparison to Sterling in the 1980s and '90s got anxious about the border, which was crossed by large quantities of 'white goods' without benefit of taxman.

The "*IRA's Chief of Staff*" may stop his (alleged) large-scale smuggling, if the Army Council so orders him. His successors may not be as organised and peaceable. The crooks running such scams will use guns on rivals, the police, and the public, at will. The range of goods smuggled will grow: drugs like cocaine and heroin will cross and re-cross the border to the great enrichment of people who just want to be rich. Mr. Moloney lives in inner south Belfast, and must have some inkling of what a free market in heavy 'drugs' would be like. A Belfast pub called the Waterfront was burned down over drug dealing in 1991.

Social disaster will come in the train of widespread addiction to 'hard' drugs; family break up, violent theft to 'feed the habit', physical degeneration and degeneration of drug-users' environment—from their own living space to whole districts, which become unpoliceable. The latter may sound interestingly anarchic, but this sort of situation is appalling for those unable to escape: young families, the old, the halt and lame, the unemployed, and the underpaid (the working class in Old Labour language).

The IRA is not a band of angels, but it has a grip on how society functions, and it clearly wants society to function as a reasonably pleasant place for the great majority of its components. It has taken (possibly over-)drastic action in regard to 'drug dealers'. But small-time drug dealers only want to be big-time drug dealers.

There are fortunes to be made for comparatively little outlay, especially if guns and 'muscle' are already available. This analysis is not starry-eyed about the IRA, or Sinn Féin. However, if the former dealt in drugs in the manner of the UDA, the vote for Sinn Féin would collapse. They would be exposed as hypocrites on a level even lower than the Stickies. They would fall that much further—the whole Republican project would go down with them.

Ed Moloney nowhere in this article gives any indication that Sinn Féin or the IRA have become cynical. That would be the only explanation of what he asserts: that the IRA is a (relatively) respectable pseudo-political front for criminality.

(A sub-theme in this sort of writing is that the IRA is incompetent—thus stealing useless local Northern Ireland plastic money from the Northern Bank. But the IRA would have known of the convertibility problem in relation to Northern Bank notes. The Provos are not portrayed as incompetent in other fields of money-raising. It seems any accusation will do to stop people voting for Sinn Féin.)

A political problem for their detractors is that Sinn Féin representatives at all levels have been energetic in pursuing the interests of their constituents: the way Fianna Fáil used to be, but with a sharper social analysis, they are behaving like an actual workers' party.

### Moloney in America

Ed Moloney's rant was in the *Belfast Telegraph* on 5th August, another was in the *International Herald Tribune* (6.8.05). This was headlined *Purge The Thugs*. The first four paragraphs underline the fact that the declaration was "cost free", in that the IRA has not exchanged shots with the "British security forces" since mid-1997. He goes on to claim that "IRA activity" has "pitched" the Peace Process from crisis to crisis, and that the IRA did not suggest it was going to disband or to cease recruitment. The implications of what he writes is that the IRA should wind itself up—the cry of an honest man, the unwary reader might think.

In the next paragraph he writes that the IRA stole "more than \$50 million from a Belfast bank", and that "IRA members killed Robert McCartney". Apparently that is why they were forced to make their statement. This is a lie, and is a disgraceful attempt to bamboozle the American public. As is his assertion that "continued IRA activity" destroyed the Peace Process for the Protestant community, and "made its political leaders reluctant to... share power with Sinn Fein".

The next accusation is that Sinn Fein piled up their vote by accusing "the Protestants" of bigotry—it seems that the party has "seats in the London, Dublin, Belfast and European Parliaments"—just because the Catholic community (nowhere mentioned as such in this short article) has, presumably recently, discovered that Ulster Unionism is, in the cliché, 'close to' the Orange Order.

In Moloney's article Sinn Fein reflects the IRA, rather than represent large numbers of the Irish electorate. And it is opposed to 'the Protestant community' rather than the Unionist parties. But that does not explain why Catholics elect Shinners to parliamentary institutions outside Northern Ireland. One of their two MEPs sits for the Dublin Euro-seat: did she get elected because Dublin's working classes have a chip on their collective shoulder about Unionism? And how about Dáil Éireann and Westminster? The notion is simply absurd. Moloney is being too clever by half here. He ought not to have mentioned Sinn Féin's electoral success.

When he gets on to "racketeering", Moloney mentions "140 paramilitary-associated criminal gangs", but only names the IRA. He reiterates his assertion that "paramilitary racketeering" has not been "moved against" because Blair and Ahern do not want to stir up trouble in the Republican movement, and lose Adams as its main spokesperson. (And the Sinn Fein leader is clearly the object of a jibe about "luxury vacation houses in Ireland ..."—but the house he built in Donegal was with money from the sale of some of his books. Royalties from the first lot (four or five) went to Republican welfare groups.)

The Official IRA does not get an outing here, nor does the alphabet soup of the other Unionist paramilitaries.

Danny Morrison wrote an article in *Daily Ireland* about the decommissioning of the IRA's arms. It suggests that Northern Ireland is a very dangerous place, where Unionist armies think they can kill and injure, and 'evacuate' Catholics from the towns and villages of east Ulster with impunity. It may be that the stabbing to death of Tom Devlin, in nice, middle-class, leafy, Somerton Road, is a dreadful swansong of raw sectarianism. It may also be the start of a new cycle of assassinations.

Ed Moloney has told a Goebbels-like Big Lie in his article about the sectarian realities in Northern Ireland. He is duty bound to rectify this if he is to be taken seriously as a journalist.

Seán McGouran

## UCD Symposium On De Valera

This extensive event in early September was to commemorate the 30th anniversary of de Valera's death. Your reporter only attended for the contributions of Peter Hart and John Regan. Hart made some very sensible points about the deterioration of the relationship between de Valera and Collins, saying amongst other things, that de Valera's decision not to go to London—up to the point of the last Cabinet meeting, after which he said he should have gone—was perfectly reasonable. Hart seems to have set out to restore Dev's reputation as against the anti-Dev vitriol of Tim Pat Coogan's *Collins*. Collins's apparent resentment of de Valera was based in part on what Hart called de Valera's failure of leadership at the last Cabinet meeting. However, he undid the good work by saying that Collins's decision to sign the Treaty was in effect made in a fit of pique. John Regan very correctly pointed out that an entirely psychologically-based reading of the situation is inadequate, and said that the British Government may have been trying to create a rift between Collins and de Valera for several months beforehand. Hart had said that the British knew very little about Collins before the treaty negotiations, etc., which is astonishing for someone who is supposed to have some knowledge of the state of British intelligence in Ireland.

Manus O'Riordan in an intervention concentrated on the Civil War issue and the assumption that for or against the Free State determined democratic credentials. One could not leave out Britain's threat of "immediate and terrible war" and therefore one could not question Mellows's democratic credentials when he said the Free State vote was not the will of the Irish people but the fear of the Irish people.

He said that historians were strangely absolving Collins of IRB murders carried out in the consolidation of the Free State (the same historians who so freely accuse him of so many murders during the War of Independence!). Thus we have Harry Boland's killing still presented as an accident (O'Riordan's quarrel with David Fitzpatrick), when we know it was not an inexperienced soldier who shot him, but an IRB Centre. Indeed, little regard is being taken of the 'Dublin City Bus Tour' that the severely wounded Boland was taken on, first up to Portobello Barracks, now home as well as HQ of Collins, to be viewed and inspected, before far too belatedly receiving any hospital care at all.



Addressing Hart, he said he didn't know if his new Collins biography still held to his previous absolution (Hart smiled but made no effort to reply, suggesting it does) of Collins for the killing of Sir Henry Wilson. Such absolution was not credible, because such a staunch Collins man as General Joe Sweeney would not have been lying when he said that Collins had told him that it was done on his orders. Historians were not accepting the implications of this particular pursuit of an IRB strategy. First, the IRB killing of Wilson as part of its involvement in the separate Northern War; then the receipt by Collins of all the British military hardware required to punish and crush the anti-Treatyites for Wilson's death—the guilty Collins punishing the innocent! As usual, O'Riordan had posed the most pertinent questions of the session.

**'Up Dev!'**

#### Letter To Editor

## Das Kapital—A Belated Comment

John Martin correctly highlights a cult of inevitability as a weakness of many Marxists (July issue, p22). But Marx himself emphasised that human society is not pre-determined but develops from how we perceive our economy, how we generate ideals based on these perceptions and organise around these beliefs (in classes, tribes, nations, etc.). In this sense he was closer to Burrage's 'modern' science (June issue p16), to Einstein's Relativity or Heisenberg's Uncertainty where the observer's point of view must be accounted as affecting the reality described.

For instance capitalism generates growing belief in equality by putting a market price on everything (labour power, products, land, etc.). This creates social relations similar to those of poker players or sportsmen: they may compete strongly but they occupy a level playing field so they gain respect for each other (e.g. Apartheid Rugby and 1950s lily-white American baseball teams instinctively knew that if black players were allowed it would massively encourage racial equality)—Kings, women, immigrants—their custom is equally welcome in the market place!

Of course in contradiction to the demand for equality capitalist owners still suck surplus value from those who must sell their labour power. That dynamite contradiction caused for instance the Chartist crisis in the 1850s when through

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### Na Creatuiri Bochta Gallda

The following is a translation of the poem which appeared last month

Is e seo dan a chum me le deanaigh ar abhar athsgrudaithe staire na hEireann agus nosanna nua na haigne ghallda ata ag teacht in Eirinn le deanaigh.

Cad a dheanfaidhmuid feasta gan oiglaigh./ What will we do in future without soldiers  
O cuireadh na gunnaigh faoi chlar?/ Since the guns were buried?  
An bhfuil tracht ar O Duibhir I gCill Manntain/ Is O'Dwyer ever mentioned in Wicklow  
Na'r Choilean I mBeal Atha na mBlath?/ Or Collins in Bealnablath?  
Na laochraí a sheasuigh an la linn/ Where are the warriors who stood up with us  
Nuair a thuirling Clann Luther ar tra;/ when Luthers mob landed on our shores,  
Thug omos a's dilseacht do'n Phapa/ Who gave their respect and loyalty to the Pope  
Agus drochmheas do'n Eiriceach thall./ And nothing but contempt to the Heretic in England.

Cad a dheanfaidhmuid feasta gan sagairt?/ What will we do in future without priests  
Nil fonn ar na stocaigh do'n chleir./ Teenage boys aren't interested in the church.  
Ta call aca laithreach sa chulghort/ They have an urgent appointment in the back field  
Le gioraigh tointarnocht' san fhear./ With barearsed teenage girls in the hay.  
Ce leighfidh an Leabhar duinn De Domhnaigh/ Who'll read the Holy Book on Sunday  
'dTigh 'n Aifrin ar leitir an chnuic?/ In our Masshouse on the side of the hill?  
Ce maithfidh sa bhocsa ar bpeacaigh?/ Who'll forgive our sins in the confessional?  
"Abair Paidir a's Deichniur, a mhic!"/ "Say an Our Father and ten Hail Marys, my son!"

Cad a dheanfaidhmuid feasta gan eigse?/ What will we do in future without poets?  
Nil rann anois sgríobhtha fiú faic./ There isn't a verse being written worth piss.  
Beowulf I reim imBeal Ath' Aoidh/ Beowulf's in charge in Bellaghy (Heaney's town)  
A Pheist dortadh orainn cnuic caic./ His Worm pouring mountains of shite down on us.  
Shakespeare le "Fwat ish my nation?"/ (Take) Shakespeare and his "Fwat ish my nation?"  
Broim Beckett, yuc Yeatsach comh maith/ Becket's fart, Yeat's yuck as well  
Slog siar iad sa scornach go doimhin./ Swallow them deep in the back of your throat  
Bronnfar Nobels anuas ort seacht saith./ You'll be awarded your seven fills of Nobels.

Cad a dheanfaidhmuid feasta gan fíorghaeil?/ What'll we do without the real Irish?  
Siol Eibhir a dibirt thar lear/ The children of Eibhir being dumped overseas  
An Glas Gort a dingeadh le bruscair/ the Green Field being stuffed with rubbish  
O Mhalainn go Conndae a' Clar./ From Malin Head to County Clare.  
Slán le fear bainte na mona!/ Farewell to the man who could cut turf!  
Slán leis an fhear chuireas tuighe!/ Farewell to the man who could thatch a house!  
Slán le fear silte na heorna.../ Farewell to the man who could still the barley!  
A' 's cead slán leatsa, Eire, a chroidhe./ And a hundred farewells to my darling Ireland.

**Liam Mac I Shearcaigh ©**

corn law reform and then imperialism the ruling class just managed to find cheap sources of food and raw materials to assuage workers' demands for equality. Again after the sideshow of two world wars the crisis of the 1960s developed which Thatcher finally diverted by allowing manufacturing to go abroad (previously of course e.g. India had to send its raw cotton to Britain and buy back manufactured textiles). So the crisis was defused (now a worker in the West still may sell 8 hours labour and be paid for only 4 hours—but that worker can with those 4 hours pay buy a product containing possibly 16 hours of technologically advanced labour in Chinese manufactured goods—see I. Kenna June p15). So this worker winds up with a 'profit' of 8 hours labour power, and so is sort of 'middle class', exploited but also exploiting. Work

(where exploitation is suffered) is seen as negative in our Western world but shopping is the new delight because there the chips are cashed in, 'exploitation' by the western worker is actually realised. Consumerism flourishes!

In the 2 mentioned capitalist crises gains were won in social equality—after 1850 particularly in education and electoral reform, and after the 1960s in race, women's children's, gay rights—in fact we must in our laws be the most egalitarian society ever! But with capitalism now global, can the next crisis—when Asian workers demand equality with western workers—be solved by capitalism (a world minimum wage of 1 Euro/hour would be a great start to Kenna's ideal)—and can it be solved before western consumerism through global warming destroys our planet?

**Jim Dixon (Cork)**

# Sprechen Sie Dáil

A week after the officially accepted announcement of the IRA's decision to achieve its aims by purely political and democratic means, on 5th August 2005, the *Irish Times* carried an article by Gerry Adams. That article contained an unarguable statement of fact beside the expression of a legitimate aspiration. Adams wrote:

"The Taoiseach has given a commitment that MPs elected in the Six Counties will be able to speak in the Dáil. As MP for West Belfast I should have the same right to speak on the Rosspoint Five in Co. Mayo, or homelessness in Dublin, or drug problems in Limerick as Michael McDowell or Dermot Ahern have to speak on issues in Belfast or Derry. We want to see this done with all speed."

Adams did not claim that the Taoiseach had given a commitment that he would have the right to speak in the Dáil on those internal matters, he just expressed a reasonable wish that someday he should be able to do.

Immediately all the usual suspects went into overdrive, conflating the statement of fact with the aspiration to produce a storm of misdirection and misrepresentation.

The very same issue of the *Irish Times* published an article by its Chief Political Correspondent, Mark Brennock, which contained Ahern's denial that he had ever given any such commitment:

"...a spokesman of the Taoiseach indicated last night that Mr Ahern's commitment was considerably less than this, and that he did not envisage northern MPs speaking in plenary Dáil sessions.

"While not commenting directly on Mr Adams' assertion, the spokesman said Mr Ahern would seek to pursue an arrangement whereby Northern Ireland MPs would be invited to attend Oireachtas committees to discuss matters relating to Northern Ireland and the Belfast Agreement.

"Ultimately, the spokesman said, this was a matter for the Oireachtas itself to decide after discussions between the parties. The spokesman said Mr Ahern had spoken of such a system in the Dáil last December and had said it "would not involve the granting of any rights or privileges, and there would be no constitutional implications or question of cutting across the architecture and operation of the Good Friday agreement".

Two days later on August 7th the *Sunday Independent* was claiming in an editorial that Adams had referred in his article to a commitment given in a private meeting between himself and Ahern. It commented:

"One of these contradictory accounts must be wrong. Either Mr Ahern or Mr Adams left that private meeting with a completely inaccurate impression of what was discussed and what was agreed.

"This indicates either disingenuousness or duplicity on the part of one, the other or both of them. Whoever is to blame, it should not be happening. It is not the way affairs of State should be handled."

In the same issue of the *Sunday Independent*, Bruce Arnold's lapdog, John A. Murphy, rushed to condemn any concession to the northern component of the nation's right to a role, however understated, in the political life of the nation:

"What Gerry Adams brazenly demands is unconstitutional. Bunreacht na hÉireann clearly limits its jurisdiction to the 26-county area. Admitting Northern MPs to the Oireachtas would amount to representation without taxation. More important, such a step would violate the spirit and the letter of the Belfast Agreement. In this fences-rushing move towards an embryonic all-Ireland parliament, SF contemptuously flouts the basic principle of the requirement of Northern majority consent for any change to the constitutional status quo."

Now the commitment to which Gerry Adams referred in his article was one which the Taoiseach gave publicly in the Dáil, while being questioned by Sinn Féin TD, Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, on 13th May 2003. The exchange between Ahern and Ó Caoláin will be reproduced below along with the 2002 recommendation of the all-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution to which their remarks were substantially addressed. That should clear up the confusion which, having originated in malicious misrepresentation in the press, was compounded by the statement of an anonymous Sinn Féin source, claimed by the *Irish Times* to be Gerry Adams' "chief spokesman". The SF spokesman's statement appeared in the *Irish Times* on 9th August 2005:

"Mr Adams is on holidays but his chief spokesman yesterday confirmed

that the Taoiseach was correct.

"He confirmed that the Taoiseach's offer referred to addressing Dáil committees rather than the Dáil itself.

"Mr Adams's spokesman indicated the 'confusion' may have arisen over the fact that on occasion Oireachtas committees meet in the Dáil chamber and that Northern MPs could possibly speak at such a committee gathering.

"Perhaps Gerry wasn't qualified enough in what he wrote or didn't explain himself enough", he said.

"That said, we are still seeking speaking rights in the Dáil. We are happy enough that the offer on committees is a step in the right direction but we will be looking for full speaking rights", he added".

Next day, in response to waters that had already been muddied, wells that had previously been poisoned, the *Irish Times* published a typically anti-national editorial:

"The acknowledgment by Sinn Féin that its president, Gerry Adams, was mistaken in saying the Taoiseach, Mr Ahern, had given him a commitment that their MPs, elected in Northern Ireland, would be entitled to speak in the Dáil, is to be welcomed. That clarification will reassure unionist politicians that the constitutional framework of the Belfast Agreement remains intact. And concerns on both sides of the Border that the Government entered into secret side-deals with Sinn Féin, in advance of an IRA commitment to end all paramilitary and criminal activity, will diminish.

"It is difficult to understand why Mr Adams misrepresented the situation, last week, in an article published in this newspaper...

"The fact that three days were allowed to elapse before Mr Adams, through a spokesman, acknowledged his misunderstanding of the situation suggests an element of political gamesmanship. Last year, when a deal appeared likely, the Taoiseach told the Dáil he was prepared to recommend that Northern MPs should be invited to attend committee meetings when they were discussing matters relating to Northern Ireland or the Belfast Agreement. It would, however, be up to the Oireachtas to make that decision. And there was no question of MPs being given a right to address the Dáil in plenary session.

"This matter had been under discussion for years. And there was never any hint that those Sinn Féin MPs who refused to take their seats at Westminster would be granted an automatic audience in the Dáil. There was certainly no question—as Mr Adams had it—of their being given quasi-ministerial licence to speak on controversial issues such as major construction projects, drug abuse

and social housing in this State... “

There was in fact more than a “*hint*” of a long overdue acknowledgment of the North’s right to a place in the political assembly of that Irish nation of which it is the once and future vanguard. That is in the recommendation of the *All-party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution* to which Taoiseach Ahern committed himself in the Dáil on May 13th., 2003. But of that, more later. In the meantime . . .

Sinn Féin’s Dáil leader, Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, replied to the farrago of misrepresentation (which an anonymous Sinn Féin source had foolishly appeared to endorse) with a letter to the *Irish Times* which was published on August 13th. It is a letter which is both polite and politic. Ahern is thrown a bone and let down lightly to drool over it. In addition to some other matters his acquiescence, if not his active goodwill, will be required by Sinn Féin in coming weeks as the IRA attempts, in the face of Unionist intransigence, finally to completely disarm. So, while the facts of the matter are adequately clarified, the politics of the matter, in a manner most politic, are understated to Ahern’s advantage. This magazine does not have any reason to be polite or politic in respect of the Taoiseach. We will not understate the politics of the matter when we come to the recommendation of the All-party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution to which Taoiseach Ahern committed himself. But of that, more later. In the meantime . . .

Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin wrote:

“Your editorial of August 10th, ‘Sinn Féin and the Dáil’, contained a string of misrepresentations. Let me make clear the Sinn Féin position on Six-County representation in the Dáil.

“We are working towards an All-Ireland Dáil, representative of 32 Counties and with jurisdiction over the whole island. Obviously, for that to happen, British rule in the North will have to come to an end. Does that mean nothing should be done in the meantime? Certainly not.

“Following the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, Taoiseach Bertie Ahern asked the All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution to examine the issue of Northern representation. It took the committee until 2002 to report. It looked at a range of options. It recommended that MPs from the Six Counties would have ‘a limited right of audience within the Dáil’. This ‘might technically be effected

through the Dáil periodically forming itself into a Committee of the Whole House for the purposes of selected debates’. MPs would ‘speak in periodic debates on Northern Ireland matters and on the operation of the Good Friday Agreement’.

“At no time did Sinn Féin state that such a facility would be open only to Sinn Féin MPs, as your Editorial suggested. Clearly SDLP members would avail of it and while unionists, initially, would be unlikely to participate, their attendance would be especially welcome.

“The Taoiseach has committed himself and his Government to taking forward the committee’s recommendations. The Government parties and Fine Gael voted for a Dáil motion in these terms in 2003, even though Fine Gael leader Enda Kenny is now rubbishing the idea of Six-County representation in the Dáil (Michael Collins must be turning in his grave)...

“The Sinn Féin president’s original comment in the *Irish Times* article is as correct as the Taoiseach’s follow-up comment. The Taoiseach has given a commitment for Northern MPs to speak in the Dáil, albeit on Dáil Committees as opposed to plenary sessions of the Dáil. That, in anybody’s book, is still speaking in the Dáil. If others wish to split hairs on the issue in pursuit of a story that doesn’t exist, then that is a matter for themselves... “

And so to the meat of the matters in hand.

First, the Taoiseach’s public commitment to the All-Party Oireachtas Committee’s recommendation on Northern representatives having speaking rights in Dáil Éireann. We have quoted this exchange before and will no doubt quote it again in days to come. It may not be politic to do so. It is political.

At Question Time in the Dail on Tuesday, 13 May 2003, Taoiseach Bertie Ahern was answering questions on among other things the “Committee on the Constitution”. Sinn Fein TD, Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, asked the following question and received the following reply:—

*Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin:*—“Focusing on another area of the work of the All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution, I wish to ask the Taoiseach if he recognises that following the unilateral suspension of the Assembly elections by the British Government, people in the Six Counties have no democratic forum to which to send their representatives? What steps are being taken by the Taoiseach to pursue the

recommendations of the All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution regarding access for elected MPs in the Six Counties’ constituencies to the Houses of the Oireachtas? I missed the Taoiseach’s initial response to the questions so may I ask whether changes envisaged in order to accommodate these important steps require constitutional change through referenda or whether, as I and others believe, such changes might not be necessary and that what is required is a decision by the Taoiseach and his Cabinet to allow for the facilitation? Will the Taoiseach recognise the importance of filling the current vacuum and allowing northern elected MPs the opportunity to have rights of attendance and rights of participation in specific debates accommodated at the earliest opportunity?”

*The Taoiseach:*—“Some of these issues may ultimately require constitutional amendments but others do not. **The All-Party Committee on the Constitution set out what could be done in regard to the right of audience and the right to participate in debates in this House. There was an all-party agreement on that early last year. The Government agreed to that. I have since asked party leaders for their views on the matter. The Government is in favour of the right of MEPS to attend and participate in committee debates on the EU and for Northern Ireland elected representatives to participate in debates on the Good Friday Agreement and other relevant debates.** Some of those mechanisms can be put in place if there is agreement in the House.

“On the more long-term issue, the all-party committee raised the issue of Seanad Éireann. That will be further developed when a report is published later this year on the long-term position and that has my support. As soon as there is agreement in the House, I am prepared to move on those issues.”

*Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin:*—“Will the Taoiseach take ownership of this matter?”

*The Taoiseach:*—“Yes, most certainly.”

The striking emphasis there is of course mine. And let this be emphasised again (and again and as often as may be required):

**“The Government is in favour of the right of MEPS to attend and participate in committee debates on the EU and for Northern Ireland elected representatives to participate in debates on the Good Friday Agreement and other relevant debates.”**

In May 2003 Mr. Ahern and his Government were in favour of MEPs having the right to attend committee debates, specifically “*committee debates on the EU*”. At the same time there is no mention of committees in respect of Northern Ireland elected representatives participating “*in debates on the Good Friday Agreement and other relevant debates*”. What the Taoiseach committed his government to in that respect was the recommendation of the All-Party Committee on the Constitution. So what did the All-Party Committee recommend?

First of all it should be noted that the Committee was at that time composed of the following eight TDs and four senators: Brian Lenihan, TD (FF), chairman  
Jim O’Keeffe, TD (FG), vice-chairman  
Brendan Daly, TD (FF)  
Thomas Enright, TD (FG)  
Séamus Kirk, TD (FF)  
Derek McDowell, TD (LAB)  
Marian McGennis, TD (FF)  
Liz McManus, TD (LAB)  
Senator Denis O’Donovan (FF)  
Senator Fergus O’Dowd (FG)  
Senator Kathleen O’Meara (LAB)  
Senator John Dardis (PD)

In that it was and is a typical Parliamentary Committee as these are constituted by the Dáil. It has twelve members, four of whom are Senators. The current Committee on Agriculture and Food, chaired by Fianna Fáil’s Deputy Johnny Brady has fifteen members. It looks like four of them are Senators and are members only of the Joint Committee unlike the TDs who are members of both the Select and Joint aspects of the Committee. On Thursday, 25th March 2004, twelve of the Senators and TDs of the Joint Committee had a meeting at which they took evidence from Mr. John Sadlier and Mr. Tim Morris from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Mr. Michael O’Donovan and Mr. Matthew Sinnott from the Department of Agriculture and Food. That was this Dáil Committee behaving as a Dáil Committee, like any other. Please bear that in mind. It is important to remember what a Dáil Committee is, and how it operates.

The All-Party Committee on the Constitution reported on the relevant phase of its work in 2002. The foreword to the Report stated:

“Following the conclusion of the Good Friday Agreement, the Taoiseach asked the committee to examine “how people living in Northern Ireland might play a more active part in national political life”. The committee considered

that this issue and the cognate issue of emigrant participation in our political institutions could be dealt with most effectively in the context of these Articles.”

The issue of emigrant participation is “*cognate*” only in an altogether abstract sense that is infinitely remote from the practical political import of the Northern issue. The chapter in which both issues are considered, Chapter 4—*Northern Ireland and emigrant participation in national political life*—is really two chapters and is in fact laid out as such with the consideration of Northern Representation coming first, followed by a recommendation, followed by an entirely separate discussion of emigrant issues with its own separate recommendation. The chapter begins:

“Immediately after the conclusion of the Good Friday Agreement, the Taoiseach requested the All-Party Committee to consider the question of the participation of people from Northern Ireland in national political life. The committee has taken the view that the issues involved cannot be considered fully and satisfactorily in isolation from its wider remit, and accordingly has decided to approach them in the context of its examination of the Constitution’s provisions on the National Parliament.”

The discussion throughout is dominated by the Committee’s strongly expressed agreement with the SDLP’s submission that—

“...the “broadest possible interpretation” should be taken of the question put to the committee, and emphasised that “national political life” should not, particularly in the context of the new beginning brought about by the Good Friday Agreement, be defined purely as occurring within Southern institutions.

“It pointed out that “that part of Irish national life which persists in Northern Ireland and over which the Assembly and its Executive will exercise devolved powers will be the responsibility of representatives from both ... traditions”.

“Secondly, “involvement in the wider national political life will be made a reality through the North/South Ministerial Council”. The SDLP also underscored the potential value of two other possible institutions to which the Agreement requires that consideration be given: a joint North/South parliamentary forum which would involve members of the Oireachtas and members of the Assembly and an independent consultative forum “representative of civil society, comprising the social partners and other

members with expertise in social, cultural, economic and other issues”.”

It was still just about possible, in 2002, to believe that such a future as is outlined in those paragraphs might somehow, someday, come to pass. Sinn Féin was not then and is not now, for politic rather than political reasons, prepared to state the plain fact of that future: that it is a fantasy. In consequence, the Committee’s recommendation on Northern participation in national political life is over-determined by wishful thinking and formulated in great measure by way of understatement. It still recommends much more than the Taoiseach is presently willing to admit to. Yet it is still the scenario to which he has publicly committed himself and his Government to work towards (to put it mildly). And this is, in its entirety that Recommendation of the All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution.

“There should be no change in the franchise for Dáil elections.

“The committee acknowledges that the immediate emphasis of the Sinn Féin submission, in particular, is on the possibility that Northern Ireland Westminster MPs might have a limited right of audience within the Dáil. This would not require a constitutional amendment, and might technically be effected through the Dáil periodically forming itself into a Committee of the Whole House for the purposes of selected debates, most obviously for instance on Northern Ireland matters and on the operation of the Good Friday Agreement. The frequency and organisation of such debates could easily be altered as no constitutional amendment is required over time, in the light of experience.

“We accept that any addition to the Dáil of participants, even if temporary and non-voting, other than those elected from constituencies within this state, could be held to be inconsistent with the thrust of our approach. We also accept that any participation in the Dáil by Northern representatives might potentially run the risk of opening up basic constitutional issues settled in the Good Friday Agreement. However, we think that in this case those risks are relatively mild and should be kept in perspective. The expertise and experience upon which Northern MPs could draw could certainly enhance the quality of certain important Dáil debates. Such an initiative would be strongly welcomed by certain Northern representatives and their supporters, and would address the continuing desire of many nationalists for further concrete expression of their Irish identity and their membership of the wider national family. The Dáil could consider taking

the necessary procedural steps to allow MPs elected for Northern Ireland constituencies to speak in periodic debates on Northern Ireland matters and on the operation of the Good Friday Agreement. The committee is of the view that any such participation should take place on a cross-community basis with parity of esteem for the different communities in Northern Ireland.

“An alternative which is worth considering is that ministers in the Northern Ireland Executive, and perhaps also members of the Assembly, might be invited instead of or as well as Westminster MPs. However, on reflection this is a more problematic option. The numbers involved might be much greater, which would cause practical difficulties. More particularly, drawing upon those serving in institutions established by the Agreement, and especially ministers, might be held more directly to cut across the balance within the Agreement, and lines of accountability and reporting, above all in relation to the North/South institutions. For that reason we would prefer the involvement of MPs from Westminster, which is also a sister sovereign legislature.”

Clearly the Committee’s recommendation goes well beyond the Taoiseach’s currently preferred option of Northern representatives addressing Dáil Committees, like the fifteen-member Dáil Committee on Agriculture and Food. A similar fifteen- or even twenty-member *Commit-*

*tee on The North And How To Have Nothing Much To Do With It* simply does not square with the All-Party Committee’s recommendation that there is nothing preventing the Dáil “*periodically forming itself into a Committee of the Whole House for the purposes of selected debates, most obviously for instance on Northern Ireland matters and on the operation of the Good Friday Agreement*”. That extraordinary scenario is now the bottom line of any set of proposals for realising the Taoiseach’s declared aim of increasing the participation of Northerners in the political life of the nation.

As a politic first step it may be enough to be getting on with. As a matter of politics it begs the question: why should it be necessary for the Dáil to periodically perform this extraordinary feat of forming itself into a Committee of the Whole House? Why not go the extra distance, little and all as it is? And politically the projected institutions of the Good Friday Agreement are no longer a complicating factor in the argument.

When Sinn Féin’s reasons for maintaining its polite stance of the moment towards the Taoiseach have been exhausted, and its stance towards him has been repoliticised, the Recommendation of the All-Party Committee is one weapon it will still have very much to hand in the struggles to come. We very much look forward to that one being dropped on Dublin.

**Joe Keenan**

According to Mr. Duffy there is no need for Northern representatives to have seats and voting rights in the Dáil for them to immediately acquire overwhelming influence in that assembly:

“In reality, actually holding a seat and so a vote is not that important. The Dáil is rarely little more than a rubber stamp” (Irish Times, 13.8.05).

Northern representatives will immediately dominate the proceedings because of who they are:

“Send the big guns of Gerry Adams MP, Martin McGuinness MP and others into Leinster House and their Oireachtas parliamentary party would jump from Division Three to Premier Division overnight.”

Those northerners are *pezzo novanti* to be sure, ninety calibre big-shots to beat the band. So keep them out for goodness sake. Spare us our mediocrity and save the rubber stamp!

Oh well, as reasons for setting claustrophobic bounds to the march of a nation go, that’s as good as any the anti-national *Irish Times* and its stable of historians and political commentators have come up with yet. And there’s more:

“Giving a right to participate in the Irish parliament to people who hold offices not recognised in Bunreacht na hÉireann, who weren’t elected in elections regulated by Irish law, and who were chosen to belong to an entirely different parliament by people not registered to vote in elections in the Republic, would be a constitutional revolution.”

Actually it wouldn’t be a constitutional revolution. The constitutional revolution is the set of proposals which will sooner rather than later be put to a constitutional referendum if the All-Party Committee’s recommendation is set aside. Jim Duffy can’t recognise that or has to mask his recognition of it because he either hasn’t read or has had to forget the All-Party Committee’s 2002 Report.

The point is that a modest right of audience exercised before a Dáil which has constituted itself into a committee of the whole House is the least the Southern political establishment feels it can get away with; precisely because, extraordinary and all as it is, it does not require a referendum to allow it to be enacted. And Sinn Féin will, at the moment at least, accept it.

If what Sinn Féin will currently accepts

## Storm In A Rubber Stamp

In its editorial (August 10th., 2005) attacking the heretical notion of Northern representatives having a right to speak in Dáil Éireann debates on matters which concern the lives and livelihoods of their constituents *The Irish Times* failed to mention, not even once in an off-hand kind of way ‘for the record don’t you know’, let alone quote, the All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution whose 2002 Report is the core and context of the whole issue.

Nonetheless it claimed, “*It is difficult to understand why Mr Adams misrepresented the situation...*”. In fact all the misrepresentation was all its own (as explained in *Do You Speak Dáil*).

Not too surprising then that when, three days later, it carried a leading article

attacking the heretical notion, that leading article also failed entirely to mention let alone quote the All-Party Committee Report. Entitled *Adams In Dáil Could Have The Status Of A British Peer* this leading article was written by Jim Duffy of whom I know nothing whatsoever except that he is probably not misrepresented by his employer which describes him as “*a historian and political commentator*”.

Quite what that description entails is anyone’s guess, and anyway who really cares? A historian and political commentator who either doesn’t know about, or is careful to suppress any knowledge he might have about the central fact of his subject, is probably not capable of bearing much further scrutiny.

is denied it, it will immediately up the *ante* and a constitutional amendment to allow full membership for representatives of Northern constituencies will be tabled. If the Southern forty-five calibre droop-shots didn't think such an amendment would be carried, we wouldn't be hearing about the lesser, extraordinarily awkward, proposal. Face it Jim Duffy, Bertie is trying to avert a constitutional revolution! Can you really imagine him entertaining the Committee's recommendation otherwise?

But there's more:

"It would raise other practical issues...If they wish to participate in debates they would need office facilities in Leinster House, and secretarial facilities, all of which would have to be paid for by taxpayers who would find themselves paying for politicians they did not elect and could not fire."

Jim Duffy should really have added that the Southern taxpayers, God Bless Them Every One, have enough to put up with paying compensation to various groups of victims of the current administration. Mac MickDowell's vendetta against the McBreartys is going to cost a pretty penny (should that be a cute cent in these Eurodays?) when all the eighty-odd cases have been heard and the awards totted up. And then there's the Tribunals, notorious monuments to good government that they are. Bequeathed to future generations by the holier than thou and not ashamed to shout about it in bygone days PDs. Comment on the cost of that, why don't you, Jim?

And wouldn't you know there'd be more:

"Giving speaking rights would also affect the Belfast Agreement. For one party, for its own benefit, and to further its own agenda, unilaterally to demand a right for some of its members to participate in a parliament they had not been elected to, would hardly embody the cross-party, cross-community consensus that is supposed to be at the heart of the agreement. Saying that other parties' MPs could if they wish do the same, when it knows on principle they would not want to, would be no excuse."

Unilateral is a fine word which is not in the least undermined by using it in its most obscure sense of multilateral. Parse those two sentences and this is what you get. Sinn Féin is demanding that it alone of all the northern parties along with all the other northern parties should have a right of audience in Dáil Éireann. I mean really. Jim Duffy, you should be ashamed of yourself.

The DUP and UUP will not currently avail themselves of speaking rights in the Dáil. I don't know that the unionist Alliance Party has committed itself one way or the other. Perhaps it would agree with the notion and maybe that would enable it to get an MP elected one of these days. And the SDLP is still a party that is not Sinn Féin and that has MPs who will certainly not commit political suicide by staying out of Leinster House. For Shame, Jim Duffy, For Shame.

There is still more, but if you want to see how Jim Duffy figures Gerry Adams will somehow follow in the footsteps of the late Lord Fitt by way of entering Leinster House you'll have to check The Irish Times, It's Website and the Archives thereof.

Jim Duffy is a historian and political commentator.

Joe Keenan

## See No, Hear No, Speak No Evil

Dermot Nesbitt is a moderate Unionist MLA for South Down, that heartland of the Protestant Fur Coat Brigade whose traditional routes in the marching season lead them to the Bahamas, the Balearics, to any field that's foreign enough and far enough away. His moderation is clearly evidenced by his having supported David Trimble in supporting the Belfast Agreement for a few months a few years ago. His moderation, in respect of the death throes of the demoralised, leaderless mass of his fellow unionists, is expressed as a post-modernist lack of drama in which nothing is seen with startling clarity, nothing is heard in quadrophonic sound and nothing is said at all at all as the Loyalists of North and West Belfast burn Loyalist North and West Belfast to the stumps. Apocalypse *Non*. Noh played out in Orange kimonononos. Not to put to fine a point on it, Dermot Nesbitt is a Norn Ironist.

So Dermot Nesbitt is just the unionist boy for the anti-national *Irish Times*, which really likes Northern Prods as little as it likes Northern Taigs, to trot out in opposition to the heretical notions of the All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution (or Sinn Féin as the *Irish Times* prefers to call it). Duly trotted out, Dermot dully performed.

*Also Sprach* the sprat, in an imperative mood, under the categorical headline, *SF MPs Must Not Be Allowed To Speak In Dáil*:—

"I never cease to be amazed at the chasm in understanding of some nationalists towards the unionist position. I witness an Irish Government

that is seemingly prepared to act both outside international law and against its own Constitution to placate the demands of aggressive nationalism. And then we, as unionists, are supposed to act as good neighbours...

"...Speaking rights seems an insignificant development, but it is an important litmus test. What is the Irish Government's view of good neighbourliness? I say to members of Dáil Éireann: according to international law such a development would represent interference in the domestic affairs of the UK...

"Thirty years ago the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe adopted proposals for promoting better relations among states. Known as the Helsinki Final Act, it laid down principles that subsequent international agreements have followed. Importantly, it stipulated that states should refrain from "any intervention, direct or indirect, individual or collective, in the affairs falling within the domestic jurisdiction of another state"...

"Put simply, the Irish Government would be in breach of its international obligations if it unilaterally succumbed to Sinn Féin's pressure to allow speaking rights in the Dáil...

"...The Irish Government said that it might establish a Forum for Peace and Reconciliation in order "to make recommendations on ways in which agreement and trust between the two traditions in Ireland can be promoted and established".

"The forum met and commissioned studies...

"...Both studies considered the Council of Europe's National Minorities Convention to be particularly relevant



to Northern Ireland...

"[According to the Minorities Convention]... Individual states are responsible for implementing rights appropriate to their minorities and are accountable to the council for implementation. No other state can interfere in this implementation. The council has already reported on both Irish and UK implementation recommending, respectively, better provision for Travellers and improvement of Irish language provision. It will monitor progress.

"Where does this leave Irish nationalists and Sinn Féin in particular? It seeks "basic rights and entitlements". It sees no reason why Northern Ireland MPs "should not be afforded the opportunity to represent" their voters in the Dáil. If this development occurs, it is completely outside international law, against Ireland's Constitution and makes a mockery of the Irish Government's commitment to the Council of Europe.

"Subscribing to these international norms is unpalatable to many. However, forsaking them is potentially disastrous for good neighbourliness. Members of Dáil Éireann, the choice is yours: choose wisely."

Well then, I can only assume that Mr. Nesbitt will be taking the twenty-six counties and the two and a bit kingdoms (queendoms? realms?) to the Tribunal of International Right Thinking over that hideous crime, the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Talk about one state interfering in another State's implementing rights appropriate to its very own minorities. Shocking breach of international norms. Something should be done about it.

But something was done about it. The Good Friday Agreement was done about it. Which is only to say that the right of the Irish Republic to interfere, on behalf of the Catholic minority living in Northern Ireland, in the affairs of the United Kingdom is enshrined in international law. The Council of Europe hasn't complained about it so far. Perhaps no-one has seen fit to inform it of the irregularity. International Norm is a notoriously casual, laid back kinda guy.

And the Irish Government's Forum for Peace and Reconciliation. Oh Dermot, that's not really a great precedent to be drawing attention to in just this context. The All-Party Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution noticed just that precedent and had this to say about it:—

"Furthermore, the New Ireland Forum and the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation also broke suggestive new ground. While they were set up as platforms for consideration of issues arising out of the Northern Ireland conflict, and not to examine a wider range of public policy matters, and while they were appointed, not elected, they did nonetheless bring public representatives from throughout the island together in a structured fashion, and facilitated serious and constructive debate."

It was, as the Committee recognises, an argument for the value of bringing together Northern and Southern representatives in a deliberative assembly. The proceedings of the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation were a harbinger of the Committee's own recommendation that Northern representatives should contribute to Dáil debates (with the whole house constituted as a Committee) on Northern Ireland and Good Friday Agreement matters. Dermot, no doubt relying on the *Irish Times* for his knowledge of cross-border matters, wouldn't be in any position to know that, since the *Irish Times* is doing its damndest to suppress such dangerous knowledge.

Which leaves just this of Mr Nesbitt's argument: that in allowing Adams and the like of him to speak in Dáil Éireann, said Dáil would be going "against Ireland's constitution". He provides no evidence for that rather stark opinion and fails entirely to understand that the Irish establishment is drawn reluctantly but irresistibly to the Committee's recommendation precisely because it can be implemented without any fuss about a constitutional amendment. There is an altogether justified concern that the measure is indispensable to preserving the Irish Constitution in its current form. The All-Party Committee drew attention to the constitutional danger as follows:

"The committee has also noted a number of recent comments on the matter by senior Sinn Féin figures, including newspaper articles by the Northern Ireland Minister for Education, Martin McGuinness MP MLA (Irish News, 19 July 2000, and Irish Examiner, 10 August 2000). Mr McGuinness suggests that "the matter might be specifically approached in terms of what requires a constitutional amendment and what does not".

"In relation to the latter category possibilities not requiring a constitutional amendment he suggests that "the minimum that could be expected is that the standing orders of the Dáil be altered by that body to allow Northern Westminster MPs (18 in all) to attend and speak at certain debates ... Debates on the work of the North/South Ministerial Council and the all-Ireland implementation bodies would be obvious examples..." as would debates on international issues.

"He goes on to propose that "the existing Northern presence in the Seanad should be provided for as of right and through some mechanism of electoral choice", with "a more realistic number" of representatives. He notes that Northern senators could participate in Oireachtas joint committees and joint sessions of both Houses.

"Mr McGuinness also advocates that citizens in the North should have the right to vote in certain referendums, though he admits that "in the jurisdictional circumstances which prevail at present, it is understandable that such a right should be confined to issues which affect all citizens on the island ... it is accepted ... that Irish citizens in the North could not reasonably anticipate having a vote on something which would exclusively impact upon those living in the twenty-six counties, eg an item to do with taxation...".

"Mr McGuinness believes that "a constitutional amendment to allow for votes in presidential elections would be more straightforward. But the same urgency does not attach to this because there is not likely to be another election until 2004, if even then." He adds that "constitutional moves may also be required to take involvement in the Dáil to the voting stage or to have northern deputies directly elected to it, depending on the exact proposals; changes in electoral law would undoubtedly be necessary".

These constitutional waters are murky and shark infested. The All-Party Committee which produced the 2002 Report was far from being a Jacobin body; it didn't contain a single Sinn Féin member. Its report is a minimalist document. Its recommendation is the bottom line. All else is *mare incognita*:—here be sharks. With big teeth.

Bather Beware.

**Joe Keenan**

# Redmond and The Pope's Peace Efforts of 1915

Just before he was elected Pope, Benedict wrote to a colleague: "*I would regret if any parish priest should take sides for one or other belligerent*". But Redmondite Ireland and its parish priests did not take this attitude.

Redmond had the active support of the Catholic Hierarchy and the clergy at the outset for his war on Germany. Bishop McHugh had declared that "*the sympathy of our people one and all is with the arms of England*" and he described Germany as "*a Power that would set at nought the very foundations upon which civilisation rests*" (*Irish Catholic*, 15 August 1914).

In August 1914, Pastoral Letters were read out at Masses across the country urging prayers for British military success. The *Independent* ran a story on the 29th September headlined, *The Loyalty of Ireland—Cardinal Logue And The War*, which attributed to the head of the Irish Church, on his return from the Papal Conclave held after the death of Pope Pius X, the view that "*there was no more loyal country than Ireland*". The *Independent* also quoted the Cardinal as saying that "*Irishmen throughout the world would stand by the Empire in the crisis, and were prepared to fight shoulder to shoulder, petty animosities being forgotten*" (cited in *Church, State and Nation in Ireland, 1898-1921*, p310).

Archbishop Walsh maintained a diplomatic silence in the face of these statements and of the clerical war-mongering of the parish priests heard on Redmondite recruiting platforms—as did Bishop O'Dwyer of Limerick. O'Dwyer, the Party's strongest critic in the past, had held his tongue since the Home Rule Bill and had ceased his attacks on the Home Rule/Liberal alliance.

As we saw last month, Redmondite Ireland actively assisted in Italy's enticement into the war by sending a strong delegation to Paris to put on a show of Catholic solidarity as the Italian Government signed up to the allied crusade. It did this to communicate the impression to Catholic Italy, on the eve of

its announcement of hostilities, that the Government in France, that had once boasted it had "*put out the lights of heaven*", had now returned to the old faith with France's participation in the blood-sacrifice at the front. Here is a view, written in 1940, of the France which the Redmondites pretended to be Catholic for the purposes of luring the Italians into the war:

"... it is no exaggeration to say that in 1914 France occupied in Europe a position as the champion of militant atheism very comparable to that Soviet Russia has occupied during the last twenty years... there can be no doubt of the implacable hostility of the politicians who gained control of France after the Dreyfus case. France came to symbolize the political forces of anti-religion just as Russia does in our own time. Even the persecution of the Church by the Nazi Government in Germany in recent years has not been accompanied by such a clearly avowed attention of destroying Christianity as was openly proclaimed by successive French governments during the pontificate of Pius X."

That view, surprisingly, is from an impeccable Redmondite, Denis Gwynn, who joined the British Army under Redmondite enthusiasm and fought at the Western front until invalided out in 1917.

Pat Maloney drew my attention to Gwynn's 1940 book, *The Vatican And The War In Europe*. And interesting it is indeed. In 1914 Gwynn saw the war in Redmondite terms, as a war for small nations, for Irish Home Rule, for Catholic Belgium etc. But looking at it in 1940 he seems to have a different view—a view much closer to Benedict's—although he does not say that explicitly.

Books written in the late 1930s are often the most enlightening about the Great War. From that vantage point, after the fog of propaganda had cleared and a true picture of the consequences of the decisions of 1914 and later are clear for the European landscape, understanding is at its fullest.

But, since then, understanding has

receded as the propaganda of the second great war has filled the history books and has become common understanding in Ireland, courtesy of the collapse of its independent mind.

Anyone looking at the Great War in the late 1930s/1940 should have a different appreciation of it than in 1914 (or indeed 2005). By this time the terrible consequences of it were apparent, as Europe looked forward to another round of hostilities, after the war to end all wars had not done so. After the 'evil' of Prussianism had been destroyed, and half Europe with it, what had been created were the greater 'evils' of Bolshevism and the Nazis—both of which now bore down on Europe.

The introduction to Gwynn's book is, in effect, a repudiation of Redmondism in its implicit agreement with Pope Benedict that the prolongation of the war led to the disasters of 1917 and 1918, "*a catastrophe for European civilisation*". Gwynn does not say as much, but he states Benedict's view and does not challenge it. How could he, looking at Europe in 1940?

But who was most eager for fighting the war to a finish, no matter what the consequences in 1917? Not the Germans, Austrians or Turks but the British and John Redmond.

In May 1915, just as Italy entered the allied ranks, the war began to swing in Germany's favour. The *Entente* believed that Germany had given its best effort in the early months of the war, that in the Spring of 1915 numbers would tell against her, and that she would be quickly collapse in the face of the vast forces that were arrayed on her borders—particularly the "*Russian steamroller*". But, by conducting of skilful defence in the West and transferring extra forces to the East, the Germans launched a huge counter-attack on the advancing Tsarist forces in Galicia, breaking through the centre of the Russian lines. By the end of June practically all of Galicia was liberated and German forces took Warsaw in early August.

At the same time it was becoming clear that the British landings in the Dardanelles had been a failure and the much-heralded Italian offensive that was supposed to make all the difference had been stopped a few miles into Austrian territory.

Around this time the Vatican began to take the initiative in proposing peace talks between the combatants. This was an

opportune time since it should have become clear to both sides in the conflict that there were no quick victories to be had and they would have now to sacrifice large amounts of men and materials to gain a result.

In August 1915 the Vatican called on Irish bishops to support the Pope's peace projects by requesting that the Irish Party MPs bring pressure on the British Government to consent to the opening up of negotiations for peace. This led to a conflict between Redmond and the Bishop of Limerick over the Pope's plea for a negotiated peace. It is mentioned in H.C. O'Neill's *History Of The War* (a Liberal Imperialist account) in the context of the German offers for peace which were made after the fall of Warsaw:

"There were... about this time appeals by the Pope and the Roman Catholic dignitaries. The wording of the Pope's letter deserves to be recorded. "It is our firm determination to devote every activity to the reconciliation of the peoples now engaged in this fratricidal struggle. Today, on the sad anniversary of the outbreak of this tremendous conflict, there issues from our heart an earnest prayer for the cessation of the war. It must not be said that this conflict cannot be settled without armed violence. Put away mutual desire for destruction and reflect that nations do not die; if humiliated and oppressed, they prepare to retaliate by transmitting from generation to generation hatred and the desire for revenge. Why should not a direct or indirect exchange of views be initiated in an endeavour, if possible, to arrange aspirations so that all should be contented? This is our cry for peace, and we invite all the friends of peace to unite with us in our desire to terminate this war and reestablished the empire of right, resolving henceforth to solve differences not by the sword, but by equity and justice"...

"Uncritical observers and nervous people in the Allied and neutral nations were liable to realise more impressively from all these different peace suggestions the one main fact that it was the Allies who were against peace at the moment. Thus, when an Irish Roman Catholic Bishop appealed to Mr Redmond to help in furthering the cause of peace, Mr Redmond could only reply that the moment was inopportune" (p441).

*A Letter From The Bishop Of Limerick* appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* of 12 August 1915:

"Dear Mr Redmond—the appeal which Our Holy Father the Pope has addressed to the belligerents in this awful

war, which is devastating the world, will be read with the sympathy and backed up by the moral support of millions of the best of the human race... But amongst them all, none will receive this solemn appeal with deeper gratitude and reverence than our own Irish people, and for that reason I venture to address you, whose responsibilities at this moment are so heavy, and beg of you to throw the weight of your influence strongly on the side of peace.

"It is not easy to see what objection any of the belligerents can take to the proposal of the Pope. He does not ask any of them to make any concession, to undergo any humiliation, or to alter one jot of what it considers to be its just claims. He simply asks them, with the experience of the woe of the year that has just closed, to confer, either directly with one another, or through some neutral, and see if it is possible to find terms, or even an approach to terms, on which they might put an end to this disastrous war.

"Unfortunately, one voice of passion has been raised already, without, we may hope due consideration, to make the shocking and unquestioned statement that to talk of peace at the present moment is immoral. There was never a more cruel and heartless untruth...

"Our Holy Father speaks words of sober truth and reason, and the impartial judgement of neutral nations, and much more of history, will utterly condemn those who refuse to hear him.

"At a crisis such as this where is the wisdom of repeating, like a parrot-cry, that no proposals for peace can be entertained until Germany is beaten to her knees? *Delenda est Carthago* is very fine, if you were sure of being able to do it. But is there a competent man in England at this moment who was confident to being able to crush Germany? Or to crush her at a cost that would be less ruinous than defeat? It may or may not be desirable to annihilate German power; but that is not the question now, but is it practicable? Proud and arrogant talk gives no help, and revolts the consciences of men; and people who set out to smash Germany should ask themselves whether the defeat of Russia, and the weakening of France, and the state of things at the Dardanelles, have not recently somewhat altered the conditions of the problem.

"A few months ago they counted with confidence on the triumphant pedigree of the Russian "steamroller". That machine is not now quite so efficient. Then great hopes were placed in the accession of the Balkan States to the side of the Allies. The turn of events in Poland would probably show them the merits of the other side, and altogether he should be a sanguine man who still

counts on an overwhelming victory for England.

"It is time to look facts in the face, whether we like them or not. There is no use in shutting one's eyes, and, in blind conceit, rushing to one's ruin..."

"The prolongation of this war for one hour beyond what is absolutely necessary is a crime against God, and humanity, and the judgement of neutral nations, and still more of posterity, will be pronounced heavily against any government that now refuses to entertain the proposals which are made in the name of religion, by one who is perfectly impartial, and has no interest to serve but the well-being of all the nations. But over and above these general considerations of religion and humanity, the vital interests of our own country call clamorously for peace.

"Therefore, we may hope that you will use your influence to get a fair hearing for the noble and Christ-like proposal of the Pope. In England some people have been complaining of his silence. Now that he has spoken we may hope that they will show deference to his words.

"But, whatever they may say or do in England, we Irish Catholics have no excuse for disregarding the appeal of Our Holy Father. Our duty and our highest interests are on his side in this movement for peace, and, therefore, I should hope that you will bring your great influence to bear on the English Government and press it to give his proposal a fair and reasonable consideration.

"Assuredly you have a right to be heard. You have given them help beyond price. We may hope that when you speak on behalf of the Supreme Head of our Church, and for the vital interests of your country, they will give heed to your words.

"Before this disastrous war, by your wise and upright statesmanship, you deserved well of your country, and brought her to the very threshold of Home Rule. It may be in God's providence that you, a Catholic Irishman, are destined to render her, and the whole world, a still greater service by leading the English Government to take the first step at the word of the Pope towards the re-establishment of peace on earth.

"I am, yours faithfully in Xt., E.T.,  
Bishop of Limerick."

With the fall of the Liberal Government in May 1915, and its replacement with a Unionist-dominated coalition, Bishop O'Dwyer felt justified to resume his opposition to Redmond.

After a mob attacked Irish emigrants boarding ships in Liverpool O'Dwyer wrote to the *Limerick Leader*, posing

questions that were not supposed to be asked in Redmondite Ireland—questions that would have been very dangerous for anyone but a Bishop to ask. O’Dwyer wrote:

“What have they or their forebears ever got from England that they should die for her? Mr Redmond will say: “A Home Rule Act is on the Statute Book. But any intelligent Irishman will say: “A simulacrum of Home Rule with an express notice that it is never to come into operation.” This war may be just or unjust, but any fair-minded man would admit that it is England’s war, not Ireland’s” (cited in David W. Miller, *Church, State And Nation In Ireland, 1898-1921*, p317).

O’Dwyer’s letter was suppressed by the Dublin papers. It was the only way it could have been handled. O’Dwyer, or the papers printing the letter, could have been prosecuted under the *Defence Of The Realm Act*. But such a prosecution, of a Catholic Bishop, would have proved disastrous. So the Bishop’s letter was suppressed and, in response, distributed in leaflet form around the country.

Archbishop Walsh and Bishop O’Dwyer were the more Vatican-orientated members of the Hierarchy. As such they took into account the international interests of Catholicism to a greater extent than the warmongering nationalist clergy in Ireland who threw in their lot with Redmond.

Brian Murphy’s recently published work; *The Catholic Bulletin And Republican Ireland* has described how this Irish division took effect in Rome. Monsignors O’Riordain and O’Hagan at the Irish College in Rome had worked to secure recognition of the separate identity of Irish Church interests from English political and clerical influence, which had been felt to be exercised detrimentally to Irish interests in the past. Both had been Home Rulers before the war but had become suspicious of British intentions both with regard to Ireland and its wider war aims in 1914. O’Riordain and O’Hagan had to initially counter the influence of the new English Cardinal Gasquet, who had publicly defended Britain’s conduct of war on the Boers a decade earlier. Then they had to deal with Sir Henry Howard, who arrived in Rome in January 1915 as Envoy Extraordinary of the British Embassy to mount a diplomatic assault at the Vatican. Use was made of the *Catholic Bulletin* in this resistance. Brian Murphy concludes:

“... two conflicting voices

representing Irish interests were to be heard at the Vatican: that of Redmond, committed to the War and content to cooperate with the English Mission; and that of Bishop O’Dwyer, ably assisted by O’Riordain and O’Hagan, who was suspicious of England’s war aims, and who was totally opposed to the English Mission. The *Catholic Bulletin* resolutely supported and endorsed the latter view” (p212).

In a real sense then Imperial Ireland was resisted by independent Ireland at the Vatican and in the *Catholic Bulletin* prior to the Rising in 1916.

Here is *Mr. Redmond’s Reply* to the *Bishop of Limerick’s Letter* to the *Irish Leader* on the Pope’s plea for a peace conference, as given in the *Freeman’s Journal*:

“Dear Lord Bishop—I have received your Lordship’s letter, and I need not say I have read it with the utmost care.

In reply, I must respectfully say that, to the best of my judgement, the course of action you suggest to me would not be calculated to promote the cause of peace. Nor do I think that I would be justified in endeavouring to bring pressure to bear upon the Government to enter into any negotiations for peace at a time when the German powers, who have been the oppressors in this war, show no sign of any disposition to repay the wrongs they have inflicted upon Belgium and our other allies—Very Truly Yours, J.E.Redmond” (*Freeman’s Journal*, 13 August, 1915).

That must be the most discourteous reply ever made by an Irish leader to a Catholic Bishop.

There was nothing odd about Germany wanting peace at this of all moments—at the time of its greatest success in the war. It was not the aggressor in the war and had secured its defence by a military ability that the *Entente* had not bargained for.

But it knew that from here on only a long and wasteful war of attrition could defeat it. It wanted to secure a peace at this point to prevent further loss of life and the inevitable political and economic destruction that a fight to the finish would produce across Europe. So it supported the Vatican’s efforts in getting for a negotiated settlement.

As H.C.O’Neill noted, for Redmond “*the moment was inopportune*”. The Redmondites saw the Pope’s appeal for peace as “*inopportune*” because they believed the British Empire, mainly in the

shape of the Royal Navy, had the strategic ascendancy over Germany, and it was vital that the “*war for small nations*” would be won without compromise. With the *Entente* forces stopped by strong German defensive positions in the west, and the “*Russian Steamroller*” halted in the east, the main hope of defeating Germany fell to the British blockade.

Since the very moment when England started to think about destroying Germany, its main weapon was understood to be the blockade. Even with the British intervention in a Continental war, the greatest weapon which England’s possessed was seen to be the Royal Navy and its ability to shut off Germany from its markets and its food supply. To suggest that the blockade was a mere act of retaliation, designed to facilitate neutral shipping, was completely false in view of the signals which emanated from the British Admiralty and anti-German propagandists in the period prior to the Great War.

Once the Allies stopped the Germans at the battle of the Marne, four years of trench warfare ensued. Although the Germans launched the most effective offensives of the war, they were always strategically on the defensive and the possibility of a negotiated settlement lay entirely with the Allies. But the British Cabinet never for a moment contemplated a negotiated settlement, despite all the losses in men and materials suffered and the fact that Allied forces did not seem to be making any territorial progress. It coldly calculated that the Allies could suffer heavier losses than the Germans and still win, so long as they had a better rate of attrition proportionate to population than the Germans. England believed that, in the long run, the Royal Navy would do its work on Germany if the line could be held for long enough on land.

The Royal Navy blockade of Germany was the decisive factor in Germany’s defeat—after the allies had failed to get the better of her in the field. It proved to be totally effective in cutting off Germany’s imports of food and material, and led to the policy of unrestricted submarine warfare that brought America into the war and tightened the noose around the Germany.

Most readers will be under the impression that the Great War finished in November 1918, and they will be totally unaware that the Allies continued the war against Germany for another five months.

There are not many history books that refer to the fact that there was a naval blockade in place against Germany until April 1919 to secure German compliance to Allied terms. It was maintained for eight months after the official ending of the war—resulting in the starvation of more than half a million civilians, mostly children, in order to turn Germany’s conditional surrender at the Armistice into an unconditional one in July 1919.

C.J.O’Donnell, the Irishman who had served the British Empire, made the following comment about blockading in *The Irish Future With The Lordship Of The World*:

“Infinitely the most inhuman act of war is the blockade, which avowedly is not aimed at soldiers or sailors, but at the aged and the child, the babe and the woman. In the Middle Ages the Catholic Church inflicted the major excommunication on any general who blockaded a town before he had given full opportunity for the withdrawal of women and children. In those uncivilized days there was such a thing as “the truce of God”” (p220).

But even though Pope Benedict XV condemned the Allied “*blockade which hems two Empires and condemns millions of innocents to famine*”, Redmond and his Party continued to support it for as long as it took for Germany to be destroyed.

The Redmondites viewed Germany’s various peace initiatives in 1915 as being a sign of underlying weakness brought about by Royal Navy blockade—which was going to ultimately starve the Germans into submission. And three more years of slaughter, and millions of deaths, on the Western front and elsewhere, did not shake them in the belief that it was all worth it to achieve Germany’s destruction.

It is of great historical significance that the Pope tried to get the Great War called off in 1915 and that England and the Irish Redmondites, for reasons of wanting to destroy Germany, Austro-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire, rejected his overtures.

Stephen McKenna, an English Liberal, writing in 1921 honestly described the implications of the British decision to prolong the war in 1915:

“When the belligerents took stock before settling down to the trench-warfare winter campaign of 1916-17, all must have felt that the war had reached its climax. The general exhaustion was

so great that, even if hostilities had ceased, every country would have been crippled; if hostilities continued, they would continue on a scale of unlimited effort in which no reserve of strength would any longer be husbanded. Set free on her eastern frontier, Germany must mass all her resources in one last effort to break through the western line; the Allies must hold out till the attempt had spent itself and then strike one last blow at a worn enemy; Germany must in turn prevent the allies from holding out by cutting their sea communications. If unrestricted submarine warfare ranged America on the side of the allies, it must have been felt that either the war would be over before any effective help could be given or else that, in the final, hopeless, death-grapple, a few million soldiers more or less would not substantially change the degree or character of Germany’s defeat.

“Many of those who meditated on the war from its climax in 1916 to its end in the Versailles conference may wonder whether they did wisely in execrating and howling down anyone who shewed the courage to advocate peace before the sphere of war underwent its last desperate expansion. The government stood by its policy of a “knock-out blow”; the knock-out blow has been dealt. Is anyone the better for it? The fire-eaters who proclaimed that anything less than the unconditional surrender of Germany would entail another German war within their generation now proclaim with no more doubt or qualification that Germany is preparing her revenge... The added two years of war, then, have not brought such security as Rome enjoyed at the destruction of Carthage; the added bitterness of those two years, on the other hand, has made more difficult any goodwill and any common effort to substitute a sane and better system of International relationship.

“Worst of all are the worldwide economic depression and political unrest for which the protraction of the war was responsible. Had negotiations been opened in 1916, the Russian revolution and its consequences might well have been averted; Germany, Austria and

Turkey might have been left with stable governments and yet with enough experience of modern warfare to discourage any taste for further adventures; and Italy, France and Great Britain—in that order—might have been saved from insolvency. The war, if ended at that time, would have ended without American help; and peace would have been concluded without American intervention. This last result might by now be a matter for regret if thereby the world had been cheated of the equitable and permanent peace, such as President Wilson sought to impose on the militarist party of the Versailles Conference; but it would perhaps have been better for the terms to be drawn by M. Clemenceau and Mr. Lloyd George on Carthaginian lines than for the world to be tantalized by a glimpse of statesmanship that revealed the universal spirit and then to be fobbed off with a compromise which embraced even the good faith of England.” (*While I Remember*, pp171-3).

This was written in 1921 before the effects of the Great War had become clear. Who can honestly disagree with this analysis—that if peace had been concluded in 1915, 1916 or 1917 the world would have been a much better place than it subsequently turned out to be?

Unlike the Vatican, Redmondite Ireland did not want a negotiated peace in 1915, 1916 or 1917. It had begun to see things as the British Imperialists of the “*new Rome*” saw them, and wanted to enhance national hatreds and escalate and widen the war so that Germany could be destroyed just as the original Rome had eliminated Carthage.

Redmond was quite prepared to oppose the Pope and treat his Bishop in Limerick with contempt in pursuit of this policy of no compromise, to fight to a finish. But the consequences for Europe of this policy were nothing short of catastrophic.

(To be continued)

Pat Walsh

## Tom Barry: IRA Freedom Fighter

by  
*Meda Ryan*

Launch of paperback edition

Introduced by

**Ruan O’Donnell**

(History Dept, UL)

author of

*Robert Emmet &*

*The Rising Of 1803*

at **Teachers’ Club**

**36 Parnell Square, Dublin**

**FRIDAY 14th OCTOBER**

**7.45 pm**

ALL WELCOME

# Spies & Lies

The Summer 2005 issue of *Problems of Communism* on George Orwell makes the following passing comment:

“Orwell doesn’t explain how one could know that an apparent leftist was a spy. Of course no one could know; characters who were regarded as genuine leftists have turned out to be actual spies of traitors, including a fellow I worked with on the Workers’ Control issue.”

We assume the fellow referred to was Harry Newton who was ‘exposed’ as an MI5 agent by an MI5 spy called Cathy Massiter. Harry Newton was the Treasurer of the Institute for Workers’ Control (IWC), one of its few public faces, and one of its most active members.

When the Bullock Commission recommended an equal position for workers on the Boards of Directors of private companies in 1976 (and similar plans were proposed for the public sector), the leader / proprietor of the IWC, Ken Coates, set the organisation against these plans. He was supported on ultra-leftist grounds by Neil Kinnock and others. And for all practical purposes the IWC ceased to exist.

But some of its public faces supported Bullock vigorously. These included Tony Benn, Audrey Wise, Jack Jones, and Harry Newton. When Newton, after his death, was ‘exposed’, it struck us as a put-up job. Others were also exposed: Ken Coates welcomed the exposures. But Tony Benn rejected it and made a robust and very public defence of Newton.

For nearly thirty years we have regularly explained the crucial moment for socialism and for Britain as a whole was the workers’ control controversy of the mid-’70s. Put simply, if the Bullock and related proposals had been embraced by the labour movement, Britain would be a true social democracy and a guiding light in Europe instead of a malign influence. The rejection of Bullock was also a crucial moment in British history. It immediately gave us Mrs. Thatcher and then Tony Blair. It made Britain the spearhead of free-market liberalism in Europe and revived its imperialist ambitions in the world.

For the most part we also felt we were talking to the politically deaf. But if British political society wasn’t listening maybe the State was. Benn and Wise have been constantly the subjects of whispering campaigns. And in the last year little stories have come up in the press hinting that Jones may have had connections with the secret police.

We ourselves have had it whispered about us that we were working for the CIA and, more recently the British spooks. The rumours were spread so widely as to be

dropped in the ears of family members. We do not know the origins of these but have traced them back at least to Dennis Skinner.

None of this would have mattered much up to about ten years ago; except to Harry Newton who was already dead. In those days anyone in the labour movement who wished could easily meet anyone else—from the Labour and Trade Union leaders down—at the Party Conference, at fringe meetings and at numerous local gatherings and campaign events. Personal acquaintance usually overcame any misunderstandings—deliberately fomented or otherwise.

New Labour put an end to all that. This mostly rootless clique wasn’t about to socialise with the masses. It saw itself not so much as a part of the democracy, but first as the State-in-waiting, and then as the State itself, for ever and ever amen. Even its lowliest backbenchers feel they can put the police onto neighbours they are in dispute with (and Blunkett put the police onto children playing ‘runaway knock’ / ‘knockdown ginger’ on his mistress).

What was once part of the kind of political abuse one had to live with and laugh off, can these days be a matter far more sinister. Care must be taken against efforts by the State to have us always looking over our shoulders. Many of the “ultra-leftists” who opposed the workers’ control line of development in the ’70s are now ex-Communist Party and ex-Trotskyist government ministers and quasi-civil servants.

**Joe Keenan, Conor Lynch**

## Book Review

### Gender And Identity

*Reclaiming Gender*, Edited by Marilyn Cohen and Nancy J. Curtin  
Macmillan £35.00

Subtitled *Transgressive Identities in Modern Ireland*, this is not a very good, or revelatory, book about women and men in modern Ireland, partly due to the variety of writers, and disciplines, and partly due to a lack of historical imagination. The United Irish are discussed as if the women and men of the 1790s should have behaved like those of the 1990s. There is also the faint squeak of the barrel being scraped: *Between Mater And Matter: Radical Novels By Republican Women*, deals with three novelists, only one of whom could be described as ‘radical’. One novel is anti-Republican. It is about a wife and mother who opposes all this romantic revolutionary nonsense indulged in by her menfolk. The unromantic fact that ‘Stormont’ and the UK Government and Army were and are factors in the situation in Northern Ireland is ignored. Heather Zwicker (Associate Professor of English at the University of Alberta, Canada) seems to be endorsing this apolitical quietism as a feminist response to the war. Ms Zwicker also endorses an assertion that Catholics never worked in Belfast’s shipyards. Catholics worked in all four yards (a very

good book on this and similar matters is John Lynch’s *A Tale of Three Cities*, published by Macmillan in 1997).

The editors in their high-spirited Introduction set the agenda for the book, Irish Studies is to be ‘gendered’, meaning the disciplines of Women’s Studies are to be applied to the subject. The problem with this is that both subjects are very open-ended. There is some discussion of patriarchal attitudes in Irish society, but nobody mentions the celibate priesthood which dominated Irish life for most of the twentieth century. (Ulster Protestants very rarely feature in such works, and this is no exception, it rather detracts from the assertion that it is breaking new ground.) Ruth-Ann M. Harris (Adjunct Professor of History and Irish Studies at Boston College) in *Negotiating Patriarchy: Irish Women And The Landlord*, writes “how differentiation was mediated by gender remains undertheorized and underanalyzed” in regard to the peasant classes. But surely the mirroring of the system brought in by the new owning class was partly self defensive? The editors contribute essays of their own, Marilyn Cohen’s is “*A Girdle Around The Globe*”: *Spinning Transnational Bonds Between Gilford, Ireland, And Greenwich, New York, 1880-1920*. It deals with emigration from one town to the other. (This Greenwich is a town in upstate New York, not the ‘bohemian’ area of the City.) This sort of specialised migration is a known factor; not all Irish emigrants were unskilled. There is a definite connection between Belfast’s aircraft factory, and those in Seattle. (Ms Cohen is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Montclair State University, New Jersey.)

Nancy J. Curtin’s is the essay on the United Irish referred-to above, “*A Nation Of Abortive Men*”: *Gendered Citizenship And Early Irish Republicanism*. Ms Curtin is Professor of History at Fordham University (New York City: it’s a Jesuit foundation, and set up the first Irish Studies course—ever—in the 1920s, taught by Belfast-born poet Seosamh MacCathmhaoil / Joseph Campbell. Boston College is also a Jesuit, and like Fordham, a heavily-Irish, foundation). Curtin does not mention that the United Irish were not republican ideologues; they were concerned about misrule by a royal government, not by the form of government. The United English (there were also United Scots) were anti-republican, because they did not like the idea of “*aristocratical republics*” (they were thinking of congealed oligarchies like Genoa and Venice). This, along with the misconceived notions about gender relations at the time, skews the essay. It is a pointer to an area of study.

There are other essays of varying degrees of interest, one seems to be implying that women in south Ulster in the 1830s were literate in both Irish and English—a quite remarkable matter—but it is simply mentioned in passing. I have not kept the best to the last: Kathryn Conrad’s essay, *Women Troubles, Queer Troubles: Gender, Sexuality, And The Politics Of Selfhood On The Construction Of The Northern Irish State*, is tripe.

**Seán McGouran**



## Ferries continued

“That is what it is at. It is sharp practice, is totally unacceptable in the Irish labour context and is used on the basis of the flag of convenience, the Taoiseach stated. “Perhaps many of the workers will see the package as a good one, but I do not know the position on that issue.”

Not half, Bertie doesn't know! A climate exists in the workplace today of “man mind thyself”, “there's no tomorrow”, grab what you can—Irish Ferries are aware of this. That is the vital test for SIPTU: they could find that the majority of their members in this dispute have no interest whatever in “social dumping”, “race to the bottom”, “outsourcing”—it's “cop it and hop it” time.

“There is a whiff of double—standards emerging in the case of the 550 workers in Irish Ferries whose jobs are to be axed.

“For decades, US multinationals coming into Ireland were given carte blanche to keep trade unions well away from their doors. They wanted the power to set wages and they got it.

“Neither Bertie Ahern nor any other politician of any party seems to have had any difficulty with that policy.

“It is one of the reasons Ireland has proved an attractive location for the big corporations. They were able to set their own wage terms and having one of the most attractive tax rates on offer anywhere also helped persuade them to set up here.

“It is hypocritical then for the Taoiseach to chastise Irish Ferries who are doing no more, in their view, than trying to protect their business future. It is under increasing threat from low air fares and the significantly lower wages allegedly paid by competitors” (Brian O'Mahony, Irish Examiner, 1.10.2005).

As we go to press, Mr. Rothwell and Irish Ferries have agreed to attend a Labour Court hearing on October 3, 2005.

We quote Gerald Flynn, Group Industrial Correspondent for the *Sunday Independent*:

“The upshot is that the relationship between Mr. Ahern and his friends in SIPTU is stronger than ever.”

Now political observers are speculating that the outcome of the Irish Ferries dispute may even go some way towards effecting the formation of the next Government.

“Many in the trade union movement favour a coalition with Fianna Fail—not withstanding the stated objection to such a development by the Labour Party leader, Pat Rabbitte.

“Political detractors claim that Mr. Ahern's Dail outburst was more a move to keep SIPTU and their Labour Party allies on side—as potential coalition partners—rather than a threat to frustrate Irish Ferries “restructuring”.

“But it may also have been intended to keep the wider trade union movement peaceful for a few stressful weeks until the ICTU secures a mandate on October 25, 2005 to enter negotiations for a seventh, successive social partnership agreement” (Sunday Independent, 2.10.2005).

It all sounds so cynical. The seafarers get their eight weeks. Mr. Rothwell gets his cheap foreign labour. Bertie and the Trade Union leadership get a seventh successive Social Partnership and Trade Union activists wonder why nobody turns up for meetings!

## The End Of The Co-Op?

In last month's *Labour Comment* (Vol. 23, No. 9), we posed the query: *The End Of The Co-Op?* The question was prompted by the decision of the 108-year old IAWS Co-Op to change its co-op status and become a body corporate, paving the way for a stock market flotation.

The new private company, One51, was to blaze its way into a €300 million flotation with the €64 million acquisition of Bandon Co-Op South Western Services (SWS).

However, a reversal of decision by the West Cork farmer members compelled One51, “to terminate discussions with SWS after key shareholders in the Bandon group reversed their previous support for the deal” (Irish Independent, 16.9.2005).

“Lynch pulled out because he saw the writing on the wall. To categorise this attempted deal as fraught with internal difficulties is an understatement” (Irish Examiner, 21.9.2005).

The move is a body blow to IAWS Co-Op (One51) Chief Executive, Philip Lynch, who grew up in Bandon, where SWS is headquartered.

SWS is an agri-services company with interests in natural resources, wind energy, forestry, biomass, waste and outsourcing services. The Co-Op has significant potential and employs more than 400 people.

All year, ‘Grub Street’ has been speculating on the downturn of the economy, whether we'd have a hard or a soft landing—but the decision by SWS shareholders is a firm indication that the

‘boom’ times are over, whatever about the frenetic activity over the €50 million an acre paid for the Doyle Jurys site at Ballsbridge in Dublin city.

The farmers have decided to circle the wagons, remain in the embrace of the Co-Op principle rather than risk the vagaries of the body corporate.

Under the deal, up to €64 million would have been paid to SWS, of which €42.5 million would have fallen due on completion. It is worth noting that some 30 managers were set to share €16 million if the deal went through.

The sell-off was opposed by Bandon and Barryroe Co-Ops and in recent weeks. Drinagh and Lisavaird members began to question the deal, despite the Co-Op voting for it. On Wednesday, 14th September 2005, members of Drinagh Co-Op met and strong opposition to the deal was expressed, with calls for a new vote. Drinagh has a shareholding of 18% in SWS, but has 28% of the votes. The 16% going to SWS managers has also been raised by opponents of the sale of the assets to One51.

In a recent alternative plan put together on behalf of a number of the West Cork Co-Ops it was suggested management's share in the business would be cut to 10% from 40%.

It was Dairygold, which owns 53% of SWS, which first made an issue of the 40% stake and forced management to accept a lower 25% holding in the run-up to the anticipated deal with Lynch. Some of the Co-Ops are still angry management got agreement for such a generous deal in 2000. That 40% stake entitles them to 40% of the profits of the group which in a few years could be in double digits.

Dairygold, which is still a Co-Op, in North Cork, which supported the sale, now seems to be the big loser. It has an 8% stake in One51 and a 44% stake in SWS. If they deal had gone through, it would have got €18 million in new shares in the merged entity and ended up with a 13% stake in the new group.

“It is felt Dairygold, which was completely behind the sale may have alienated some of the others. History suggests there is no love lost between the West Cork Co-Ops and Dairygold” (Irish Examiner, 21.9.2005).

On 15th July 2005, Philip Lynch stated: “Everything out there in that sector is for sale”, adding that One51 could comfortably spend “a couple of hundred million” if the right deal came along!

The boys of West Cork didn't think so!



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# Comment

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## Choppy Waters Ahead! —and fewer life belts

*Irish Ferries* plan to make most of its 543 Irish Sea crew employees redundant beginning on 3rd October 2005. The strategy is to replace them with eastern European agency crews on €3.60 an hour, about one-third of the current crew pay rate.

SIPTU served notice of strike action to commence on Monday, 3rd October 2005. However, the Union represents 40% of the seafarers on the route (mostly ship's officers). Its action is not being supported by the rival Seaman's Union of Ireland, which represents about 350 of the crew members and has advised them to take the exit cash payment of eight weeks' redundancy, including statutory and no cap applying to years of service.

SIPTU president, Jack O'Connor said the dispute was "*the greatest test that the social partnership process has faced*" since it was introduced 18 years ago.

"It is now incumbent on the government to actually do something instead of standing idly by wringing its hands," he said

"While the union will vote next week on whether it should enter talks on a new national agreement, Mr. O'Connor said that the position adopted by Irish Ferries would have a significant impact on its attitude to the talks.

"Some people ask if we would be better off outside an agreement, but if employer organisations are going to behave like this increasing numbers of my members are asking if we are better off inside, and I am becoming inclined to agree with them.

"The most daunting aspect of all that is taking place is the position being adopted by IBEC. Its director general, Turlough O'Sullivan, has refused to rule out similar approaches by other employers, citing competition as the reasons," Jack O'Connor stated. (*Irish Times*, 30.9.2005).

On 30th September 2005, the High Court granted SIPTU a temporary injunction preventing the company from laying off any staff—this means that Irish Ferries will not be able to proceed with its compulsory redundancy plan at least until a further court hearing on October 5, 2005, one day after SIPTU's strike notice runs out.

However, this may not prevent the company from axing the jobs of Seamen's Union of Ireland (SUI) members.

The Attorney General, Rory Brady, has advised Irish Ferries that its staff will not be entitled to State redundancy payments if they opt for a "voluntary" severance package.

Mr. Brady is understood to have suggested that a State rebate to Irish Ferries of 60 % of its statutory redundancy costs should not apply in this particular case.

He found that the company cannot legally claim that the workers are being made redundant because it proposes to replace them with new staff on less pay. If confirmed, such a finding would increase

the cost of the scheme to the company. It may also mean that departing workers would have to pay tax on any payments from the company and might not be entitled to social welfare after they leave.

An unfortunate precedent was set late last year when the State effectively contributed to redundancy payments made when similar work practices were introduced by Irish Ferries on the French routes. So too did the Trade Unions, when the company cut 150 jobs on its Cherbourg and Roscoff routes and about 90% of employees took voluntary redundancy, with the balance of members moving to the Irish Sea routes.

Irish Ferries say 475 of the 543 workers have indicated their "*intention*" to accept the redundancy package.

"By lunchtime, September 30, 2005, 86% had signed written acceptances of the offer of redundancy, including a clear majority of both SIPTU and SIU members" (Eamonn Rothwell, Chief Exec. of Irish Continental Group owners of Irish Ferries, Mr. Rothwell is a former journalist, *Irish Times*, 1.10.2005).

### THE WORKERS' SAVIOUR

The Taoiseach has accused Irish Ferries of putting a gun to the head of its workers: "*You'll know—get out or you'll get nothing—and then when they get out the door they bring in immigrant workers the following day. It's just the wrong way to do industrial relations business in this country. Whether the company thinks they'll get away with that, well, we'll see*" (*Irish Times*, 1.10.05). The biggest problem for the Taoiseach on the eve of new partnership talks is that SIPTU and the ICTU see the Irish Ferries move as an "*attack on social partnership*".

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