

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

April 2006

Vol.21, No.4 ISSN 0790-7672

and **Northern Star** incorporating **Workers' Weekly** Vol.20 No.4 ISSN 954-5891

Among The Scribes And Pharisees

Conor Cruise O'Brien was an anti-Partition civil servant for many years, producing propaganda in support of the sovereignty claim on the North expressed in Articles 2 & 3 of the 1937 Constitution. Then he was for a few years an anti-Partition Cabinet Minister and played an active part in undermining the 1974 power-sharing Government by his insistence on immediate implementation of the Council of Ireland provisions of the Sunningdale Agreement while refusing to consider an amendment of Articles 2 & 3. He then underwent a fundamental revulsion of feeling and became very strongly Partitionist, even to the extent of joining Robert McCartney's Unionist Party. It seems that it was only when he became a Unionist that he began to see the basic realities of Northern Ireland and of Ulster Unionism. This fresh experience led him to suggest that the Unionists might be well-advised to consider joining a United Ireland. And one of the UUP leaders (was it Reg Empey?) commented that that was what happened when you let a cuckoo into the nest.

It appears that Professor Bew has undergone a somewhat similar evolution. He was for many years an Official Republican—a Stickie. When the international framework of the Stickie world-view collapsed around 1990 (beginning with the overthrow of Sir Nicolai Ceaucescu) he morphed into a fundamentalist Unionist, and became an adviser to David Trimble. But now it seems that he too is suggesting that the Ulster Unionists would be better off in a United Ireland.

So says the new star reporter of the *Irish Times*, Stephen Collins (11 Feb), reporting a meeting of the British/Irish Interparliamentary body:

"When the Belfast Agreement was being negotiated, a central preoccupation of unionists was to prevent the creation of significant North/South institutions. Other issues, such as the release of paramilitary prisoners, decommissioning and the future of policing, which were to have such a huge impact later, often appeared to be secondary to them at the time. Now the main preoccupation of unionists is to avoid being ruled by Sinn Fein. The penny seems to have dropped with them that the same sentiment is shared by a significant segment of the electorate in the Republic."

Therefore:

"the Republic is now seen by at least some unionists as a bulwark against domination by Sinn Fein".

We recall from long ago the argument put to us by mainstream politicians in the Republic (Fine Gael and Labour, rather than Fianna Fail) that if the pressure was kept up

continued on page 2, column 3

Som(m)e Commemoration!

The Government plans to commemorate the Somme have run into some problems. The people it was meant to impress can't be bothered to attend. This is good. It brings an air of reality to all the waffle that is pouring out about the event. The Somme was THE blood sacrifice. It was not a battle in any meaningful sense. The strategy adopted was to kill more Germans than they could kill of the other side and thereby weaken them.

The Irish nationalist involvement in this was based on lies and deception about the '*freedom of small nations*'. It should be commemorated here for that reason and that reason alone. Any other reason is commemorating self-deception, humiliation and is a public display of self-abasement by the Government. It is a pathetic sight. It brings to mind the saying '*Fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me.*'

The Unionists were invited to both the 1916 and the Somme events but—

"Speaking after a meeting of his party's Assembly members, Ulster Unionist parades spokesman Michael Copeland said that while they welcomed the Government's plans to commemorate the Somme, they viewed the 1916 Easter Rising as an act of terrorism. "It is up to people of the Republic to celebrate their own past in whatever way they think appropriate. We have no problem with

continued on page 2

On Fascism: Fact And Fiction The Case Of Muriel MacSwiney And Others

It is very interesting that some who are most ready to throw around the allegation of "*fascism*" against both the living and the dead are those whose own past associations have been highly questionable in this regard. In *Roger Casement In Death* (2002) W.J. McCormack presents the Casement campaign of the 1930s as an essentially Nazi conspiracy. Among those he seeks to find guilty by association is the late Dermot Fitzpatrick (Diarmuid MacGiolla Phádraig), notwithstanding the fact that, under the pen-name of Somhairle

Mac Alstair, he had been the foremost Irish writer of anti-Hitlerite and anti-fascist verse during the 1930s. Indeed, that campaign's principal protagonist, W.J. Maloney, had also been so anti-Nazi that he refused permission to Francis Stuart to bring out a German edition of *The Forged Casement Diaries* (1936), so that Stuart had to rely on the Nazis to publish his own *Der Fall Casement* (1940).

This is not, of course, to accuse Stuart himself of Nazism. Stuart was congenitally

Part One

incapable of being anything so consistent. But the Spirit had moved him to express exultant anticipation as he proclaimed in that same book that "the German victory... is, at the moment I am writing these words, almost complete".

W.J. McCormack himself had arrived on the literary scene to play the role of one crying in the wilderness, a John the Baptist to Stuart, the unacknowledged Messiah of Irish literature. As editor of *A Festschrift For Francis Stuart On His 70th Birthday* (1972), McCormack was determined—in the interests of 'Art' of course—to nail down a Jewish victim of Nazism like Anne Frank firmly in her place:

continued on page 12

CONTENTS

	Page
Among The Scribes And Pharisees. Editorial	1
So(m)me Commemoration. Jack Lane	1
On Fascism: Fact And Fiction. The Case Of Muriel MacSwiney And Others. Manus O'Riordan	1
1916: The Empire Strikes Back. Nick Folley (unpublished letter)	3
Shorts from <i>the Long Fellow</i> (Royal To Lead The Republic?; The Best Manager In The World; The Worst Manager In The World; Arrogance And Petulance; The Belarus Tiger; The Celtic Tiger)	11
Garret FitzGerald's Pack Of Misbegotten Lies. Joe Keenan	14
A Shape-Shifting Society? Seán McGouran	16
Some Recollections Of The Connolly Association. Wilson John Haire	17
Cinema, Consciousness & The Irish War Of Independence. John Borgonovo	19
Britain And The Spanish Civil War. Brendan Clifford (report)	24
The 1916 Polemic. Seán McGouran (review)	26
Prisoners Of War In Ireland. Seán McGouran (review)	27
Editorial Commentary. (Cory; Billy Wright; <i>Irish Times</i> Anti-Semitism; Jericho's Walls; 1916; Dublin Riot; Policing Board; Lord John Alderdyce; Was Milosevic Murdered?; Begrudgery; Green Greens?)	29
 <i>Labour Comment</i> , edited by Pat Maloney : <u>The Ministry For Immigration</u> back page <u>A Newspaper Debate About The Somme</u> (Pat Muldowney, Gerald Morgan) page 31	

that, but their version of history would not be our version of history", he told *The Irish Times*" (7 March).

That was stating the obvious. Why do the Government and the Establishment not accept this and drop the charade?

And the report added:

"When it was pointed out that the Government intended to commemorate the Somme anniversary separately at the War Memorial in Islandbridge in July, Mr Copeland said unionists were unlikely to be free to travel because they would be attending commemorations throughout Northern Ireland."

This was putting the boot in, but again totally understandable—why choose the sham before the real thing? The Unionists are probably the only people left who glory in the real spirit of the Somme. Commemorating the Somme in Dublin is about as sensible as attempting to commemorate the Rising on the Shankill. There are two histories on this island and wholesale amnesia has not yet afflicted the populations.

Our liberals would no doubt bemoan saying this, as it is assumed to be encouraging divisions etc. For example, Martin Mansergh is genuinely horrified when such facts are stated. It is stirring up trouble to state these things. Martin believes that some form of words, some formula, can always be found to wish this awfulness away.

But individuals can be married for

years and then realise they are living different lives in the same house and that they are no longer compatible. No form of words that denies the incompatibility can solve the problem, and any attempts to do so with words alone will be seen as insulting to one or both and aggravate the situation even further.

Our liberals are forever parading their efforts to 'allay' Unionists' fears but they protest too much about these fears. They pride themselves on dropping Articles 2 and 3 and were a little upset that the Unionists did not come running. Surely when I stop threatening you - you will love me? And if not, why not? Dropping Articles 2 and 3 was conceding national rights to the Unionists but how many of our liberals argued for it on that basis? Not one since Jim Kemmy. If it is not based on national rights for Unionists it is only an expression of moral cowardice or a con trick - or a combination of both which is doubly despicable. And our liberals personify both and spout nonsense about the north as a result.

Now we are to impress them with commemorating our mass killing for the lies, deception and humiliation about 'freedom for small nations.' How more self-debasing can you get? How would it impress anyone who knows the first thing about the Somme? And the Unionists do know about the Somme.

The amazing thing is that as our great and good begin to be overwhelmed and awed by the Somme there are signs that

Unionists like Gusty Spence and Philip Orr are beginning to voice criticisms of it and make realistic assessments of it. And when they do so there is no flippancy involved because they cannot afford to be flippant about it coming from where they do. Flippancy in such matters is a luxury only our chattering classes can afford to indulge in.

This is not the first time the Unionists have come to the rescue of nationalists. A hundred years ago the Redmondite Home Rulers lived in another fantasy about the island of Ireland and a future that tried to ignore the realities of political life on the island. The Unionists brought them to their senses in 1912 and the obvious, inevitable future never happened.

When one looks at the *slieveen* mentality that now rules the roost in a politically independent Ireland it is too awful to try to imagine what it would be like today if the future had worked out as the Redmondites hoped for. For example, saying what they say, Eoghan Harris, Kevin Myers, Robin Bury *et al* might then be sensible, cautious, conservative voices acting as a restraint on our government of the day!

Think about it— and thank whatever Providence there might be for the Unionists.

Jack Lane

Among The Scribes continued

on the Unionists they would eventually crack, and would accept a united Ireland as a relief. These people were not themselves Republicans, and they would not publicly approve of the IRA, but it was basic to their calculations that the situation within the North was such that the conflict of Republican and Unionist must continue, and that in the end the Unionists would tire of it and would give way.

It is interesting that Professor Bew (all theory of theoretical thought now discarded) now feels empirically that this point has been reached.

Maybe he's right. But empirical understanding was never his strong point. He rejected it on principle at the formative stage in his formation, and then when he looked for it it wasn't there.

It has to be remembered, with regard to Bew and O'Brien, that they see things through the prism of their ideological feud with the Provos, and are likely to see their own concerns everywhere.

We grounded ourselves in the empirical

realities of the Northern Ireland situation back in 1969-70, regardless of ideological fashion, and tried to describe things as they were. And it never seemed to us that the points in debate in the conflict of the two communities were what was actually at issue between them. They were only the debating points of the moment.

The Protestants don't hate Gerry Adams any more than they hated John Hume when John Hume was the man. And they did not hate John Hume any more than they hated John Redmond with his policy of Imperial Home Rule. The debating point of the moment might be power-sharing, or de-commissioning, or North/South bodies, but it was never the issue.

When Paisley insisted on a photograph album of weapons being destroyed, DUP spokesmen on RTE said it was so that ordinary Protestants might be certain that the weapons had gone. We took Paisley's earlier word that it was about humiliation. RTE interviewers, pleased at being spoken to at all, never asked how an album of photos, however extensive, could prove that there were no more arms.

The practical assumption on all sides was that the Provos had called off the war and had no intention of resuming it. And anybody who was seriously concerned that a general peace should be the outcome, and who had any sense of reality at all, understood that the Provos must be accorded a fair degree of autonomy during the process of demobilisation in order to curb other military developments. But that was turning a blind eye to criminality—if that was how you wanted to see it. And that was how many people wanted to see it. Electoral considerations in the Republic began to cut against sensible management of the peace process in the North. Pat Rabbitte and Michael Mc Dowell were to the fore in demanding instant law and order in the North—order maintained by the official forces of the law. They all know that this was not an actual possibility, but at a certain point they all agreed that it was the only right thing, regardless of whether it was possible or not. And the Taoiseach confessed to having turned a blind eye to the criminality by which a tolerable degree of order was maintained in many regions of the North, but he would never do so again.

The demand then was that Sinn Fein should end its association with the IRA and become like the Pharisees. It should condemn, condemn, condemn, as the parties of the Unionist middle class do, and live off the thing they condemn while self-righteously disclaiming all relationship with it.

None of them wanted this. But all of them demanded it. They couldn't help themselves.

continued on page 4

1916: The Empire Strikes Back!

The following letter by Nick Folley, dated 13th February 2006, failed to find publication in the *Irish Examiner*

Robin Bury (Irish Examiner 13-02-06) in his criticisms of the President's address at UCC has made a number of flawed assertions about the nature of the Irish State and republicanism. As a citizen of that State, I hope you will grant me the courtesy of a reply.

Let us start with the Land Acts by which Mr. Bury reminds us 'millions of acres had been transferred from Protestant landlords to small catholic farmers'. Being able to buy back your property from the descendants of those whose had dispossessed your ancestors may be a welcome gesture, but hardly a huge leap for a just society. Ireland was still paying these annuities as late as the 1930s.

'Ireland was fundamentally free' asserts Mr. Bury 'local government was in Catholic hands'. That depends on your interpretation of fundamentally free. Britain still decided all foreign policy and had ultimate say on matters of policing, taxation, war and defence. Ireland could by no means be described as a 'free' country.

'Who wanted 1916?' No one really, according to Mr. Bury, and certainly the public mood in the immediate aftermath of the Rising seems to bear that judgement out. Yet by 1917 and 1918 the country was voting almost solidly Republican. What brought such a drastic change? The executions of the leaders of such an unpopular Rising does not satisfactorily explain it, nor does the 'conscription crisis'. If Irish people were such ardent supporters of Redmond and the British war effort, why did they go to such extreme measures to defeat conscription? Could it be that the Irish finally decided to have a crack at something that up to 1916 had been so off the agenda as to be even beyond discussion—separatism?

Mr. Bury is correct in saying Roger Casement's attempts to halt the Rising were ignored. However he does not tell the full story, for Casement's efforts were indeed ignored—by the British authorities. I learned at the same UCC conference that the British had been in possession of at least 3 German code books since early in the war and knew full well plans for the Rising in advance, having intercepted communiqués on the subject. They made a conscious decision to let the Rising proceed—regardless of risk to civilians—confident of being able to beat the Irish easily, draw the Republican leadership out in the open and decapitate it. So much for republicans alone bearing full responsibility for the Rising.

Mr. Bury repeats the allegations of 'ethnic cleansing'—large numbers of Protestants being cleared out of the South. No solid study has been done of this, as far as I'm aware (though I may stand corrected). My guess is that Protestants left for a variety of reasons: some because they were loyalists and feared for their lives having actively aided the British. Others because they were targeted by opportunists seeking to exploit the situation to their own advantage. Indeed IRA man Tom Barry went to the assistance of one such protestant neighbour and posted guards round his property to protect him from such hooligans. Others, like my grandfather, had jobs that were connected to the British Administration, jobs that ceased to exist when the British pulled up tents and left. He did in fact leave the country as work was hard to find here, but later returned when things improved.

Mr. Bury's assertion of sectarianism also overlooks the thousands of anti-Treaty IRA men who were obliged through harassment to leave the country, or found themselves unable to secure proper work because of their politics, often right into the 1930s. Politics, and not religion drove them out. Mr. Bury rightly refers to the overbearing role of the Catholic Church in the Free State. The Catholic Church supported whoever was in power—British or Free State, since looking after its own interests was more important to it than social justice—an attitude that has landed it in hot water in recent times (however, I wish to acknowledge the goodness of many rank and file clergy). Republicanism was not responsible for the nature of the Catholic Church, indeed the Church despised it and many IRA were excommunicated. The unionists bullied both British and proto-Irish governments into accepting partition thus depriving our fledgling state of a voice of balance.

Moreover, if republicanism is supposed to be responsible for violent sectarianism, what does Mr. Bury have to say about the formation of the UVF which introduced the gun into 20th century Irish politics a full four years before the Easter Rising and the Ulster Covenant which set about creating a 'Protestant state for a Protestant people'? And how does he explain the sectarianism of the North—the Belfast pogroms, the anti-Catholic riots of 1935, etc., etc.,—where republicanism was a minority voice amongst enlightened unionist neighbours? In the instance of the 1935 riots, Protestant and Catholic working classes had united in common grievance until the vested interests—the Northern 'Kildare Street Club' to borrow a phrase from President McAleese—played the religion card and broke the solidarity of poor Protestant and Catholic alike by fermenting sectarianism. I could make many further points on Mr. Bury's letter, but I think there is food enough for thought here already.

Have there ever been wars that were fought in the abstract, outside of all political framework, and without political purpose? Of course there have. The wars fought by the IRA, as one finds them described by modern, really up to date, correctly-programmed historians.

We had hoped that this mode of writing would be broken by *The Northern IRA And The Early Years Of Partition* by Robert Lynch (Irish Academic Press). Well, we hadn't really. Not when we saw that Robert Lynch was "*senior Government of Ireland Research Scholar, Hertford College, University of Oxford*". But this subject matter above all others required that the mode of abstraction of war from political context should be breached, and there was a billion to one chance that Lynch would breach it, in breach of his own political context.

Thirty years ago (from 1974 to 1976) we sponsored a series of discussion meetings at the Queen's University Students' Union for the purpose of investigation of political and military affairs in the Six Counties during the years, 1920-22. We drew up an extensive summary of events, political and military, and invited the academics to come along and discuss what they meant. Only two academics ever turned up. One of them, who was English, held that it was imperialistic even to entertain the possibility that an event like the Shipyard Expulsions might have had a political context, even in the sense of a causal relationship with other events that were happening at the time. The other academic who showed up was the late Professor J.H. White. Discussion with him focussed on the 1974 Ulster Workers' Council Strike. He rejected our view that the Strike was made possible by the duplicity of Garret FitzGerald and Conor Cruise O'Brien at the Sunningdale negotiations, as made explicit by their Defence plea in the legal action taken against them by Kevin Boland. He also rejected our general view that the establishment of the 'Northern Ireland State' in a political Limbo was responsible for the persistence of 'sectarianism'. But Professor Whyte must be credited with the moral courage to place himself in a room where dangerous thoughts were given expression.

This new book tells us that, "In the two years running roughly from June 1920 to June 1922 what became the province of Northern Ireland was engulfed in brutal and vicious sectarian violence" (p2). But three pages later it tells us that these things happened in "the Northern Ireland state" (p5).

So which was it? A state, or the province of a state? There is a vast difference between the two.

Things would not have gone the way they have gone in Northern Ireland if it was a state—or if it was a province of a state. So it is neither. It is part of a province detached from the state for some political purpose of the State, and camouflaged as a pseudo-state for that same political purpose.

Senior Government Scholar Lynch refers to "the unique context in which the Northern IRA were operating" (p129). But he does not say what that uniqueness consists of.

The blurb on the book cites praise of it by three other modern historians, who have also abstracted from political reality in their own histories: Keith Jeffrey, Michael Hopkinson, and John Regan.

Lynch cannot have assumed that "*the unique context*" was self-evident, because the point of his Introduction is that the doings of Northern Republicanism in those years have not been dealt with in either song or story:

"Perhaps the most fundamental reason for this neglect has been due to the psychological impact of the past thirty years of political upheaval in Northern Ireland. The sheer length and immediacy of the recent conflict has relegated earlier periods of violence in Ulster to the position of mere dress-rehearsals for the main event taking place in the present. They are the unfinished battles of the past now finally reaching their conclusion... Such attitudes have meant that the role of the north-east in the Irish revolution is extremely ill-defined. Vague or emotive phrases such as the "Troubles" or the "Belfast Pogrom" have been employed to describe what is an extremely complex set of historical events with distinct phases of development. This failure to adequately define the period has been reinforced by a distinct possessiveness of the events of the revolutionary period on the part of Southern nationalists, typified by the employment of an identical nomenclature for the various phases of the conflict on both sides of the border", e.g. the Truce, which was a period of intense warfare in the North (p2).

"The context of the recent 'Troubles'... has also meant that any historical subject which involves a link between the IRA and Northern Ireland will almost inevitably be an extremely sensitive one. This has been demonstrated markedly by the lack of substantial historical sources for the period. Archival material, such as that now released today, was simply not available to earlier historians. There was almost a paranoid fear, especially in Northern Ireland, that new historical revelations would do little but stoke the fires of sectarian conflict and either offend or reinforce one of the two competing ideologies. The absence of available archives meant that those who did research the subject tended to have something of an axe to grind. This

approach is typified in the work of republicans such as Michael Farrell and rather defensive unionists, most notably Bryan Follis" (p3).

"The end result of these various practical and ideological barriers has led to what the historian and political scientist Paul Bew has called "partitionist history". Bew argues convincingly that historians have concentrated overly on the internal development of either southern nationalism or Ulster unionism. Whereas knowledge of the two traditions in Ireland has become increasingly sophisticated, and the grand nationalist narrative of the revolution has been successfully challenged, this has been achieved at the expense of all-Ireland perspectives" (p4-5).

Bew was one of the academics whom we had hoped, 30 years ago, to draw into a discussion of the general connectedness of things in the 1920-22 period. Both he and Professor Patterson maintained a severe distance from us. They were members of 'Official Sinn Fein', or whatever it happened to be called at the time, and they were living ideologically in the *a priori* omniscience of Althusserian political science, which discounted experience as a source of knowledge.

The idea that an accurate account of what went on in 1920-22 could not be written thirty years ago for lack of "*archival material*" is groundless. Everything of any real consequence was public at the time. Archive material has supplied no more than curious footnotes or fine detail. And the present mode of writing history from archives has had the function of displacing narrative history, rather than of filling it out with greater detail. These archives should be published in bulk as a matter of academic routine, without ideological furore, as is done elsewhere.

And what are we to make of the fear that "*historical revelations would... stoke the fire of sectarian conflict in the mid 1970s ! ! ?*"

Historical revelations could have had nothing but a calming effect on the "*fires of sectarian conflict*" that had been generated by the existing structure of "*the Northern Ireland state*". We can state that with certainty, because we made a few revelations at the time, and that is the effect they had.

Our revelations did not come from access to secret sources. They came from the operation of reason on publicly-available information—the kind of thing that archival history, as conduct in recent years, is designed to prevent.

The political context of Irish affairs in that general period is the British State. The strict meaning of politics (both etymologically and in actual life) is the business of governing a state. Britain was

a state conducted by representative government in a two-party system of politics, and it was in the process of establishing a democratic electoral franchise. The two-party system (described by undisputed authority as "*the life-blood of the Constitution*") failed to put down roots in Ireland, outside eastern Ulster, after the Act of Union. There was a separate Irish Party development which, although called Constitutional, was committed to the Constitutionally abnormal principle that it would *not* take part in the Government of the state. It would have been an Irish Independence Party, but for the fact that Parliament would not entertain the idea of Irish independence. So, in place of independence, it adopted the aim of establishing a degree of local, devolved government in Ireland under the authority of the Crown and the supervision of the UK Government, and with continuing Irish representation at Westminster. Under John Redmond's leadership the Home Rule Party became increasingly Imperialist in outlook, and in 1914 it threw itself wholeheartedly into the Great War which led to the expansion of the Empire in Africa and the Middle East.

It was against the measure of modest self-government within the Empire and under the eye of Westminster that Protestant Ulster rebelled and formed a private Army to fight against Home Rule if ever the Home Rule Bill became an Act. It never did become an Act. Although it was put on the Statute Book in September 1914, its implementation was suspended indefinitely, and the Unionists were given a guarantee that it would never be implemented as it stood.

Electoral government was suspended in 1915 for the duration of the War. When a General Election was eventually held in December 1918, the Home Rule Party was wiped out by the electorate, which voted for Irish independence.

Senior Government Scholar Lynch writes: "Assessing the level of IRA violence in particular areas of Ireland during the revolutionary period, and more crucially the reasons for it, is notoriously difficult" (p43).

It certainly is—if you turn a blind eye to the fact that an electoral mandate for independence was being ignored by the Government, as Lynch does. He does not mention the Election and the Government response to it, and therefore he deals with the "*violence of the revolutionary period*" in a political vacuum, so that it appears as mere feuding.

It is highly improbable that the IRA would ever have existed if the Government, when it saw the Irish election result (a result which it had anticipated), had made a statement of policy which indicated an intention to act in accordance with the

will of the electorate. (It had been for four years fighting a World War for democracy and the rights of small nations, and its professions of principle had been widely believed in Ireland.)

When it ignored the Election, and carried on governing Ireland, democracy would have been reduced to a travesty if the Irish had just put up with it. They didn't put up with it. They set about establishing their own system of government, and they fought a war against the British Army of Occupation that tried to stop them.

Of course the Irish resistance to the Occupation force was more intense in certain "*particular areas*" than in others. That was in the nature of things. It would have been strange indeed if it had been homogeneous.

Some areas were more active than others. But to investigate these particularities, while ignoring the general political situation which made it necessary that there should be a war to give effect to an electoral mandate, and then to attribute the "*violence*" to those local particularities alone—which is the revisionist way: that is falsification of history.

"The failure of Sinn Fein to make a priority of the North in its programme, the unionists not even being mentioned in the 1918 constitution, would inevitably mean that any future policy would be based more on expediency than political commitment... Sinn Fein's "one size fits all" nationalism would prove particularly ill-suited to the demands of the IRA organisation in the six counties although the brutality of unionist opposition would consistently act to mask these fundamental flaws" (p43). The "subtleties of Ulster's political landscape" were not taken into account.

There was a dissenting minority in the North East which had organised itself militarily against Redmond's Imperialist Home Rule movement when the sovereign Parliament was in the process of passing a Bill to establish devolved government in Ireland. The Irish electorate changed its mind in the course of the Great War and voted for independence in 1918. There was no "*subtlety*" in the Unionist position when mere Home Rule was the issue, and it is hard to see how "*subtlety*" entered in when independence became the issue.

The great question was whether Ireland was to be dealt with as a single political entity, as it had been by England ever since the Conquest. The Ulster Unionists had often complained of this since the mid-19th century, arguing that their different social and economic structure required different laws and a different administration from the rest of the country, but Westminster had paid no heed. It was as the Kingdom of Ireland that Ireland

entered the Union in 1800, and it was as the Kingdom of Ireland that it was governed by Britain until 1920.

In 1919 Britain constructed many new states in Europe, applying the standard of historic political territory, combined with current national opinion, to the delimitation of these states, and in many instances the factor of historic territory was given priority. This procedure resulted in the formation of national states in which there were large dissenting national minorities.

In Ireland it was not a case of reviving ancient political territories. The constitutional existence of the Kingdom of Ireland was never challenged by the conquest—until 1920.

The ground of Senior Government Scholar Lynch's criticism of Sinn Fein in this matter is far from clear. Is he suggesting that Sinn Fein should have taken the initiative in Partitioning the country and not waited for Britain to do so?

Gladstone proclaimed the grand principle that "*England has her constancy no less than Rome*". This was in the spirit of Burke, who held that ancient forms should be maintained almost at any cost, and that Constitutional innovation was to be avoided. It had been raised as a debating point by Macaulay against O'Connell's Repeal campaign (which went much further than Redmond's Home Rule demand) that the principle on which O'Connell argued for Repeal might be used by Protestant Ulster as an argument for exclusion from a Repeal Bill. But it was only a debating point, because Repeal was then taken to be an utter impossibility.

The drastic constitutional innovation of breaking up the Kingdom of Ireland was something that the powers-that-be in Whitehall could not set before themselves coldly as a systematically thought out project. They deceived themselves about what they were doing when they were doing it. (See Eamon Dyas, *Federalism & The 1920 Government Of Ireland Act*, Institute for Representative Government, 1989.) And they possibly would not have done it at all if, at a desperate moment during the Great War, the conduct of government had not fallen into the hands of a gifted charlatan. (Lloyd George was of the type that Burke held up to contempt in his tirade against the French Revolution.)

The frivolously-enacted Partition of Ireland was one of a series of disastrous decisions which undermined the Empire at the moment of its greatest power. It was not something which a thorough knowledge of English affairs would have led one to take to be inevitable. And it is certainly not reasonable to criticize Sinn Fein for failing to pre-empt it by doing it itself.

Sinn Fein won the election in the Kingdom of Ireland on an independence mandate—a very much clearer mandate than that by which the Act of Union was achieved. It declared independence, appointed a Government, and gained the adhesion of local authorities to its system at the following local elections. It was obliged to go to war when Britain's Irish Government—a government of all Ireland under a Viceroy—took no heed of the Election, substituting naked military power when the fig-leaf of the Home Rule Party was torn off.

In 1919 there were two rival Irish Governments, one based on force the other on an electoral mandate. And Ulster Unionism supported one of them—the one based on force.

Although the Ulster Unionist Council had in 1916 been persuaded into a provisional acceptance of a 6 County Partition in the event of the Home Rule Act being revived from the dead and implemented, it was far from being committed to Partition. It relinquished its claim to three Ulster Counties in the event of Imperialist Home Rule being implemented, but it became an Imperialist all-Ireland Party when independence came on the agenda. It supported British military rule over the whole of Ireland in defiance of the Election result. It was Imperialist by preference. The appeal to democratic principle was a fall-back position to be appealed to in case the Empire faltered.

The Unionist response to the 1st Home Rule Bill in 1886 was an expression of outrage that a superior people should be subordinated to an inferior people on the basis of head-counting, even though it was only a matter of local government. That remained its animating spirit. The Ulster Protestants were one of the peoples of the master-race of the world, and their great concern in public affairs was that they should stay in the game of world-mastering. When most of Ireland was let go (sort of) in 1921-2, what hurt most was not the loss of 26 Counties to which they had been attached, but the failure of Imperial will to master the situation. Ulster remained attached to what it was attached to—the Empire. Carson uttered a kind of protest on its behalf at the setting up of 'the Northern Ireland state', which placed it at a distance from the democracy of the State and required it to engage in the distasteful business of governing—or controlling—a large body of Catholics. But Carson was not an Ulsterman. And Ulster did not feel the pain of the arrangements made in 1921-2 as Carson did. The Ulster Unionists were, if anything, rather proud that they had become a semi-detached statelet of the Imperial family of nations, and they felt no loss at being excluded from the new, vulgar, nondescript democracy of the "mainland".

Even fifty years later, when the whole ramshackle structure had been brought down, we had the greatest difficulty in getting them to understand that their trouble had come about through their exclusion from the democracy of the state. And, even when they grasped it intellectually, they didn't feel it. And as William James said, where there is no feeling there is no value. The late Harold McCusker was one of those who understood it best, but even he could never get over the feeling that the half-century of the Stormont statelet was an idyll, one of the great Golden Ages in the history of the world.

Ulster Unionist culture had little to do with democracy as an actual mode of government. It was happy to support military rule in Ireland after the 1918 Election. And it was happy after 1922 to be excluded from the politics of governing the State, and to occupy its own apolitical niche in the Empire. And it is a shame that Providence did not arrange their Paradise for them in a way that was not a fool's paradise.

Senior Government Scholar Lynch says not a word about the setting-up of Northern Ireland by Britain. In this he follows Professor Foster, to whom he acknowledges a particular debt. To Foster it is as if the British State did not exist, or played no particular part in Irish affairs. Consistently with this view, Foster argues that Irish Republicans should have made war on the Ulster Unionists rather than on the British State:

"...it was Ulster resistance that should have provided the target for advanced nationalist aggression" (*Modern Ireland* p492).

But Irish affairs were above all affairs of the British state. Britain was not a federal state whose regions developed themselves autonomously. It was a tightly-centralised state with no autonomy in its parts. Local government within it was a concession from the central authority, which operated under central supervision and might be revoked at any time.

Northern Ireland was set up in response to the Ulster Unionist terrorism of 1913-14. Unionists in recent years have said that the existence of an illegal army in the state is an act of terrorism, regardless of whether it does any shooting. The formation of the UVF, then, was a terrorist act, which led to the formation of Northern Ireland. And Northern Ireland was not a great deal more than the legalising of the UVF in the 6 Counties. But Northern Ireland was not set up by the Ulster Unionists. It was set up by British Act of Parliament.

The Ulster Unionist Council had no experience of statecraft and no aptitude for it, and it was not its business to see that

the Partition settlement in the North was democratically viable. It was not greatly concerned about democracy, which it used only as a fashionable slogan. Its concern was that it should not be subjected to government by Catholics/Nationalists/natives. That was secured for it by Partition. But the condition on which Britain enacted Partition for it was that it should conduct a Home Rule government of Northern Ireland outside the political system of the state.

It might be argued that the Unionists did not know what they were getting. But Whitehall undoubtedly knew what it was giving—what it insisted on being taken.

All Ireland was governed by the Viceroy in January 1919. The IRA was formed as an all-Ireland body when the Viceroy took no heed of the election result.

Partition was enacted two years later. The Catholic community in the Six Counties had since about 1900 been the most vigorous element in the Home Rule Party. It was organised in the Ancient Order of Hibernians which was affiliated to the party, and the Hibernians, who were constitutional nationalists, remained strong in the North when the Home Rule Party collapsed in the South.

Eastern Ulster was the only part of Ireland where the British party-system took root after the Act of Union. The Whigs and Tories combined in opposition to Home Rule in 1886, but the two strains remained discernible in 1919, and there had in addition been a strong Labour development.

The rest of Ireland was in a sense the hinterland of the Ulster Hibernians, who were the active, popular element in the Home Rule movement. (They disciplined the Cork defectors from Redmondism at the 1909 Convention of the Irish Party). Partition cut them off from their base and left them an isolated vanguard. But they were not simply a nationalist organisation. Joe Devlin developed the AOH as a Friendly Society, and it registered as such under the Insurance Act.

In 1919 the Liberal Party (which had split under the stress of the War it had launched in 1914) was relegated to the political margins, and its place taken by the Labour Party.

If there had been a simple Partition of Ireland in 1919, with the Declaration of Independence being accepted for most of the country, or at least being negotiated with, and the Six Counties (or three or four Counties with bits of others) simply being part of the British political system, it is very improbable that there would ever have been an IRA. Hibernians and Unionists would in all probability have found natural places for themselves in the political life of the state.

But Eastern Ulster, the part of the country most suited for participation in the politics of the British state, was the only part of Ireland ever excluded from the politics of the British state. And the only strong survival of constitutional nationalism in Ireland was left without a constitutional outlet.

In June 1914 Redmond's nephew collaborated with Carson's son to write a play envisaging what would happen if the Home Rule Bill was enacted and implemented. Would the Army inspired by the Curragh Mutiny refuse to act for the Government? If it acted, would the Protestants resist? Conflict erupts between the Hibernians and the UVF, with the Army attempting to act but being ineffectual, and the play ends in chaos.

The Hibernians were then on the side of the law against the UVF rebellion. When it happened for real seven years later, the UVF was the legal authority and the Hibernians were driven berserk by being simultaneously cut off from their natural hinterland (which had changed from Imperial Home Rule to Republicanism in the interim), and from the British state in whose affairs they had begun to participate, and placed under the control of the rebels of 1913-14.

Those who dispense the patronage of the British State do not want these matters to be probed too closely. They want all of them to be lumped together as one thing, called "*Partition*", and discontent with this "*partition*" to be named "*sectarianism*". And that is what Lynch does.

He says: "the partitioning of Ireland into two new self-governing administrations has received only limited attention from historians" (p1), and proceeds to limit his own attention to it. He says that "Vague or emotive phrases such as the 'Troubles' or the 'Belfast Pogrom' have been employed to describe what is an extremely complex set of historical events" (p2). But nothing could be vaguer than "Partition into two administrations". As to the word "*sectarian*", which he uses a lot, it applies most properly for the system devised by Britain for the 6 Counties when it was partitioning Ireland. The response to a sectarian system by its victims is sectarian only as an inescapable derivative of the system: e.g. popular opposition to the Penal Laws was sectarian because it was composed of the Catholic victims of the system.

In abstraction from the shifting framework of the State, only a "*bang-bang*" history of the conflict of the North is possible. As a "*bang-bang*" history this book appears to be quite industriously written. But the IRA has never been just a bang-bang gang.

Have there ever been wars that were

fought in the abstract, outside of all political framework, and without political purpose? Of course there have. The wars fought by the IRA, as one finds them described by modern, really up to date, correctly-programmed historians.

We had hoped that this mode of writing would be broken by *The Northern IRA And The Early Years Of Partition* by Robert Lynch (Irish Academic Press). Well, we hadn't really. Not when we saw that Robert Lynch was "*senior Government of Ireland Research Scholar, Hertford College, University of Oxford*". But this subject matter above all others required that the mode of abstraction of war from political context should be breached, and there was a billion to one chance that Lynch would breach it, in breach of his own political context.

Thirty years ago (from 1974 to 1976) we sponsored a series of discussion meetings at the Queen's University Students' Union for the purpose of investigation of political and military affairs in the Six Counties during the years, 1920-22. We drew up an extensive summary of events, political and military, and invited the academics to come along and discuss what they meant. Only two academics ever turned up. One of them, who was English, held that it was imperialistic even to entertain the possibility that an event like the Shipyard Expulsions might have had a political context, even in the sense of a causal relationship with other events that were happening at the time. The other academic who showed up was the late Professor J.H. White. Discussion with him focussed on the 1974 Ulster Workers' Council Strike. He rejected our view that the Strike was made possible by the duplicity of Garret FitzGerald and Conor Cruise O' Brien at the Sunningdale negotiations, as made explicit by their Defence plea in the legal action taken against them by Kevin Boland. He also rejected our general view that the establishment of the 'Northern Ireland State' in a political Limbo was responsible for the persistence of 'sectarianism'. But Professor Whyte must be credited with the moral courage to place himself in a room where dangerous thoughts were given expression.

This new book tells us that, "In the two years running roughly from June 1920 to June 1922 what became the province of Northern Ireland was engulfed in brutal and vicious sectarian violence" (p2). But three pages later it tells us that these things happened in "the Northern Ireland state" (p5).

So which was it? A state, or the province of a state? There is a vast difference between the two.

Things would not have gone the way they have gone in Northern Ireland if it

was a state—or if it was a province of a state. So it is neither. It is part of a province detached from the state for some political purpose of the State, and camouflaged as a pseudo-state for that same political purpose.

Senior Government Scholar Lynch refers to "the unique context in which the Northern IRA were operating" (p129). But he does not say what that uniqueness consists of.

The blurb on the book cites praise of it by three other modern historians, who have also abstracted from political reality in their own histories: Keith Jeffrey, Michael Hopkinson, and John Regan.

Lynch cannot have assumed that "*the unique context*" was self-evident, because the point of his Introduction is that the doings of Northern Republicanism in those years have not been dealt with in either song or story:

"Perhaps the most fundamental reason for this neglect has been due to the psychological impact of the past thirty years of political upheaval in Northern Ireland. The sheer length and immediacy of the recent conflict has relegated earlier periods of violence in Ulster to the position of mere dress-rehearsals for the main event taking place in the present. They are the unfinished battles of the past now finally reaching their conclusion... Such attitudes have meant that the role of the north-east in the Irish revolution is extremely ill-defined. Vague or emotive phrases such as the "Troubles" or the "Belfast Pogrom" have been employed to describe what is an extremely complex set of historical events with distinct phases of development. This failure to adequately define the period has been reinforced by a distinct possessiveness of the events of the revolutionary period on the part of Southern nationalists, typified by the employment of an identical nomenclature for the various phases of the conflict on both sides of the border", e.g. the Truce, which was a period of intense warfare in the North (p2).

"The context of the recent 'Troubles'... has also meant that any historical subject which involves a link between the IRA and Northern Ireland will almost inevitably be an extremely sensitive one. This has been demonstrated markedly by the lack of substantial historical sources for the period. Archival material, such as that now released today, was simply not available to earlier historians. There was almost a paranoid fear, especially in Northern Ireland, that new historical revelations would do little but stoke the fires of sectarian conflict and either offend or reinforce one of the two competing ideologies. The absence of available archives meant that those who did research the subject tended to have something of an axe to grind. This approach is typified in the work of republicans such as Michael Farrell and rather defensive unionists, most notably Bryan Follis" (p3).

"The end result of these various practical and ideological barriers has led to what the historian and political scientist Paul Bew has called "partitionist history". Bew argues convincingly that historians have concentrated overly on the internal development of either southern nationalism or Ulster unionism. Whereas knowledge of the two traditions in Ireland has become increasingly sophisticated, and the grand nationalist narrative of the revolution has been successfully challenged, this has been achieved at the expense of all-Ireland perspectives" (p4-5).

Bew was one of the academics whom we had hoped, 30 years ago, to draw into a discussion of the general connectedness of things in the 1920-22 period. Both he and Professor Patterson maintained a severe distance from us. They were members of 'Official Sinn Fein', or whatever it happened to be called at the time, and they were living ideologically in the *a priori* omniscience of Althusserian political science, which discounted experience as a source of knowledge.

The idea that an accurate account of what went on in 1920-22 could not be written thirty years ago for lack of "archival material" is groundless. Everything of any real consequence was public at the time. Archive material has supplied no more than curious footnotes or fine detail. And the present mode of writing history from archives has had the function of displacing narrative history, rather than of filling it out with greater detail. These archives should be published in bulk as a matter of academic routine, without ideological furore, as is done elsewhere.

And what are we to make of the fear that "historical revelations would... stoke the fire of sectarian conflict" in the mid 1970s ! ! ?

Historical revelations could have had nothing but a calming effect on the "fires of sectarian conflict" that had been generated by the existing structure of "the Northern Ireland state". We can state that with certainty, because we made a few revelations at the time, and that is the effect they had.

Our revelations did not come from access to secret sources. They came from the operation of reason on publicly-available information—the kind of thing that archival history, as conduct in recent years, is designed to prevent.

The political context of Irish affairs in that general period is the British State. The strict meaning of politics (both etymologically and in actual life) is the business of governing a state. Britain was a state conducted by representative government in a two-party system of politics, and it was in the process of

establishing a democratic electoral franchise. The two-party system (described by undisputed authority as "*the life-blood of the Constitution*") failed to put down roots in Ireland, outside eastern Ulster, after the Act of Union. There was a separate Irish Party development which, although called Constitutional, was committed to the Constitutionally abnormal principle that it would *not* take part in the Government of the state. It would have been an Irish Independence Party, but for the fact that Parliament would not entertain the idea of Irish independence. So, in place of independence, it adopted the aim of establishing a degree of local, devolved government in Ireland under the authority of the Crown and the supervision of the UK Government, and with continuing Irish representation at Westminster. Under John Redmond's leadership the Home Rule Party became increasingly Imperialist in outlook, and in 1914 it threw itself wholeheartedly into the Great War which led to the expansion of the Empire in Africa and the Middle East.

It was against the measure of modest self-government within the Empire and under the eye of Westminster that Protestant Ulster rebelled and formed a private Army to fight against Home Rule if ever the Home Rule Bill became an Act. It never did become an Act. Although it was put on the Statute Book in September 1914, its implementation was suspended indefinitely, and the Unionists were given a guarantee that it would never be implemented as it stood.

Electoral government was suspended in 1915 for the duration of the War. When a General Election was eventually held in December 1918, the Home Rule Party was wiped out by the electorate, which voted for Irish independence.

Senior Government Scholar Lynch writes: "Assessing the level of IRA violence in particular areas of Ireland during the revolutionary period, and more crucially the reasons for it, is notoriously difficult" (p43).

It certainly is—if you turn a blind eye to the fact that an electoral mandate for independence was being ignored by the Government, as

Lynch does. He does not mention the Election and the Government response to it, and therefore he deals with the "*violence of the revolutionary period*" in a political vacuum, so that it appears as mere feuding.

It is highly improbable that the IRA would ever have existed if the Government, when it saw the Irish election result (a result which it had anticipated), had made a statement of policy which indicated an intention to act in accordance with the will of the electorate. (It had been for four years fighting a World War for democracy and the rights of small nations, and its professions of principle had been widely believed in Ireland.)

When it ignored the Election, and carried on governing Ireland, democracy would have been reduced to a travesty if the Irish had just put up with it. They didn't put up with it. They set about establishing their own system of government, and they fought a war against the British Army of Occupation that tried to stop them.

Of course the Irish resistance to the Occupation force was more intense in certain "*particular areas*" than in others. That was in the nature of things. It would have been strange indeed if it had been homogeneous.

Some areas were more active than others. But to investigate these particularities, while ignoring the general political situation which made it necessary that there should be a war to give effect to an electoral mandate, and then to attribute

BOOK LAUNCHES

sponsored by

Aubane Historical Society

Aubane, Millstreet, Co. Cork

Friday, 7 April 7.30pm

TEACHERS CLUB, 36 PARNELL SQUARE, DUBLIN

Conversations with Carlyle by **Charles Gavan Duffy**.

Reprint of the 1892 edition with introduction: *Stray thoughts on Young Ireland* by **Brendan Clifford**

Good Friday, 14th April 11.30 am

GREEN CROSS BOOKSHOP, 51-55 FALLS RD., BELFAST

Six Days of the Irish Republic (1916) and other items

by **L G Redmond-Howard**. Introduction by **Brendan Clifford**

Saturday, 29th April 3.30 pm

CORK CITY LIBRARY, GRAND PARADE, CORK

The Origins & Organisation of British Propaganda In Ireland 1920

by **Brian P Murphy OSB**

&

Florence and Josephine O'Donoghue's War of Independence

by **John Miller Borgonovo**

All Welcome

jacklaneaubane@hotmail.com

the "violence" to those local particularities alone—which is the revisionist way: that is falsification of history.

"The failure of Sinn Fein to make a priority of the North in its programme, the unionists not even being mentioned in the 1918 constitution, would inevitably mean that any future policy would be based more on expediency than political commitment... Sinn Fein's "one size fits all" nationalism would prove particularly ill-suited to the demands of the IRA organisation in the six counties although the brutality of unionist opposition would consistently act to mask these fundamental flaws" (p43). The "subtleties of Ulster's political landscape" were not taken into account.

There was a dissenting minority in the North East which had organised itself militarily against Redmond's Imperialist Home Rule movement when the sovereign Parliament was in the process of passing a Bill to establish devolved government in Ireland. The Irish electorate changed its mind in the course of the Great War and voted for independence in 1918. There was no "subtlety" in the Unionist position when mere Home Rule was the issue, and it is hard to see how "subtlety" entered in when independence became the issue.

The great question was whether Ireland was to be dealt with as a single political entity, as it had been by England ever since the Conquest. The Ulster Unionists had often complained of this since the mid-19th century, arguing that their different social and economic structure required different laws and a different administration from the rest of the country, but Westminster had paid no heed. It was as the Kingdom of Ireland that Ireland entered the Union in 1800, and it was as the Kingdom of Ireland that it was governed by Britain until 1920.

In 1919 Britain constructed many new states in Europe, applying the standard of historic political territory, combined with current national opinion, to the delimitation of these states, and in many instances the factor of historic territory was given priority. This procedure resulted in the formation of national states in which there were large dissenting national minorities.

In Ireland it was not a case of reviving ancient political territories. The constitutional existence of the Kingdom of Ireland was never challenged by the conquest—until 1920.

The ground of Senior Government Scholar Lynch's criticism of Sinn Fein in this matter is far from clear. Is he suggesting that Sinn Fein should have taken the initiative in Partitioning the country and not waited for Britain to do so?

Gladstone proclaimed the grand

principle that "*England has her constancy no less than Rome*". This was in the spirit of Burke, who held that ancient forms should be maintained almost at any cost, and that Constitutional innovation was to be avoided. It had been raised as a debating point by Macaulay against O'Connell's Repeal campaign (which went much further than Redmond's Home Rule demand) that the principle on which O'Connell argued for Repeal might be used by Protestant Ulster as an argument for exclusion from a Repeal Bill. But it was only a debating point, because Repeal was then taken to be an utter impossibility.

The drastic constitutional innovation of breaking up the Kingdom of Ireland was something that the powers-that-be in Whitehall could not set before themselves coldly as a systematically thought out project. They deceived themselves about what they were doing when they were doing it. (See Eamon Dyas, *Federalism & The 1920 Government Of Ireland Act*, Institute for Representative Government, 1989.) And they possibly would not have done it at all if, at a desperate moment during the Great War, the conduct of government had not fallen into the hands of a gifted charlatan. (Lloyd George was of the type that Burke held up to contempt in his tirade against the French Revolution.)

The frivolously-enacted Partition of Ireland was one of a series of disastrous decisions which undermined the Empire at the moment of its greatest power. It was not something which a thorough knowledge of English affairs would have led one to take to be inevitable. And it is certainly not reasonable to criticize Sinn Fein for failing to pre-empt it by doing it itself.

Sinn Fein won the election in the Kingdom of Ireland on an independence mandate—a very much clearer mandate than that by which the Act of Union was achieved. It declared independence, appointed a Government, and gained the adhesion of local authorities to its system at the following local elections. It was obliged to go to war when Britain's Irish Government—a government of all Ireland under a Viceroy—took no heed of the Election, substituting naked military power when the fig-leaf of the Home Rule Party was torn off.

In 1919 there were two rival Irish Governments, one based on force the other on an electoral mandate. And Ulster Unionism supported one of them—the one based on force.

Although the Ulster Unionist Council had in 1916 been persuaded into a provisional acceptance of a 6 County Partition in the event of the Home Rule Act being revived from the dead and

implemented, it was far from being committed to Partition. It relinquished its claim to three Ulster Counties in the event of Imperialist Home Rule being implemented, but it became an Imperialist all-Ireland Party when independence came on the agenda. It supported British military rule over the whole of Ireland in defiance of the Election result. It was Imperialist by preference. The appeal to democratic principle was a fall-back position to be appealed to in case the Empire faltered.

The Unionist response to the 1st Home Rule Bill in 1886 was an expression of outrage that a superior people should be subordinated to an inferior people on the basis of head-counting, even though it was only a matter of local government. That remained its animating spirit. The Ulster Protestants were one of the peoples of the master-race of the world, and their great concern in public affairs was that they should stay in the game of world-mastering. When most of Ireland was let go (sort of) in 1921-2, what hurt most was not the loss of 26 Counties to which they had been attached, but the failure of Imperial will to master the situation. Ulster remained attached to what it was attached to—the Empire. Carson uttered a kind of protest on its behalf at the setting up of 'the Northern Ireland state', which placed it at a distance from the democracy of the State and required it to engage in the distasteful business of governing—or controlling—a large body of Catholics. But Carson was not an Ulsterman. And Ulster did not feel the pain of the arrangements made in 1921-2 as Carson did. The Ulster Unionists were, if anything, rather proud that they had become a semi-detached statelet of the Imperial family of nations, and they felt no loss at being excluded from the new, vulgar, nondescript democracy of the "mainland".

Even fifty years later, when the whole ramshackle structure had been brought down, we had the greatest difficulty in getting them to understand that their trouble had come about through their exclusion from the democracy of the state. And, even when they grasped it intellectually, they didn't feel it. And as William James said, where there is no feeling there is no value. The late Harold McCusker was one of those who understood it best, but even he could never get over the feeling that the half-century of the Stormont statelet was an idyll, one of the great Golden Ages in the history of the world.

Ulster Unionist culture had little to do with democracy as an actual mode of government. It was happy to support military rule in Ireland after the 1918 Election. And it was happy after 1922 to be excluded from the politics of governing the State, and to occupy its own apolitical

niche in the Empire. And it is a shame that Providence did not arrange their Paradise for them in a way that was not a fool's paradise.

Senior Government Scholar Lynch says not a word about the setting-up of Northern Ireland by Britain. In this he follows Professor Foster, to whom he acknowledges a particular debt. To Foster it is as if the British State did not exist, or played no particular part in Irish affairs. Consistently with this view, Foster argues that Irish Republicans should have made war on the Ulster Unionists rather than on the British State:

"...it was Ulster resistance that should have provided the target for advanced nationalist aggression" (*Modern Ireland* p492).

But Irish affairs were above all affairs of the British state. Britain was not a federal state whose regions developed themselves autonomously. It was a tightly-centralised state with no autonomy in its parts. Local government within it was a concession from the central authority, which operated under central supervision and might be revoked at any time.

Northern Ireland was set up in response to the Ulster Unionist terrorism of 1913-14. Unionists in recent years have said that the existence of an illegal army in the state is an act of terrorism, regardless of whether it does any shooting. The formation of the UVF, then, was a terrorist act, which led to the formation of Northern Ireland. And Northern Ireland was not a great deal more than the legalising of the UVF in the 6 Counties. But Northern Ireland was not set up by the Ulster Unionists. It was set up by British Act of Parliament.

The Ulster Unionist Council had no experience of statecraft and no aptitude for it, and it was not its business to see that the Partition settlement in the North was democratically viable. It was not greatly concerned about democracy, which it used only as a fashionable slogan. Its concern was that it should not be subjected to government by Catholics/Nationalists/natives. That was secured for it by Partition. But the condition on which Britain enacted Partition for it was that it should conduct a Home Rule government of Northern Ireland outside the political system of the state.

It might be argued that the Unionists did not know what they were getting. But Whitehall undoubtedly knew what it was giving—what it insisted on being taken.

All Ireland was governed by the Viceroy in January 1919. The IRA was formed as an all-Ireland body when the Viceroy took no heed of the election result.

Partition was enacted two years later. The Catholic community in the Six Counties had since about 1900 been the most vigorous element in the Home Rule Party. It was organised in the Ancient Order of Hibernians which was affiliated to the party, and the Hibernians, who were constitutional nationalists, remained strong in the North when the Home Rule Party collapsed in the South.

Eastern Ulster was the only part of Ireland where the British party-system took root after the Act of Union. The Whigs and Tories combined in opposition to Home Rule in 1886, but the two strains remained discernible in 1919, and there had in addition been a strong Labour development.

The rest of Ireland was in a sense the hinterland of the Ulster Hibernians, who were the active, popular element in the Home Rule movement. (They disciplined the Cork defectors from Redmondism at the 1909 Convention of the Irish Party). Partition cut them off from their base and left them an isolated vanguard. But they were not simply a nationalist organisation. Joe Devlin developed the AOH as a Friendly Society, and it registered as such under the Insurance Act.

In 1919 the Liberal Party (which had split under the stress of the War it had launched in 1914) was relegated to the political margins, and its place taken by the Labour Party.

If there had been a simple Partition of Ireland in 1919, with the Declaration of Independence being accepted for most of the country, or at least being negotiated with, and the Six Counties (or three or four Counties with bits of others) simply being part of the British political system, it is very improbable that there would ever have been an IRA. Hibernians and Unionists would in all probability have found natural places for themselves in the political life of the state.

But Eastern Ulster, the part of the country most suited for participation in the politics of the British state, was the only part of Ireland ever excluded from the politics of the British state. And the only strong survival of constitutional nationalism in Ireland was left without a constitutional outlet.

In June 1914 Redmond's nephew collaborated with Carson's son to write a play envisaging what would happen if the Home Rule Bill was enacted and implemented. Would the Army inspired by the Curragh Mutiny refuse to act for the Government? If it acted, would the Protestants resist? Conflict erupts between the Hibernians and the UVF, with the Army attempting to act but being ineffectual, and the play ends in chaos.

The Hibernians were then on the side of the law against the UVF rebellion. When it happened for real seven years later, the UVF was the legal authority and the Hibernians were driven berserk by being simultaneously cut off from their natural hinterland (which had changed from Imperial Home Rule to Republicanism in the interim), and from the British state in whose affairs they had begun to participate, and placed under the control of the rebels of 1913-14.

Those who dispense the patronage of the British State do not want these matters to be probed too closely. They want all of them to be lumped together as one thing, called "*Partition*", and discontent with this "*partition*" to be named "*sectarianism*". And that is what Lynch does.

He says: "the partitioning of Ireland into two new self-governing administrations has received only limited attention from historians" (p1), and proceeds to limit his own attention to it. He says that "Vague or emotive phrases such as the "Troubles" or the "Belfast Pogrom" have been employed to describe what is an extremely complex set of historical events" (p2). But nothing could be vaguer than "Partition into two administrations". As to the word "*sectarian*", which he uses a lot, it applies most properly for the system devised by Britain for the 6 Counties when it was partitioning Ireland. The response to a sectarian system by its victims is sectarian only as an inescapable derivative of the system: e.g. popular opposition to the Penal Laws was sectarian because it was composed of the Catholic victims of the system.

In abstraction from the shifting framework of the State, only a "*bang-bang*" history of the conflict of the North is possible. As a "*bang-bang*" history this book appears to be quite industriously written. But the IRA has never been just a bang-bang gang.

Church & State No. 84

**"I Slept With James Connolly"—
a contribution to the Pearse debate**

The Thoughts Of Lundy

Liberal Totalitarian Truth

Cadamstown - part two

Feminism

ORDER THROUGH:

www.atholbooks.org

Shorts

from

the Long Fellow

ROYAL TO LEAD THE REPUBLIC?

For some years now, the French political class has failed to respond to the demands of the people. Symptoms of the malaise include: the vote for the right-wing Jean Marie Le Pen in 2002, beating the socialist candidate into third place; the defeat of the European Constitutional Treaty in last year's referendum, despite overwhelming support from the French political and media establishment; and the riots in the poor suburbs.

No political party or personality has succeeded in responding to and making politics out of the deep discontent of the people. While the communist party fought a brilliant campaign against the Treaty, it has taken a terrible battering over the last 25 years and does not have the confidence or ability to lead the French working class. Its leader Marie George Buffet, although excellent in many respects, does not have the necessary leadership qualities for the task in hand.

The most impressive opponent of the constitutional treaty was Lauren Fabius. During the referendum he helped to place the issues in the context of recent developments, such as globalisation and the Nice Treaty. His opposition was from a pro European perspective. However, he is viewed with deep suspicion by the left. He is remembered as the Prime Minister who was at the helm when Mitterrand's Government shifted to the right and, as such, his recent conversion to socialism looks like opportunism. He is also associated in the public mind with the contaminated blood scandal of more than ten years ago, which has undermined his credibility.

And so, into this political vacuum has entered the beautiful Segolene Royal, the partner of the General Secretary of the French Socialist Party, Francois Hollande. She seems a breath of fresh air and the possibility of a woman as President has installed her as favourite for the 2007 elections. But alas, the novelty is an illusion. She is very much part of the political establishment. Her support for the Constitutional Treaty as well as her cautious admiration for Blairism in a *Financial Times* interview does not augur well.

THE BEST MANAGER IN THE WORLD

I suppose if Ireland can't win the six nations rugby championship, the next best thing is that the French do so. In this campaign French Manager Bernard

Laporte showed that he was in a class of his own. In his pronounced working man's southern French accent he castigated the supporters in Stade de France for being "bourgeois" and demanded that the French Rugby Federation cut prices by half to allow the real rugby supporters watch their national team.

The manager is great. The players are brilliant. Let's sack the fans. *Allez France!*

THE WORST MANAGER IN THE WORLD

If Laporte is the best, the worst manager must be Jose Mourinho whose arrogance and petulance prevented him from acknowledging that his Chelsea team was completely outclassed by Barcelona. The best comment I heard regarding the match was from the excellent Newstalk 106 which made the point that Ireland's Damian Duff was in no way out of his depth among his millionaire Chelsea team mates. He was as shite as the rest of them!

ARROGANCE AND PETULANCE

But no one can compete for arrogance and petulance with our Minister for Justice Michael McDowell. The edited extracts of his "Goebbels" outburst which appeared in the following days newspapers did not capture the emotion behind his rant. (The *Irish Times* of 22nd March reported him as calling Richard Bruton "*the Dr. Goebbels of propaganda... he has manipulated public opinion in a disgraceful way... He resembles a kind of post-graduate student... [who] uses figures selectively to prove a falsehood... Deputy Bruton is knee-high to me in terms of anything that he ever managed to do for this country...*")

It could be said that the Justice Minister has finally lost it, except that it is difficult to remember when he ever had a sense of perspective. Comparing Fine Gael's Richard Bruton with Goebbels comes on top of his description of *Daily Ireland* as a Nazi-type publication, as well as his ridiculous belief that the head of the Centre for Public Inquiry represented a threat to the State. Richard Bruton did not lose his job, nor was his business undermined by McDowell's comments. Nevertheless, McDowell decided to apologise to the Fine Gael spokesman on Finance because he actually "*liked*" Bruton. Presumably if McDowell didn't "*like*" Bruton or didn't mix in the same social milieu an apology would not have been forthcoming. (Or was he looking to the negotiations to form the next Government?)

Earlier in the year McDowell said in a radio interview that he believed that British intelligence sacrificed Denis Donaldson to hide a much more senior member of the IRA who was working for them. He gave the impression that he had inside knowledge on the matter. It would be understandable for a member of British intelligence to put out such a line. But

why would an Irish cabinet minister engage in such speculation, the only possible effect of which would be to undermine Sinn Fein at the expense of dissident Republicans opposed to the Good Friday Agreement?

The behaviour of McDowell calls to mind the famous quote of Huey Long, the Governor of Louisiana in the 1930s. When asked about whether a fascist party could come to power in the United States, he replied that it was possible, but such a party would have to call itself the 'anti fascist party'.

THE BELARUS TIGER

This column salutes the great democratic victory of President Alexander Lukashenko in the elections of Belarus. This achievement was in the face of an almost unprecedented Western media onslaught and financial manipulation. But it appears that economic realities have won out. Average real wages have increased consistently over his term, culminating in a 24% increase in the last 12 months (see *Guardian*, 10.3.06). The Belarus people have ignored the outrageous slur by Condoleeza Rice who called Belarus the last "*outpost of tyranny*".

The people of Belarus have learned from the failed US backed "Orange Revolution" in the Ukraine. We look forward to the forthcoming defeat of the failed Western puppet Viktor Yushchenko in Ukraine.

Democracy is great!

THE CELTIC TIGER

Last month this column queried Vincent Browne's description of Pat Rabbitte as "*right wing*" because of the latter's raising of the issue of immigration controls. It appears that *The Phoenix* (10/2/06) is also of the opinion that such a policy is right-wing and has given the impression that Labour TD Michael D Higgins is in someway opportunistic in supporting Pat Rabbitte on this issue.

It may or may not be in the interests of working people in this country for Ireland to have no restrictions on immigration. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the influx of immigrants has in some cases undermined wages (e.g. Irish Ferries and Jacobs). The idea that it is 'racist' or 'xenophobic' for the State to consider imposing such controls is ludicrous. There is nothing left-wing about the State taking a passive role in relation to the free market and the free movement of labour. On the contrary, mindless liberalism is likely to lead to an increase in racist and xenophobic attitudes if ordinary people see such immigration as benefiting the capitalist class at their expense.

Higgins and Rabbitte should be supported for raising the issue.

On Fascism:

continued

"The Books of Francis Stuart: ...The war years saw quite a few additions to his bibliography. It had been his intention to have one of Dr. Moroney's books on Sir Roger Casement translated into German. Moroney {sic} however refused to cooperate. So Stuart went ahead and wrote his own book, relying largely on Moroney's publications..." (but also, of course, adding his own "German victory" twist, so as to ingratiate himself with the Nazis—MO'R).

"Introduction: ...For those who were not there, those who were not touched outwardly by the holocaust, the testimony of a returned witness may be embarrassing; they prefer the pure martyr to the flawed survivor who may still speak. Stuart is such a survivor; Anne Frank is such a victim. Many who read 'The Diary' mentally limit their experience to specified periods of time, specific individuals. The reader is largely immune... He {Stuart} has constantly refused to give these easy answers; and for this we now pay our respects..."

The fact that McCormack has now chosen to pursue a different tack with the sensationalist "*Nazi hunting*" of others in his books of this new millennium cannot, however, be ascribed to "*mature reflection*" upon his unacknowledged "*follies*" of the early 1970s. The year for such "*mature reflection*" had in fact been 1989 when, in an Afterword to Charles Bewley's *Memoirs Of A Wild Goose*, McCormack persisted with the line that he had already sustained for the best part of two decades:

"...He {Stuart} remains a moralist... Some readers of Stuart's novels may find the claim for him of moralist surprising, even scandalous. Yet in the fifty first chapter of 'Black List Section H' the author's ciphered representative argues strenuously with the English Captain Mandeville in favour of an approach to life in which one deliberately aligns oneself with the guilty, the unacceptable, the rejected..."

Stuart, the "imaginative" writer, and his apologist McCormack have one very obvious characteristic in common—a shameless capacity for self-reinvention. This is particularly nauseating when—in his most recent book *Blood Kindred* (2005)—McCormack the intrepid "*Nazi-hunting*" sleuth now proceeds to 'try and convict' others in his drum-head literary court:

"There were other fascist sympathisers in Ireland both before and during the Second World War ... Investigating some—Ruairi Brugha ...for example—we quit Olympus for the smoky cellars of petit-bourgeois prejudice (p54) ... Rory Brugha junior {sic} later became a sanctified member of Fianna Fáil" (p436).

This is pure slander. Although interned as an IRA member in 1940, not alone was

Ruairi Brugha not a fascist sympathiser, he did not even subscribe to the "*England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity*" line of the IRA leadership. In a memorandum which he wrote for Tim Pat Coogan's *The IRA* (1970) Brugha recalled:

"In the autumn of 1940, I was interned. In the Curragh I was struck by a curious situation. Irish soldiers were guarding alike IRA and British and German internees in separate internment camps. I realised that Irish neutrality was a token of our sovereignty. I found it difficult to resent the government which had interned me because, in their view, I was not prepared to acknowledge their right to maintain order and defend the freedom of this part of Ireland".

In *History's Daughter* (2005)—the memoirs of his wife Máire MacSwiney Brugha—it is further recounted how, while out on parole because of illness, Ruairi Brugha had voted for the Government during the 1943 General Election, having become a convinced supporter of de Valera's policy of wartime neutrality.

In contrast with his treatment of Ruairi Brugha, McCormack remains idyllically soft-focused on another wartime internee:

"Roy Johnston {was} part of a new avowedly Marxist leadership in Sinn Féin and the IRA... Johnston's Chief of Staff was Cathal Goulding (1927-1998)... a long-time resident of Her Majesty's prisons... By 1967 Goulding, charming and intelligent, had become a thorough going Marxist whose attempts to take the gun out of republicanism had not dimmed his reputation as 'a hard man'..." (pp45-46).

During the Second World War Cathal Goulding had also been a resident of the Curragh Internment Camp. The IRA's camp o/c, Liam Leddy, was a harsh disciplinarian who pursued a pro-German line based on the rationale of "*England's difficulty*". Ruairi Brugha broke free from Leddy while out on parole and supported de Valera's neutrality. Another internee, my father Michael O'Riordan, pursued an anti-Nazi, pro-Soviet line within the Camp and was sentenced to death for doing so by the Leddy High Command (but the sentence was obviously not implemented!). Yet another internee, Cathal Goulding, stuck rigidly and loyally with Leddy. In 1970 Leddy repaid the compliment. On the occasion of the IRA split between Officials and Provisionals, Liam Leddy loyally followed Cathal Goulding into the Officials.

What McCormack wrote of Brugha was indeed slander. But it is no longer libel. For you cannot libel a dead man. McCormack must therefore consider himself fortunate because of the recent death of Ruairi Brugha on 30th January 2006. But, of all the 'Nazi/fascist' slanders of the innocent that are currently in circulation, it is in fact the slander of

Máire Brugha's mother, Muriel Mac Swiney that is the most outrageous, as Angela Clifford has rightly highlighted in the February 2006 issue of *Irish Political Review*.

Having had a school-boy's friendship and correspondence with Muriel Mac Swiney during the 1960s, together with being a friend for the past 40 years of Máire's son Cathal Brugha, the mother/daughter personal estrangement between Muriel and Máire is not an issue on which I wish to comment. But I care passionately about the political slander to which Muriel has been subjected with even greater intensity in recent years. As Angela Clifford correctly points out, the principal source of that political slander has been Máire Cruise O'Brien in her memoirs, *The Same Age As The State* (2003), in which she accuses Muriel of having had a Nazi lover. As the relevant paragraphs were quoted at length in February, there no need for me to repeat them here. Suffice to say that when I first read them, while on holiday in Spain in the New Year of 2004, I hit the ceiling with anger. I there and then penned an outraged letter to Máire Cruise O'Brien and posted it off to her, with enclosures, within days of arriving back home. In my furious haste I forgot to make any copy for myself of my own handwritten text, but as a contribution to setting the record straight my enclosures had also included photocopies of many pages from Muriel's *Letters To Angela Clifford*. The gist of what I myself had written to Cruise O'Brien, at considerable length, centred on the following:

Máire Óg MacSwiney had never been kept by her mother in Nazi Germany;

It was in fact Weimar Germany that she left in 1932;

As a member of the German Communist Party Muriel MacSwiney had been an anti-Nazi activist in that country and continued afterwards to play that role as a member of the French Communist Party;

Far from being a Nazi, Muriel's partner has been a Jewish Communist; Accordingly, both they and their half-Jewish daughter would have been prime candidates for the Holocaust had they not escaped from Germany following the Nazi assumption of power in 1933.

Out of courtesy to her first language, I had written to Máire Cruise O'Brien in Irish, and she replied to me in kind on January 10, 2004. The personal invective against Muriel was, if anything, even more pronounced than in her book. But at least there was the concession that she had made a totally incorrect political charge and the promise from her that it would be corrected, and not just in the forthcoming paperback edition.

I have waited in vain for any erratum slip to appear for insertion in the hardback edition, as the "*Nazi*" slander continues to

be offered for sale. As for the paperback edition (2004), it did contain one additional acknowledgement: "I also owe a debt to Manus O'Riordan for correcting a serious error about Mrs. Muriel MacSwiney". But there was no attempt by the author herself to offer any meaningful correction and the precise error being corrected remained mysteriously unspecified.

The amendments to the text on page 105 were in fact restricted to the following:

"Máire Óg was being brought up in Germany by her ravishingly attractive, if somewhat feckless mother and her mother's Nazi lover" was amended only to the extent of dropping the word "Nazi";

"She did not like Nazis, or camps" was modified to read "She did not like being boarded out";

"Enough was known of conditions in Hitler's Germany, even then, for the aunts never to have doubted the propriety of their action" was only modified by substituting the phrase "conditions in Germany immediately before Hitler".

During the course of 2005 I had for the very first time discussed with Cathal Brugha my 1960s friendship with his grandmother. I also met Máire herself for the first time at her book launch on 17th October 2005. But, some weeks prior to that, she had in fact phoned to thank me for attempting to vindicate the integrity of Muriel's political reputation with reference to Máire Cruise O'Brien's "Nazi" slur. Notwithstanding the fact that in her second, paperback, edition Cruise O'Brien went on to repeat her sentence that *"Máire will correct me if I have any of those facts wrong"*, she had not made the slightest attempt to contact M. MacSwiney Brugha in order to ascertain what were the actual facts. She persisted in her insistence that Máire Óg had worn German uniform in Kerry, requiring the latter to publicly correct her in her own memoirs with the statement that *"my aunts would have been horrified at the thought of me wearing shorts"*. And, notwithstanding Máire Óg's own anti-communism, she also made a point of directly refuting the *"Nazi lover"* and *"youth camp"* charges of Cruise O'Brien against her mother, going on to correctly describe Muriel's politics as Communist.

Angela Clifford speculates:

"It is ironic that Muriel, a dedicated anti-fascist, should have been tarred with the Nazi brush ... In her naïve way Mrs. O'Brien has done history a service in retailing the nasty gossip about Muriel which was doing the rounds in Fianna Fáil circles at the time. Her father was Seán MacEntee, second-in-command in Fianna Fáil ... In the early 1930s the Communist tag might not have been black enough in Fianna Fáil circles—presumably that is where the Nazi slur came from".

How right she is! Ordinarily I would not quote from personal correspondence.

No matter how distasteful I found Máire Cruise O'Brien's personal spite against Muriel MacSwiney in her reply to me, I would have left it unpublished if she had made a serious and honest attempt to respond to my request that Muriel's political integrity be vindicated. By leaving uncorrected her *"German trousers"* story and shifting only ever so slightly to a reference to *"Germany immediately before Hitler"*, she in fact leaves intact the whole thrust of the original innuendo, without ever needing to use the word "Nazi" itself. Moreover, it was not Germany *per se* that Mary and Annie MacSwiney had objected to. Five years after the anti-Nazi Muriel had been forced to flee that country with her Jewish partner and child, the MacSwiney sisters were more than happy to make arrangements for Máire Óg to spend the Summer of 1938 in Nazi Germany.

Among the pages of *Letters To Angela Clifford* that I had photocopied for Cruise O'Brien had been page 84, which contains Muriel's 1944 account of the 1932 confrontation between Mary MacSwiney (assisted by her German companion Mrs. Stockley) and Muriel's partner Pullman. Muriel alleged:

"They had several hours' heated discussion with Pullman, the women exhibiting religious and national violence".

Quite clearly, the allegation here is one of anti-Semitic abuse. How likely is that to have been the case? Mary MacSwiney was no Nazi; she was the 'purest of pure' Irish Republicans. On the one hand we also have Máire Óg's warm recollections of how kindly and sensitively Mary had dealt with the Jewish children attending her school in Cork. But on the other hand there is no evidence that Mary MacSwiney demurred in the slightest when she chaired a Sinn Féin meeting in Cork City Hall on 3rd December 1939 and the lecturer, her friend and closest political associate J.J. O'Kelly ('Sceilg'), proceeded to rant and rail:

"England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity ... It seems to me that England prefers to plant the Jews in Ireland, as she planted the Cromwellians, the Orangemen, the Palatines, the Huguenots and the rest, and unless rumour has grown entirely unreliable, she must be succeeding hugely ... How many people in Ireland reflect that the Treaty of Versailles placed Germany ... with the heel of the Jew on her neck ... while Jewish usury emaciated and the Jewish White Slave Traffic sought to corrupt the whole land?" (Sceilg: *Stepping Stones*, Irish Book Bureau, 1940).

Need I say that it would be an understatement for me to declare that I find Muriel MacSwiney's politics a breath of fresh air by comparison? And yet we have Máire Cruise O'Brien's character assassin-

ation in her letter to me of 10th January 2004 (as translated from the Irish), coupled with the false promise that she would make recompense for her political slander of Muriel:

"I am obliged to you for the amendment concerning my memories in respect of Máire Óg's mother. I will make sure that the mistake will be corrected at the earliest—especially in the paperback edition. I have no doubt, however, that this is the version that I had always been given to understand, whatever way the misunderstanding first arose—some sort of "Chinese whispers" I suppose. My father knew Muriel. Like a lot of the Volunteers he was somewhat in love with her. He used to always say that she was attractive and pretty, but forever flighty and frivolous. I don't believe any of them had any real respect for her in those years. That's why I called her 'feckless', and after reading the interesting material you sent me, I still believe that word to be an accurate description. The rest of the story I have from Máire herself, I am certain that 'summer camp' is how she described the 'pension' that her mother mentions—both terms could be accurate. The clothes she wore, short trousers and a shirt, would fit in with a camp {all refuted head on in the MacSwiney Brugha memoirs—MO'R} ... I admit with regret that none of the above was any excuse to call either poor Pullman or Muriel herself a Nazi and I will do my best to somehow make recompense for that. By the way {when her husband Conor Cruise O'Brien served in the Irish Embassy in Paris—MO'R} Conor knew Muriel long ago in France; he found her very attractive even though she was by then an old woman".

"Feckless, flighty and frivolous"!

Muriel MacSwiney had the stoicism and courage to sit by her husband Terence MacSwiney's bedside during the course of his long hunger strike, right through to his agonising death. She had the stoicism and courage to serve alongside Cathal Brugha in combat and, when he had been fatally wounded, to sit in vigil at his deathbed as well. And she also sat in vigil, providing both comfort and solidarity to the Boland family, during the agonising death of Harry Boland.

In this article I have dealt with some issues of outright hostility towards Muriel MacSwiney. But Muriel's political integrity also needs to be asserted in respect of what might at first appear to be 'friendly fire'. In the *Sunday Independent* of 4th December 2005 Eoghan Harris has written of her: *"After MacSwiney's death, Muriel lived in Germany and France, became an anti-fascist activist and later in life rejected the republican claim on Northern Ireland"*.

This leaves a hell of a lot more unsaid than it actually should. It is an issue that must next be addressed.

Manus O'Riordan

(To be continued)

Garrett FitzGerald's Pack Of Misbegotten Lies

Among those Irish persons generally held to be qualified to stand among the Great and the Good of the Free World few are Greater and none is as Good as that Man of High Wisdom, Garrett FitzGerald.

For truly Garrett FitzGerald is Great. And Good. And Wise.

Out of the Great Good Heart of His Wisdom Garrett gave the plain people of Ireland a Constitutional Crusade to establish the basic truths of liberal democracy within the land. In consequence of which the constitutional ban on divorce was upheld for a further ten years. And an amendment which he first proposed, and then opposed in the half-hearted way so characteristic of The Wise, was voted into that Constitution to protect the lives so to speak of the not yet born.

Whereupon this Wise Man who of a time had lectured the children of Ireland at their University on the sciences of Money put all his science into Great Wagers on the International Markets and bankrupted himself. But, so Great and Good was Garrett, that the Banks of Ireland reprieved His Indebtedness. Which is surely the full measure of such Wisdom. And then some.

So now Garrett the Great and Good shares with the plain people of Ireland such of his inexhaustible Wisdom as he can be brought to part with for a shilling or two to keep the wolf from the door. Sometimes from atop a Column of the *Irish Times*. Sometimes addressing others of the Great and Good and Wise at gatherings of the same. Also on the web.

The website of Fine Gael's *Collins 22 Society* (at <http://www.generalmichaelcollins.com/>) is currently hosting the text of a Garrett the Great and Good address that was delivered in April 2003 at University College Cork. And it's an odd thing really. A haggard, paltry tattered old thing it is and difficult to believe as having come from the nimble brain of that Wise Man, his Good Self. But his name is on it and surely Fine Gael would never lie to us about such as that.

The address is entitled "*Reflections On The Foundation Of The Irish State*", though it is concerned with a period some years after the foundation of the state. There is also a subtitle: "*Cumann na*

nGaedheal—Government And Party". And between the title and the subtitle there are logical gaps and temporal distortions. Really the state in question is a state of fugue (the pathological condition in which acts are no sooner performed than immediately lost to mind, not the musical form).

Our Good Wise Man puts it like this:

"...I shall concentrate mainly on three aspects of this subject:

"First, our state found its origins in what might be described as an anti-colonial war fought within part of a well-established but culturally diverse parliamentary democratic system. Perhaps because of this, the State's founders included some very different kinds of people. In the first part of my remarks, therefore, I shall try to disentangle the tensions that divided the leadership of the first government during its early years, about which until quite recently we have known very little.

"These tensions and divisions led the leadership to a grave crisis within two years of the foundation of the state, but the intense patriotism and commitment to the common good of these leaders, and their sublimation of personal ambition, led them ultimately to overcome these tensions, with the result that our state was built on foundations that proved capable of surviving many severe tests in the remaining decades of the twentieth century.

"Second, I shall discuss the *Cumann na nGaedheal* Party and the separate, but in certain respects similar, set of tensions that existed between it and the Government it was established to support. An understanding of this is necessary in order to explain why the circumstances of that party's origins condemned it, and its successor party, *Fine Gael*, to a less successful political role than *Fianna Fail* for much of the 20th century.

"Third, I shall briefly remind you of some of the achievements of that first government...

"Let me start at the beginning. At the end of the Treaty Debate in early January 1922 de Valera resigned as President of the Dáil Cabinet and Arthur Griffith was elected in his place by the Second Dáil, which comprised the *Sinn Fein* majority of those who had been elected in June 1921 to the Southern Parliament established under the Government of Ireland Act 1920 (1).

"Five days later the Southern Parliament itself (comprising the pro-Treaty Southern Ireland Dáil members and the Dublin University members) met and elected a parallel Provisional Government under Michael Collins's chairmanship, as provided by the Treaty. Thence-

forward, until 6th December 1922, these two Governments ran in parallel."

Garret the Good takes it, for no clear reason, no reason at all that he can be bothered to declare, that the Irish state was founded either by the 'Treaty' of December 1921, or by the vote of the Second Dáil in January 1922 which accepted the terms of the 'Treaty' or by the elections of June 1922 which gave a majority in the Third Dáil to supporters of the 'Treaty' or by the British Act of Parliament which brought the Parliament of Southern Ireland into existence in December 1922. He doesn't say which of those was the foundation event but clearly he believes that one or other or a combination of several or all of them was the decisive moment. The "*grave crisis within two years of the foundation of the state*" is later declared to have been the Army Mutiny of March 1924 so our Good Man certainly takes the state to have been founded at some time between December 1921 and December 1922.

Now then, where to start? How to grapple with all that Wisdom, all that garbled gobbledeook?

Let's take his note (1) which is supposed to elucidate the exceptionally wise remark that "*the Second Dail...comprised the Sinn Fein majority of those who had been elected in June 1921 to the Southern Parliament established under the Government of Ireland Act 1920*". This is that note (1):

{(1) It should perhaps be explained that five *Sinn Fein* leaders elected to the Northern Ireland House of Commons—Collins, Griffith, de Valera, McNeill, and Sean Milroy—had also been elected to the Southern Parliament. The sixth, John O'Mahony, was admitted to the Second Dáil, but apparently did not attend. }

The underlining and other typographical devices employed there are all His Wisdom's own work, or the work of his webwise minions.

Apparently! Apparently John O'Mahony did not attend the Second Dáil into which he was somehow '*admitted*'. Apparently!

First of all, John O'Mahony was elected to Dáil Éireann in 1921 for the constituency of Fermanagh/Tyrone, just as Collins was elected for the constituency of Armagh. He was no more '*admitted*' to the Dáil than Collins was. They were both elected to it.

Our Good Man's note is supposedly drawing out the implications of his

formulation that *"the Second Dáil... comprised the Sinn Féin majority of those who had been elected in June 1921 to the Southern Parliament established under the Government of Ireland Act 1920"*. But the Southern Parliament established under the Government of Ireland Act 1920 did not exist. The Second Dáil was composed of all those who were successful in the elections held throughout Ireland in June 1921 who responded favourably to the invitation to attend.

Speaking in Dáil Éireann in July 1951 in support of a motion to afford Northern representatives a right of audience in that assembly, the Blacksmith of Ballinalee, General Seán MacEoin (of Cumann na nGaedhael and Fine Gael, twice a candidate for the Presidency) recalled the terms under which the War Dáils sat (he was referring specifically to the First but every word stands as well for the Second Dáil):

"I throw my mind back to the First Dáil. The Clerk of the House at that time called the roll at every Dáil meeting. He called Sir Edward Carson and Michael Collins. He called Sir James Craig and Alfie Byrne. He called John Redmond and everyone else. The fact that we were all called to an Irish Parliament left no doubt as to what the then Dáil was seeking to govern. All the elected representatives of the Irish people were being called to take their place in the sovereign Parliament of the nation."

So there's the rub. The Second Dáil, like the First, was the sovereign Parliament of the nation, legitimised by the vote of a body politic that was inclusive of the nation. Our Wise Man can't be having that. Clearly for Garrett the Good the first legitimate parliament of the Irish state (of which he was once Taoiseach) was the first parliament legitimised by the *'Treaty'* the British imposed under the threat of *'immediate and terrible war'*. The first Irish parliament he can feel comfortable with is the gerrymandered one in which Northern voters were disenfranchised, from which Northern representatives were excluded. And so he evolves a formulation allowing if not quite carrying, the ludicrous implication that the Second Dáil which acquiesced in the *'Treaty'* was really the *"Southern Parliament established under the Government of Ireland Act 1920"* (why would the British have waged Black and Tan war on such a thing? Great Man do tell).

This is why John O'Mahony's status, the status of the one Northern rep-

resentative of the six Northern representatives who didn't have a second, Southern, seat to fall back into when acquiescence in the *'Treaty'* mutilated the Irish body politic, has to be muddled and tangled. And then sneered at.

The sneer is outrageous. *"John O'Mahony, was admitted to the Second Dáil, but apparently did not attend"*.

There is no *'apparently'* and no doubt about the matter at all. Of course John O'Mahony attended the Second Dáil. Of course he represented Fermanagh/Tyrone in the sovereign parliament of the Irish nation. That is what the voters elected him to do, so of course that is what he did.

More than that, rather than there being any question about his status as a member of Dáil Éireann representing the electors of the Northern constituency of Fermanagh/Tyrone, that unquestioned status was raised in the Treaty Debates as a core issue in resolving the nature of Dáil Éireann itself. It was raised as eradicating any semblance of right for a mutilated assembly in the throes of a gerrymander to unilaterally dismiss and disband and then to arbitrarily reform the electorate which had legitimised it in the first place. (The Dáil which debated submitting to English threats by acquiescing in the imposition of the terms of the *'Treaty'* was mutilated by four of the six Northern TDs, Collins, Griffith, MacNeill and Milroy, abandoning their Northern electors and treating the Irish body politic as effectively gerrymandered.)

On December 21st Mary MacSwiney made the constitutional position crystal clear to as many as would listen:

"...Mr. Lloyd George has said in his letter to Mr. Arthur Griffith: {We propose to begin by withdrawing the military and auxiliary forces of the Crown in Southern Ireland when the articles of agreement are ratified." Therefore they will be kept in "Northern Ireland" if Britain so wills. And take that statement "when the articles of agreement are ratified" in connection with Article 18 of the Treaty: "This instrument shall be submitted forthwith by his Majesty's Government for the approval of Parliament"—not ratification you will notice—"by the Irish signatories to a meeting summoned for the purpose of the Members elected to sit in the House of Commons of Southern Ireland, and, if approved, shall be ratified by the necessary legislation." Therefore this assembly is not, as has been already pointed out, competent to deal with the matter at all. We are not the Members

elected to sit in the Parliament of Southern Ireland. We are the Members elected to sit in the assembly of the Irish Republic.

"MR. MILROY: Under a British Act of Parliament.

"MISS MACSWINEY: Yes, under a British Act of Parliament, for until our Government was functioning we had no machinery to act otherwise. The Deputy who has spoken knows perfectly well, as well as every intelligent man listening to me knows, that if we had refused to use that Act of Parliament against the enemy himself, what would have happened was that all the Southern Unionists, gombeen men and other good-for-nothing, soulless, characterless men would have gone up for that Southern Irish Parliament and legalised partition. Moreover, in this assembly there sits at least one Member who holds a seat for Northern Ireland and has no seat in Southern Ireland at all, and, therefore, this assembly is not legally entitled, even by that instrument, to approve or disapprove of this agreement."

Now then, here is John O'Mahony attending the Second Dáil, addressing it on January 4th., 1922:

"We may find ourselves in a minority as Pearse and his comrades were in a minority in Easter Week; but like them we will have the satisfaction of feeling that we have saved the soul and body of the nation from those who would wittingly or unwittingly kill it, for the purpose of bringing ease and comfort to the material body. We can face the future with hope, nay with confidence, because we have with us the two elements amongst our people with whom the national future lies. We have the women with us, and no cause that is backed by the national womanhood of the country can ever fail, just as no cause that lacks their support can end in anything but disaster and disgrace. We have the youth with us, too—the youth of the Irish Republican Army—human beings endowed by God with the power of deciding what was right and what was wrong; not mere goods and chattels to be carried off and used as their absolute property by our anticipated Free State majority. For opportunism, for supineness, for contemptibleness, the daily Press of Ireland is unique in the journalism of the world. However, the young men of the army I am proud to say, have proved themselves too straight, too true, too unselfish in their love and loyalty to the Republic to be decoyed from the path of honour, of righteousness and of duty, to be deceived into breaking their soldier oaths by such transparent political expediency on the part of a majority of their Headquarters Staff. We have the young men of the army with us, we have the womanhood of the nation with us, and with these two elements on its side the ultimate triumph of the Republic is assured; because, as Terence MacSwiney said:

"Those who walk in old ruts and

live in trembling may bend the knee and sign their rights away; but one wronged man defrauded of his heritage can refuse to seal the compact, and with one how many, thank God, will be found to stand, for the spirit of our youth to-day is not for compromise.”

At the beginning of his speech O' Mahony made it clear that he was under great pressure from his local Sinn Féin Party (which had taken the Big Lie of the Boundary Commission from Griffith and Collins and expected to be shortly delivered like some great overdue lump of an immaculate conception into the Free State) to vote in favour of acquiescing in the 'Treaty'. Throughout his speech he was heckled repeatedly by Griffith, Milroy and O'Higgins. In the event he abstained in the vote on Griffith's motion that the 'Treaty' be acquiesced in. He paid his constituents more heed than Collins, Griffith, Milroy and MacNeill did theirs.

A few days later, after Griffith's motion had been carried (on January 7th), Mary MacSwiney subjected the remains of the sovereign parliament of the nation to a brief but devastating analysis. This is herself speaking to Griffith's election to replace de Valera as President on January 9th:

"Every representative in Ireland—even in the North-East Corner—is a member of Dáil Eireann, and if he only comes in and sits here we will welcome him if he takes the Oath of Allegiance. Moreover, every member in Ireland cannot sit in Mr. Griffith's parliament, or at the meeting of members summoned for constituencies of Southern Ireland. Before Mr. Griffith can use this Assembly in order to set up his Provisional Government he has to exclude Mr. Seán O'Mahony, and Mr. Seán O'Mahony is the test in this case, because he is the only member who sits for a constituency in what is called Northern Ireland, and has no seat in Southern Ireland, so-called. Further, and I ask you young men of this assembly who mean the Republic but who are voting for its subversion, to think carefully over this—if you elect Mr. Griffith without first getting a declaration from him, given to us solemnly here and to the Irish nation, that he will not combine the Executive power of Dáil Eireann with his office as Chairman of the Delegation to summon the meeting for Southern Ireland—I ask you to do that—that Mr. Griffith if he dares to use this

Assembly, or the sixty-four members of it that support him, because he cannot use us, will first exclude Mr. Seán O'Mahony. Nothing would please Mr. Lloyd George better than that you, by your vote here to-day, should elect Mr. Griffith as Executive of this Assembly and then let Mr. Griffith, as Executive of this Assembly, summon this meeting to set up a Provisional Government, because then he would be able to say that Dáil Eireann sanctioned the setting up of the Provisional Government. Dáil Eireann has not done that."

On this occasion Griffith was forced to back down, saying:

"I will summon this body to constitute the Provisional Government as Chairman of the Delegation, not as head of Dáil Eireann."

And eighty-one years later Garrett Fitzgerald set himself to turn the tables, claiming that the Second Dáil which was established by a British Act of Parliament admitted as an act of grace and favour one Northern member who never bothered attending. Such a Good, Great Man. So Wise. Such a pack of misbegotten lies.

Joe Keenan

A Shape-Shifting Society?

Reviewing book reviews may seem an odd business, but reviewers often reveal more than possibly they should in looking at other lives. Risteárd Mulcahy "...professor of preventative cardiology (emeritus) at UCD. His publications include *Richard Mulcahy—a Family Memoir...*" (Irish Times, 18.02.06). He reviewed *Seán MacBride—That Day's Struggle: A Memoir, 1921-1951*, edited by Caitriona Lawlor (Currach Press, Euro 24.99). In his review Dr. Mulcahy, the son a founder of the Irish State, engages in odd asides. His father, Richard Mulcahy, helped conduct the War of Independence (against hugely superior forces) to produce a prosaic Irish Republic and thereby was probably regarded by the British and the Unionists as a suicidal crazy man.

Risteárd gives a précis of MacBride's youth. Son of Maud Gonne and John McBride, brought up in Paris until 14, he "*arrived in Ireland in 1918... acted for Sinn Féin and the military leaders during the War of Independence... not surprising MacBride was committed to the republican ideal... opposed the treaty and the oath...*". Dr. Mulcahy writes of MacBride, "Like many opponents of the settlement, he had little insight into the ineluctability of partition...". "*Ineluctable*" is defined in the Concise OED (*Oxford English Dictionary*), as: "That cannot be escaped from; against which it is useless to strive", an absurd definition of Partition. It might have been impossible to convince the Unionists of east Ulster that the Republic was capable of treating them fairly. Probably the Irish State would have had problems knitting together an industrialised and a pastoral economy. It was never in a position to make the effort. In 1912 the Ulster Unionists armed themselves to prevent mere 'Home Rule';

and half of England (and most of Scotland) backed their treason. There was nothing 'ineluctable' about Tyrone, or Fermanagh, (or most of Armagh or Derry—particularly the City) being included in the Ulster Unionist haul.

The Irish State, even at its most Catholic-Nationalist, did not take the same attitude to its Protestant (or Jewish) citizens as 'Northern Ireland' did to its Catholics—even though many of the ex-Ascendancy in the Free State despised it, while the Catholics (especially in east Ulster) were imperialist Home Rulers, anxious to work the system. The Belfast 'government' allowed the Ultras in its following to make the running, denouncing the Catholics as 'Fenians' (revolutionary, probably Red, republicans). The fact was, however, that they were, largely, appallingly respectable, enjoying their gongs from the King and suchlike, a mindset that lasted until after WWII, being replaced by the notion that the Welfare State was preferable to the Free State.

The Unionists were embarrassed by the fact that Northern Ireland's only VC was a Falls Road Fenian, James Maginnis, who was later forced to go to Sheffield to find a job. (Sheffield raised a monument to their 'local hero' while he was still alive—Belfast tried to forget that he existed.)

There is more biography, some of it slightly skewed, in Mulcahy's review. MacBride is 'accused' of being Chief of Staff of the IRA "*for eighteen months in 1936*" (rather a long year), but "*claimed... a caretaker capacity*". MacBride formed Clann na Poblachta, and was Minister for External Affairs in the first Inter-Party Government of 1948-51, refusing a place in the second such government, CnaP

having disintegrated; he lost his seat in 1961. We then get a (relatively) long examination of his 'shape-shifting' into an international jurist; the title of this review is *A Republican Shape-shifter*.

Risteárd Mulcahy does not make his (implied) case. He mentions the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to MacBride, "*an irony not lost on some of his opponents*", Dr. Mulcahy suggests "*his views... cannot be accepted without... research and documentary evidence...*". Why are these 'opponents' not named? There is nothing 'ironic' from the perspective of February 2006, for a 'militarist' man to get the Nobel, or any other Peace Prize. Mandela engaged in warfare, as did Yassir Arafat and Ariel Sharon. Gerry Adams and Gusty Spence would have been worthier recipients than was David Trimble when the Northern Ireland 'peace process' was given a leg-up by Sweden's establishment — though John Hume deserved his: he took genuine risks in promoting the process. It is noticeable that MacBride's Lenin Prize is unmentioned, maybe the Kremlin really wanted MAD (mutually assured destruction), and was up to no good with peace prizes?

MacBride is sneered at for being vain, and a meddler. We are further told "*he undoubtedly helped to counteract the insular attitude of the post-World War Irish...*". This has been a theme of Irish (for want of a better word) intellectual life (for want of a better phrase) for more than a decade, and is very difficult to understand.

The Irish State campaigned to enter the UN (United Nations) for ten years after the end of the War: Éire poured a lot of energy the League of Nations. Ireland was allowed to join in 1955, (while the USSR was on boycott), becoming a fervent member. The Irish State was interested in what was going on in western Europe from the early 1950s onwards, and was decidedly *communitaire* until the PD tail was allowed to wag the Fianna Fáil dog.

Was Irish society 'insular' in this period? What does Dr. Mulcahy, and many others, mean by this cliché? It depends, presumably, on what is meant by 'insular'. This period was the zenith of the Catholic Irish mission project. Thousands, tens of thousands, of priests, nuns, other 'religious', and 'civilians' travelled to every part of the world to bring Roman Catholicism (Irish-style) to every clime, 'race' and language group outside of the 'Soviet Bloc'. Catholic Ireland felt the 'loss' of China as sharply as did the USA's ruling class. It educated many African leaders: Nkrumah, Nyerere, Mugabe, and

more. The point of all this is that Irish society, from adult intellectuals to school children, including quite 'ordinary' women and men were engrossed by this great venture, even taking part in it. This ranged from loitering about London and Birmingham railway stations to directing Irish people off the trains to the local Catholic facilities, and to button-holing potential converts. And travelling to the ends of the earth and learning obscure languages to help the cause along.

It does not matter what attitude one takes to this endeavour, it permeated the

society, and to claim that this was 'insular' is to stretch the word well beyond breaking point. Worrying about the influence of rubbishy 'newspapers' from London and about Hollywood's sexual *mores* may induce a slight smirk these days—but those worries were the product of a coherent (if raw) culture. Smirking at it is the product of—essentially—another culture, and not one that can seriously be claimed to be superior to it. This 'elephant on the lawn' of our history is going to have to be dealt with, and superior smirks or simply ignoring it, are not viable options.

Seán McGouran

Some Recollections Of The Connolly Association

Muriel McSwiney must have had her work cut out doing housework for Desmond Greaves. (Anthony Coughlan's letter, *Irish Political Review*, March 2006 in answer to Angela Clifford's article on Muriel McSwiney, *Irish Political Review*, February, 2006). Muriel must have been around before I joined the Connolly Association in 1954 for I never heard her name mentioned.

I did have occasion once to go to Desmond Greaves' flat at Cockpit Chambers in Holborn, London, about 1954, to pick up some papers. It was an Aladdin's Cave of books. Even the bath was filled to the brim. But those were the days of the weekly bath. To do so every day was to be as compulsive and neurotic as the Americans.

A large notice on a bookcase read:

"I DON'T LEND BOOKS. THIS IS HOW I GOT MINE"

They say the English working-class weren't give indoor baths during the 1930s in case they used them to put coal in. Nobody mentions baths being used by political theorists to keep books in.

Greaves was an asexual bachelor. I say this in order to save Ruth Dudley Edwards running again to catch up with the British 1957 Wolfenden Report on Homosexuality. She sure has been out of breath recently.

Though I came to disagree with Desmond Greaves politically in the end, I did retain respect for him over the years. He and Anthony Coughlan were two of the hardest political workers I had come across in the 1950s. Having said that, I want to challenge Coughlan on a few points in his letter. He writes:

"For while he (Desmond Greaves) had considerable respect for her, (Muriel McSwiney) he considered her highly strung and politically erratic, and too leftist and anti-Catholic in her view for his liking."

Of course many of us—as well as Greaves—were members of the Communist Party Of Great Britain and we were continually told by him to hide that fact. Often when we went around the pubs in the Irish areas of London selling the *Irish Democrat* we were challenged on our credentials as Irish Nationalists. Some of the Irish saw the CPGB as being potential empire builders, though an empire of a different hue. Their idea was that you would never get rid of the English out of Ireland if Britain became communist. Also, because of the Cold War, others saw us as anti-Catholic.

The CPGB did have an anti-Catholic agenda. Some of this was fuelled by people like Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty who was notorious for his anti-communist views and was jailed under the Hungarian Communist Government. Later, with the 1956 disturbance, he was able to slip away and spend fifteen years in the US Embassy in Budapest before being allowed in 1971 to go and live in the US. So it was under these conditions that we sold the *Irish Democrat*, many of us as covert communists. Lots of times we were threatened with violence by individuals in these lion's dens called pubs. But three or four of the Irish clientele would stand up silently to protect us. These anonymous rural men allowed us our freedom to sell the paper and to keep whatever views we were accused of having. These were the Catholics that some of the membership of the CPGB were condemning. Later I began to get the nasty feeling that anti-Irish Catholicism in the Party was synonymous with anti-Irishism.

Greaves was totally irreligious but searched eternally for progressive priests to decorate the nationalist cake. He dug up odd nationalist in the Six-Counties and supported the corrupt Harry Diamond of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the old

Stormont for a time. It is true to say that there were very few straws to grasp on to during the 1950s. The pathetic showing of the IRA during the 1956–1962 campaign didn't give any of us grist for the mill. Therefore a lot of energy went into work for the CPGB.

I was sitting in the canteen of the Daily Worker in Farringdon Street, London during 1956 when Greaves suddenly entered. I was there along with Brian Behan as a member of the Strike Committee of a building site in Cannon Street in the City of London. Greaves was not pleased to see me there. Maybe I wasn't being covert enough. He grunted his disapproval and disappeared upstairs into some office with the ease of someone familiar with that building. I think his main embarrassment was being caught acting the CPGB apparatchik.

I don't know the extent of Muriel McSwiney's anti-Catholicism but generally I felt Catholics had the right to criticise certain Vatican edicts on occasions and not to be called anti-Catholic. True anti-Catholicism is what two of my sisters as teenagers did when they both turned to a rabid anti-Catholic DIY religion called the Church of God. They preached its souped-up Old Testament message on soap boxes in Royal Avenue, Central Belfast on a Saturday night for the benefit of "oul red-socks in Rome". That's what I call anti-Catholicism.

Being a Northern Catholic is an identity you can't lose even when you become irreligious as I did. Anyway the Loyalists didn't allow you to lose it in a statelet like the Six Counties. Thank you, Loyalists. But Greaves would not tolerate any criticism whatsoever of Catholicism. He, as the chemist and Marxist scientist, never did get a feel of religion. Religion, to him as an atheist, was a very holy and sacred emotion as strongly felt as Islam is today and he thought the Irish Catholics populating the pubs felt the same.

My nieces grew up and my sisters watched, much to their dismay, as their Protestant daughters either married Catholics or lived with them. Maybe it's in the genes as the Loyalists claim. Thank you again, Loyalists.

Most Irish members of the CPGB had differences with their English counterparts. Some would sneer at the green aspects of the Irish members and wonder why we didn't come in completely.

One day, still in the 1950s, I foolishly accompanied a CPGB councillor contender, during the local elections, to Camden Town where the "fascists" live. He drove the car while I bawled out communist slogans through a microphone. He pointed out a crowd of Irishmen hanging on the traffic barriers and told me to let rip at

them. He thought my Irish voice would do something for the local elections. It probably did—there was no way they would vote for him now. It would be justifying what seemed like a racist revenge attack on them. Maybe Quisling felt like me some days.

A row broke out once, in 1954, at an International Brigade Association meeting in the Orange Tree pub in Euston Square between British and Irish veterans of that organisation who had met up to commemorate one of the Spanish battles. The British members were again trying to include the Irish members into the British ranks which would have deprived the Irish of their identity. It appears it was part of a left-over struggle that had been going on since the battlefields of 1930s Spain.

The CPGB really had no time for what it saw as Irish nationalism. Ireland was not important enough beside the mighty Soviet Union. One day there would be a Western Soviet Union and Ireland would be in whether they liked it or not.

An exhibition to do with the Spanish Civil War was held in the Imperial War Museum in Southwark, South London. It was opened in the Summer of 2001 by Michael Portillo, a British Conservative MP at the time. I knew there had to be a catch somewhere.

The museum is based in a fine building in the style of what was early Victorian humanitarian architecture, with its flood of natural daylight cascading in from its high dome. It was once the Bethlehem Royal Hospital for the Insane but was known better by the name of Bedlam. And Bedlam it remains.

I soon discovered the catch—the names of the British International Brigade volunteers were mixed with the names of the Irish volunteers, and further mixed with British Union of Fascist members and the names of O'Duffy's Blueshirts who fought for Franco. The result was one great hotch-potch of names indistinguishable from one another with hypocritical insipid anti-war messages below smelling of the latest pro-war slogans: Peace to the Afflicted, Peace to the Dead, Peace to the Living. Peace to the Peace Keepers. Pro-fascist and anti-fascist posters on the walls were arranged side-by-side as if their messages differed little. This added to confusion for many visitors.

I wondered if the CPGB would have approved of such an arrangement. After all, before their demise their main slogans were Peace, Unity and Socialism. The Soviet Union re-made Tolstoy's *War And Peace* as an anti-war film in the 1960s. Panned altitude shots showed Napoleon's invading army along with the Russian defending armies about the size of ants. So, was one as bad as the other?

What Greaves might have been planning with the CPGB leadership behind our backs is something we will probably never find out, but the CPGB just about tolerated the Connolly Association with the *Irish Democrat* as a mirror image of the *Morning Star* that said nothing much and left an empty feeling in the soul.

My worse experience was being sent to a Young Communist League branch in Golders Green, London, around 1955, in order to try and pull it back to its true path. I arrived just in time to hear the members organising a leafleting of Camden Town. It seemed the Irish there were Catholic which meant they were fascist and therefore anti-Semitic. I was witnessing the beginning of the end of the YCL. This particular branch was now Zionists. Nothing could be done so the branch was closed down a few weeks later. Zionism had had been tolerated in the Party for a number of years but now it was becoming too blatant and insular to argument. It was too late to be dealt with and too early to oppose politically.

The last great rally of the Young Communist League was held in Coulsdon in the Surrey Hills in 1955. It was what was then a multi-cultured affair of about two thousand with young Jews, Greek-Cypriots, Irish, some Indians students and young Londoners.

When the YCL Jews turned to the Zionist youth clubs the YCL collapsed. That is how vital the Jews once were to the left movement.

During that time most of us supported Israel without knowing about the plight of the Palestinians. Or, if we did know something, we thought it was nothing compared to what the Jews suffered during WW2. And if the Soviet Union saw fit to recognise that anomaly carved out of the flesh and blood of the Palestinian people then who were we to argue otherwise? Holocaust literature was fresh then with the emotion-making *A Diary Of Anne Frank* and the startling and honest memoir of Primo Levy. Many Jews had the cultural ability to express their horrific experiences vividly and win us over to the idea of a land for the Jews where they would be safe. Most of didn't seem to care to know how safe the Palestinian would be. There were many Jews in the CPGB once and we socialised and some of us married into Jewish communist families. But it all began to go too far.

One day I bought the *Jewish Chronicle* and was amazed to see a well-known South African Jewish communist psychiatrist featured under an assumed name. He was putting out the theory that the nature of European society made anti-Semites of all non-Jews. He wrote that he detected it in non-Jewish children for example whom he was treating. He went to say that the societies of Europe and the

US demanded a Jewish sacrificial offering from time to time. He gave many examples from history but emphasised the Rosenbergs, who had recently been sent to the electric chair for supposedly passing atomic secrets to the Soviet Union. To him the secrets was a cloak. Jews had to die from time to time in order to assuage the many outbursts of anti-Semitism in the world. He then went into linguistics. He claimed the anti-Semite had a particular speech pattern and use of words which betrayed an inborn hatred of the Jews. For example to say 'he is a Jewish man' is anti-Semitic instead of just saying straight out that 'he is a Jew'. I bought the *Jewish Chronicle* week after week, unable to believe that this prominent member of the CPGB was peddling severe racist Zionism. He was a very active door-stepper in delivering leaflets and the *Morning Star* and eventually he knocked on my door. I mentioned his articles. He asked me what I was doing reading the *Jewish Chronicle* and implied that it was beyond my capacity to understand the Jew and the building of the Homeland. When I said a sentence with "Jewish" in it he said: "Got you!" and walked away.

I felt frozen out by this comrade. I realised that Zionism was very single-minded and had no time for anyone outside its circle. In a sort of mental blur I began to re-think the ten commandments for some reason. I figured them out as just being house-rules for a particular people to keep them united and to stop in-fighting so as to deal with the real enemy. People like me didn't count in the end.

These experiences I couldn't voice in the Party and in meetings of the Connolly Association never. I often wondered why we were covert communists in the Connolly Association. Greaves never got us together to discuss anything about the CPGB. All he ever said was: "Hush!"

But before the Irish Unity March from London to Birmingham about 1961 Greaves got the fifteen of us together. We were to hold meetings in the towns all the way up, and we were to deal with hecklers at these meetings. Some prospect of that after a 25-mile walk in one day. The other order of the day was not to wash. This would toughen the body, especially the feet. We stayed in the houses of CPGB members on the way up and when asked by some of the town's Irish residents where we were staying we lied and said we were doing B&B. I did have a bath each night despite this advice and did get blisters so badly on my feet that I became intolerant and highly strung. At least Greaves was proven right about something.

So, Muriel McSwiney, wherever you are, I too was all of those things you were accused of. But hush!

Wilson John Haire. 8th March, 2006

Cinema, Consciousness, And The Irish War Of Independence

INTRODUCTION

The National Concert Hall's recent screening of the silent film *Irish Destiny* underlines the enduring cinematic impact of the Irish War of Independence. In the seventy-five years since its end, the Irish Revolution has been the setting for at least seventeen feature films. These movies have depicted thrilling ambushes, impassioned ideology, and heart-breaking tragedy from the 1919-1921 period. Legendary filmmakers such as John Ford, Alfred Hitchcock, David Lean, and Neil Jordan have interpreted the Anglo-Irish War, and film casts have included Jimmy Cagney, William Powell, Liam Neeson, Julie Christie, Robert Mitchum, Richard Harris, Julia Roberts, and Anthony Hopkins. Most of these films were created by non-Irish artists for overseas audiences, or produced long after the conflict ceased to be a living memory in Ireland. However, three Irish productions were made within fifteen years of the war's conclusion. This article will examine those three films and determine how post-revolution Irish filmmakers viewed the Anglo-Irish conflict.

The three Irish-made films are: *Irish Destiny* (1926), *Guests Of The Nation* (1935), and *The Dawn* (1936.) Each movie offers tangible connections to the independence struggle. Irish Republican Army (IRA) veterans worked on all three productions, and the actors and crew likewise brought their own memories and experiences to the film-making process. The movies provide an intriguing glimpse of the Irish mindset in the fifteen years after the conflict. Not surprisingly, plots and characters become more candid and complex the further they are from the war's conclusion. The simplistic propaganda of *Irish Destiny* gives way to moral questioning in *Guests Of The Nation* and the probing realism of *The Dawn*. However, none of the productions challenge the Irish Republican's physical force ideology, and all celebrate the independence struggle. Likewise, each screenplay portrays clear national unity and a strong resentment of British conduct against Irish civilians.

IRISH DESTINY
DIRECTOR GEORGE DEWHURST
SCREENPLAY DR. ISAAC J. EPPEL
EPPELS FILMS. 1926

Irish Destiny was the first Irish film to portray the War of Independence. Made only five years after the 1921 Truce and three years after the bitter Irish Civil War, this short period probably guaranteed the film to be a superficial and simplistic depiction of the conflict.

The screenplay transposes a standard

Hollywood Western into an Irish Revolution setting. There is the hero (an IRA Volunteer), the villain (an informer), cowboys (the IRA), Indians (Black and Tans), and a beautiful woman in danger. The plot is purely action-driven and does not delve into characters' motivations or ideologies. Strong nationalism is apparent in the dialogue and cinematography, and the film makes no secret where its sympathies lay.

The silent film opens in the fictional village of Clonmore in the year of 1920 when, "Ireland was in the throes of bloody war. There was a reign of terror throughout the country." The lead character Denis O'Hara is an upstanding young fellow whose patriotism is matched only by his love for his fiancé, Moira. A valued member of the IRA's Clonmore Company, Denis keeps his activities secret from his disapproving father and devoted mother. After Black and Tans violently raid Clonmore, Denis joins an IRA ambush of local police. The film tells us, "At dawn, a small number of Volunteers with only a few rifles and shotgun, prepare to attack powerfully equipped and numerically superior forces of military and Black and Tans". The IRA inflicts ridiculously high casualties on the British, who flee after a suicidal attack on the IRA positions. When the Volunteers discover a British message telling of a pending raid on IRA headquarters in Dublin, Denis mounts a swift steed and rides off to warn his colleagues.

While rushing from Clonmore, Denis encounters the sinister Gilbert Beecher, "A newcomer whose friendly ways diverted suspicions from his treacheries". With his gang of slovenly drunks, Beecher operates a poteen-still in a haunted mill outside town. Suspecting the covert nature of Denis' mission, Beecher promptly informs the British. Denis then engages in a horse chase worthy of Tom Mix. He leaps hedges, saves Moira from a runaway carriage, dodges British patrols, and fights his way into Dublin, arriving finally at IRA headquarters on a stolen army motorcycle. After he delivers his message, Black and Tans shoot Denis in the street and take him to prison. In Clonmore, the O'Haras are mistakenly informed that Denis has been killed, and Mrs. O'Hara loses her sight upon hearing the news. Her husband laments, "My son killed! My wife blind! Curse those who have brought this misery upon us!"

Denis recovers from his wounds and escapes from prison, returning to Clonmore in the nick of time. Beecher has kidnapped Moira, taken her to his hideout, and is about to rape her when Denis bursts in. Denis shoots Beecher's cronies and

kills Beecher in a climatic hand-to-hand duel. Reunited, Denis and Moira arrive home as the news of the 1921 Truce reaches Clonmore. *"On Clomore's Green, Erin's sons and colleens dance in happiness to the music of the piper."* Denis and Moira embrace, while the blind Mrs. O'Hara smiles. The local priest pronounces, *"Let us pray that this will mark the dawn of a new era. Peace and happiness to all mankind."*

Beneath its thriller exterior, *Irish Destiny* fully embraces Irish Republican propaganda of the period. The two opposing sides are shown with clarity. The IRA protects the Irish people from the deprivations of the British Army, violent Black and Tans, and the degenerate local informer Gilbert Beecher. Ireland stands together to evict her invaders and oppressors. There is no moral ambiguity in Clomore.

The film's lead characters are interesting stereotypes. Denis O'Hara, the son of wealthy farmers, portrays the model Irishman, *"a popular lad"*, and a *"fine athlete and daring horseman"*. His fiancé Moira is lovely, loyal, and in constant need of protection. When Moira is kidnapped, tied to a still with her hair waving in a surreal breeze, she resembles Mother Ireland under assault by foreign enemies. Her protector and defender is the IRA superman Denis O'Hara, who, like Ireland, ultimately triumphs.

The Clomore Volunteers are sober and clean-living patriots, dressed in jackets, collars and ties. Their leader, Captain Kelly, exists purely for the struggle. When he is mortally wounded, Kelly cries out, *"They got me! God!—If only I could live to fight on!"* A tearful comrade mourns, *"There lies a brave and unselfish hero, he sacrificed everything for Ireland"*.

Clonmore Village offers unqualified support for the IRA. A hackney driver and his daughter constantly protect the Volunteers. An old woman shelters Denis after his escape from prison. The sympathetic Parish Priest praises the IRA's noble struggle. He reproaches Mr. O'Hara for bemoaning his family tragedy, *"Stop! Control yourself! Remember, Denis died for his country, and that we—and Ireland's destiny—are in the hands of God."* At the end of the film, the village green is invaded by step-dancing young men and women dressed in kilts and folk costumes. They celebrate their Irishness and their nation's liberation from foreign domination.

The Crown forces are faceless oppressors seemingly without emotion or humanity. The sole dialogue uttered by the British comes from a surprised Tommy who asks himself in stage cockney, *"Blimey, what was that?"* British soldiers and policemen are never explored or developed as characters.

The most fascinating aspect of *Irish*

Destiny lies in its portrayal of the informer Gilbert Beecher. He is a "newcomer" in the parish, with an Anglo planter name, who drives the only automobile in town and dresses like a gentleman. The sinister Beecher eyes defenseless colleens and profits from the Irish weakness for poteen (*"a vile and ruinous alcoholic concoction, the distillery of which is prohibited by the Irish Republican Army"*.) He leads a gang of villains, who stumble about in rags, play cards, and laugh at the antics of a grotesque hunchbacked dwarf. Their clothes, morals, and mannerisms stand in sharp contrast to those of the noble IRA Volunteers. In *Irish Destiny*, British loyalists are foreign, anti-social outcasts, who are a scourge to Clonmore. The death of these degenerate lackeys translates into a victory for the Irish nation.

"Irish Destiny" leverages recent memories of the conflict by using historic detail throughout the narrative. Former Dublin Brigade Commandant Kit O'Malley plays Captain Kelly, and lists his IRA rank in the credits. When Denis warns IRA headquarters, he reports to Vaughn's Hotel in Dublin, Michael Collins' favorite meeting place during the war. Denis breaks out of prison in the celebrated Curragh Camp escape tunnel (which actually occurred during the Truce period).

Newsreel footage from the 1919-1921 period appears throughout the film, connecting historical fact with fictional events in Clomore. When Black and Tans raid Clonmore, we see scenes of the ruined Cork City center, burned by Auxiliary Cadets in 1920. After the Clonmore ambush, we watch footage of Dublin crowds cheering IRA prisoners. Denis' capture in Dublin recreates Seán Treacey's fatal gun battle in Marlborough Street, which was captured in a 1920 newsreel. Denis assumes a firing position identical to the British Lt. Price, and Auxiliary Cadets load his spread-eagled body into a lorry, like Treacey's. The concluding Truce celebrations on Clonmore Green are interrupted with real shots of revelry in Ireland after the Truce announcement. These popular images exploit the war's emotional resonance in the Irish conscious.

Irish Destiny clearly honors the IRA's campaign against Britain. Here Republicans fight to defend their countrymen from violent British assault. The Irish people support the IRA and remain united during their hour of trial. Together they overcome the anti-Irish touts and outcasts who pimp their nation for English blood-money. The end of hostilities marks a new era where native Irish culture will flourish and a fresh society blossom. Complexities or contradictions in the rebellion are ignored.

The film's ending omits any possible mention of the destructive Irish Civil War that followed the 1921 Truce. It seems remarkable that such idealism would still

be portrayed after the turmoil and fratricide of 1922-1923. *Irish Destiny* shows that Republican propaganda could still be accepted as uncritically in 1926 as it had been in 1921.

GUESTS OF THE NATION
DIRECTOR DENIS JOHNSTON
SCREENPLAY MARY MANNING
FROM THE SHORT STORY BY
FRANK O'CONNOR. 1935

Guests Of The Nation is a darker and more sober view of the Anglo-Irish conflict. It is an adaptation of Frank O'Connor's famous short story of the same title. Produced fourteen years after the Truce, the grim silent film provides a more critical moral examination of the War of Independence.

The plot follows two IRA Volunteers guarding two captured British Army deserters. The four men spark an uneasy friendship as they pass the days in a secluded farm cottage playing cards and arguing socialist politics. Eventually war intrudes. When the British Army executes two IRA prisoners, the Volunteers are ordered to shoot the British soldiers in retaliation. After much soul-searching, the reluctant Volunteers follow orders and execute their British friends. The film's final shot shows the dismayed IRA men staring into the cottage hearth, as an old woman prays for the souls of the dead men.

The film departs significantly from Frank O'Connor's story. O'Connor illustrated and emphasized the brutality of war. The reader comes to know and like the two captured British soldiers. When they are executed by the IRA Volunteers, the coldness of the act is shocking. O'Connor points out that there can be no justification for killing innocents, even in a war of liberation. However, the screenplay dilutes O'Connor's anti-war theme. Additions to O'Connor's narrative subordinate humanity to nationalism.

A key new scene provides a crucial justification of the IRA's actions. Unlike O'Connor's story, the film depicts the capture, trial, and execution of the two anonymous IRA Volunteers. Here they are presented as counterparts to the imprisoned British soldiers. The film opens with an IRA flying column capturing a Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) police garrison. The chivalrous IRA commander prevents his men from shooting a fleeing constable. The escaped policeman then flags down a British Army patrol, which in turn catches the vulnerable IRA column on a road and wounds a Volunteer. The commanding British officer, in contrast to his IRA counterpart, orders his soldiers to shoot an IRA Volunteer attempting to save his wounded comrade. The IRA flying column watches helplessly as their two injured compatriots are taken away.

After a British Army court-martial sentences the IRA Volunteers to death,

we see IRA commanders debate the fate of the captured British deserters. As the condemned Volunteers march towards the hangman, the film cuts to the IRA messenger approaching the cottage with the execution order for the British soldiers. The fates of the captured Volunteers and British soldiers are connected, which validates the subsequent death of the British deserters. The screenplay implies that the execution never would have occurred had the British Army treated their prisoners with as much humanity as the IRA.

One of the cottage Volunteers is even shown at the British prison before the hanging of the IRA prisoners. As he prays outside, he seemingly recognizes the necessity of killing his two British friends. This unpleasant job must be done, as duty to one's country outweighs personal considerations. While we feel empathy for the doomed British soldiers, these added scenes make us feel even sorer for their IRA killers. For the sake of their country, the Volunteers must perform a dreadful act and carry a burdened conscience. That is their ultimate sacrifice for 'the movement'. Unlike the short story, the film does not compare patriotism with compassion.

The film edits one vital scene from the short story. We watch the British deserters marched to their newly dug graves, while the Hawkins character (played by the great Barry Fitzgerald) bickers with his captors. The prisoners are blindfolded and await their IRA firing squad, but then the film jumps to the Volunteers filling in their graves. We never see the deserters' final moments, probably the most disturbing and haunting part of O'Connor's tale. The audience is spared from watching the cold killing of two sympathetic characters.

Although the film dilutes Frank O'Connor's message, *Guests Of The Nation* remains a much starker portrayal of the Anglo-Irish War than *Irish Destiny*. The mere existence of a humanitarian sentiment is an improvement on the latter. The IRA Volunteers here are also more believable than those in *Irish Destiny*. Lazier, funnier, and less formal, these Volunteers are innocent citizen-soldiers rather than professional patriots. The depiction of the British forces is an even greater departure. While *Irish Destiny* entirely ignores the humanity of the Crown forces, *Guests Of The Nation* shows two caring, humorous and sympathetic British deserters. We watch them sing, work, and joke in an idyllic country setting. They are not faceless oppressors, but unfortunate soldiers caught in a situation beyond their control. Their death is close to tragic.

Guests Of The Nation is an enduring story from the War of Independence that has inspired a number of film and stage treatments in various revolutionary

contexts (most recently in Neil Jordan's *The Crying Game*.) It is based on a 1921 incident in West Cork, where two brothers held two British Army deserters in their mother's cottage until ordered to kill the men as a reprisal for the execution of an IRA prisoner. At their mother's urging the Volunteers initially protected their prisoners (threatening to shoot anyone who harmed them), but eventually obeyed their superiors and shot their two English friends. Frank O'Connor served with the Cork city IRA during this period, where he probably heard the story. A similar case took place in O'Connor's IRA unit (the Cork No. 1 Brigade), when, following the execution of an IRA Volunteer, the IRA shot a captured British Intelligence Officer named Major Compton-Smith. The charismatic Compton-Smith wrote of singing songs with his captors and left his watch to his executioner, "*Because I believe him to be a gentleman, and to mark the fact that I bear him no malice for carrying out what he sincerely believes to be his duty*". Similar executions took place throughout Ireland during this period, which adds to the tale's emotional realism.

The Irish War of Independence, like all conflicts, contained acts of blood-chilling brutality committed by both sides. The film's depiction of the IRA executioners as reluctant killers is selective and supportive of the IRA's righteous self-image. It is not surprising that the IRA characters in *Guests Of The Nation* are moral and just, but it is disappointing that the filmmakers did not fully embrace O'Connor's provocative story.

Guests Of The Nation remains grim and real. It shows compassion towards Ireland's former enemies and challenges the glorification of the war then in vogue by Republican commentators. While the filmmakers' downplay of Frank O'Connor's disillusionment seems a bow to Irish nationalism, their choice of such grim subject matter indicates an evolving attitude towards the war.

THE DAWN
DIRECTOR TOM COOPER
SCREENPLAY TOM COOPER,
ASSISTED BY DR. D. A. MORIARTY
HIBERNIA FILMS. 1936

Of the three films examined in this article, *The Dawn* offers the most impressive and realistic depiction of the War of Independence. Although dated in many ways and suffering from uneven sound and acting qualities, *The Dawn* remains a compelling film filled with humor, action, and memorable imagery. Made by amateurs with little money or cinematic experience, the director built a soundstage in a garage and filmed exteriors in the Killarney area every Sunday for three years. It is remarkable that he completed a film of such quality.

The Dawn is a complex tale of the independence struggle in County Kerry. The film revolves around the Malones, a family with a tainted name in the parish. During the Fenian times, a jealous romantic rival maliciously labeled their grandfather an informer. Fifty years later, the Malones still live under a cloud of local suspicion. Dedicated Volunteer Brian Malone is engaged to Eileen O'Donovan, the sister of his IRA commander. However, Brian's IRA colleagues are uneasy about his family history. Brian's situation turns worse when his obnoxious brother Billy derides the IRA. The suspicious local Volunteers unjustly expel Brian from the IRA, and out of spite he joins the Irish police. His patriotic fiancé Eileen then breaks off their engagement and Brian finds himself isolated and alone.

Meanwhile, the Black and Tans arrive in the parish and start raiding for the IRA. Fortunately the Volunteers are crafty Kerry men who skillfully and sarcastically dodge the police. Their success is due to an unknown IRA Intelligence Officer providing crucial information that keeps the Volunteers a step ahead of the Crown forces. Now a member of the RIC, Constable Brian Malone transfers back to his hometown police barracks, bringing danger to his brother Billy, a suspected informer. Disillusioned and outraged by the drunken brutality of his Black and Tans colleagues, Brian sneaks away to warn the IRA of a pending police raid. At the Malone home, Brian vows to join the IRA flying column, but is forbidden by his brother Billy. The entire Malone family then jumps Billy and knock him unconscious, allowing Billy and his father to assist the Volunteers. They do not know that Billy is actually the secret IRA Intelligence Officer, afraid his brother will spoil a carefully planned ambush of the police raiding party. The Malones are warned off at the last moment, and join the IRA flying column that defeats the Black and Tans. Unfortunately, Billy has been killed in the ambush, and his patriotism is finally revealed. The film closes with the silhouette of the parading flying column laying a Celtic cross where Billy fell. The IRA Volunteers stand at attention, listen to a mournful bugle, and finally march across the lonely field to continue their fight for freedom.

The greatest asset of *The Dawn* is its effortless realism. Whether it is the actors' thick Kerry accents, the easy dialogue, or its believable plot, *The Dawn* makes the war seem accessible. Its characters don't spout Republican dogma or undertake Herculean tasks. Instead they pursue their independence struggle as if it were a normal part of their lives. The IRA Volunteers joke, flirt with girls, and lounge about between guerrilla operations. They are not the rigid soldiers of *Irish Destiny*,

nor the tortured innocents of *Guests Of The Nation*. Here they are simply "the boys"—normal young men caught up in an extraordinary time.

Another intriguing aspect of *The Dawn* is its parochialism. The War of Independence is conducted and confined to this specific County Kerry parish. Occasionally characters read newspapers about events elsewhere in Ireland, but to them Dublin is as remote as Timbuktu. Their conflict is a local affair, outside the domain of IRA headquarters in Dublin. This reflects the reality of the war, as seen in accounts by IRA leaders like Ernie O'Malley, Tom Barry, Seán Moylan, or Florrie O'Donoghue.

The Dawn is set in rural Ireland, where neighbors know each other's business and feuds remain deeply entrenched. The local population constantly warns the Volunteers of approaching police and potential trouble. They seem motivated less by idealism than by a desire to safeguard their "boys" against British outsiders.

The film captures the secrecy and suspicion common during the War of Independence. Its Volunteers realistically survive by cunning and smarts instead of brute force. The hero of the piece is not a fighter in the IRA flying column, but Billy Malone who lives the life of an outcast for the cause. By laying a cross on his grave, the IRA Volunteers salute his courage and seemingly acknowledge their own narrow-mindedness. The secret war portrayed in *The Dawn* is a neglected but essential element of the Anglo-Irish conflict. Like Billy Malone, many Republican operatives worked without knowledge of local colleagues, and a few narrowly escaped IRA assassination. Their efforts were unglamorous, but essential to the Volunteers' success. *The Dawn* uniquely captures the paranoia of Ireland's intelligence conflict.

The Dawn is unique in its treatment of civilian informants. The IRA Volunteers assume Billy Malone is an informer, despite the absence of any direct evidence. His pro-Union sentiments, civility towards local police, obnoxious personality, and troubled family history combine to convict him in many eyes. Amid the hundreds of suspected informers killed by the IRA during the War of Independence, there were numerous spurious executions. Although seldom documented, local feuds and jealousies also occasionally resulted in death. In the film, IRA Volunteers unjustly expel Brian Malone, largely because of the perceived sins of his grandfather. Brian's most bitter critics is the grandson of Grandpa Malone's original accuser. It is remarkable that *The Dawn* addresses this issue. The issue's central role in the film's plot reveals its importance to the filmmakers.

Dark memories of the Black and Tans must have likewise stayed fresh in the filmmakers' minds. Here the Black and Tans are drunken bullies who shoot prisoners, wreck homes, and attempt to strangle a surly housemaid. British frustration is ably illustrated in scenes showing the police penned into a crowded barrack common room, with little to do except drink large quantities of alcohol. Under siege, they suffer from Republican sniping and harassment (such as when a Volunteer humorously needles them while tapping their phones), which usually induces a violent reaction.

The Irish members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, however, are portrayed in a surprisingly sympathetic light. They seem to be decent men trapped in a situation of which they want no part. One officer tells Brian Malone, "I stay out of trouble as much as I can". Another crosses himself when a Volunteer is killed, while another constable remarks of the Black and Tans, "I'm glad we aren't mixed up with them". This depiction reflects another frequently forgotten reality of the Anglo-Irish war. Many of the Irish police regarded themselves as patriotic Irishmen, but found themselves caught up in a spiraling conflict. Ultimately over a third of the old RIC resigned, others became passive, and more than a few actively assisted the IRA.

The film also briefly shows an inactive part of the country controlled by police, during Brian's early days with the RIC. As he and an older constable patrol a deserted country lane, they relax against a wall on a smoke break. The older man likes his station because, "no one disturbs us". It should be remembered that hardly a shot was fired in large areas of Ireland during 1920 and 1921. *The Dawn* illustrates the vast difference between these active and inactive areas.

Surprisingly, the film's action sequences are very effective. Underplayed and modest, they contain no daring feats or thrilling gunplay. We see two IRA Volunteers sneak behind two bored policemen and disarm them at gunpoint, warning, "If you know what's good for you, you never saw us before". This type of simple assault was probably the most common armed encounter of the war. Later we witness the IRA's attack on a police lorry. Filmed a couple hundred meters above the road from the guerrillas' view, the brief exchange consists of two sides blazing away as the lorry speeds through the ambush. Only one person is hit and both sides scramble to safety. The viewer understands the great difficulty of hitting a moving target and the briefness of such a battle. The film's final engagement is a full-scale ambush of a number of police lorries. Lying out all-day on a windy road, the IRA column allows the first part of the dispersed convoy

to pass before attacking. This too is typical of large ambush of this period. The police jump from their lorries and desperately flee up the road, firing as they run from cover to cover. The audience sees their viewpoint, comprised of far-away smoke of IRA rifles on a raised ridge. Tied together, the cinematography, sound, and pacing, captures the feeling of a guerrilla ambush.

Beneath a pro-IRA exterior, *The Dawn* provides a complexity and accuracy missing from almost every film treatment of the period (Irish and non-Irish alike). Its plot questions rural Ireland's narrowness, empathizes with the IRA's opponents, and acknowledges the real and prolonged sacrifice required for ultimate national freedom. The film is a remarkable step up from *Irish Destiny* and even makes *Guests Of The Nation* timid by comparison. One suspects "The Dawn's" believability resulted from the filmmakers' first-hand experience, as well as a lack of commercial demands on an independent production. Ireland's first indigenous sound picture, *The Dawn* remains a forgotten gem of Irish cinema.

COMMON THEMES

The three films contain many similar themes, indicative of Irish attitudes towards the war in the years following its conclusion.

Catholic imagery appears in all three works. *Irish Destiny* and *Guests Of The Nation* seem to go out of their way to place the IRA Volunteers within the grace of the Church. In *Irish Destiny* the parish priest serves as the most articulate advocate of the Republican position. He prays for fallen Volunteers and ultimately blesses the new Irish state at the film's conclusion. In a departure from Frank O'Connor's story, *Guests Of The Nation* shows the two IRA protagonists dutifully attending mass. However, their devotion is more realistic, as one Volunteer has to prod his sleeping friend in order to make the service in time. Later, the same character joins a crowd praying outside a jail during the execution of IRA prisoners. *The Dawn* does not contain such explicit religious references, but provides simple examples of devoutness. A policeman crosses himself when two Volunteers are shot out of hand. Mrs. Malone sprinkles Holy Water on her sons as they depart to fight the British. The IRA Flying Column lays a cross on the spot where Brian died.

In all the movies, Catholicism does not intrude on the political struggle but remains an integral part of the participants' daily lives. This reflects the reality of the War of Independence. The IRA was composed almost exclusively of Catholics and many of its most violent leaders remained pious and devout. However, none of the films address the Church's mixed treatment of

the IRA during the conflict. It should be remembered that, while many priests supported the IRA, others denounced the Volunteers, including the Bishop of Cork who excommunicated the IRA in his diocese. The films' friendly portrayal of Catholicism could be interpreted as evidence of the increased power of the Church in the 1920s and 1930s. Interestingly, *The Dawn* which largely excludes images of the Church, was produced in County Kerry, where much of the Catholic Hierarchy violently denounced the IRA during the Irish Civil War.

Gaelic culture is evident in each of the films. *Irish Destiny's* closing scene would make Douglas Hyde blush, as a step-dancers in kilts and folk gowns celebrate the new Gaelic order. *Guests Of The Nation* largely omits Irish Ireland, except when we see an IRA commander attending a céilí. This scene was an addition to O' Connor's story, so it seems a nod to cultural nationalism. *The Dawn* provides a freer and more believable Gaelic framework. Its characters often greet each other in Irish and IRA Volunteers meet at cross road dances. Here Ireland is not so much an ideal, as it appears to the Dublin filmmakers of *Irish Destiny*, but a real element of their social fabric. Not surprisingly, *Irish Destiny* is the only one of the three productions made outside of Dublin.

Each of the films defines the independence struggle in military terms. Likewise, the War is framed as a cultural conflict, rather than a political one. Sinn Féin, the Dáil, and any mention of the Irish Republic are omitted from both *Irish Destiny* and *Guests Of The Nation*. While the IRA was a single wing within a mass political movement, here the IRA is the sole manifestation of Ireland's resistance to British rule. Only *The Dawn* pays a passing tribute to the independence front and Republican ideology. When Billy Malone's younger brother asks him to define Sinn Féin, he explains, "*It means heritage. We don't want to have anything to do with the British Empire. We want to be left alone, to work out our own civilization and our own future in our own way.*" Each film opens with the guerrilla war already in full swing, without addressing the IRA's initial destabilization of the country or its decision to employ physical force against the British Administration. Likewise, none of the films foreshadow the political issues that tore the country apart during the bitter civil war of 1922-1923.

The productions all address the IRA's attitude towards informers and its own internal security. In *Irish Destiny* the issues are dealt with simply and unrealistically. The vile informer Gilbert Beecher is clearly guilty and deserving of execution,

and his associates are a threat to the new Irish order. Informers are not dealt with in *Guests Of The Nation*, though we do see the Volunteers masking their movements from the local population. When the two protagonists receive an IRA message outside of Church, they discreetly read it while pretending to fix a flat bike tire. This precaution is both realistic and telling. As mentioned above, the mature depiction of informers is probably the most interesting aspect of *The Dawn*. It illustrates how local feelings and prejudice can create a situation where an innocent person, or even secret patriot like Billy Malone, can be killed. That is a powerful message.

The treatment of Anglo-Irish Unionists differs in each film. *Irish Destiny* through the Gilbert Beecher character, offers the most negative portrayal. Beecher is a treacherous spy, plying alcohol on local degenerates, who betray Ireland for blood-money. His death is necessary for the birth of a new Ireland. This anti-Protestant bias is as clear and bigoted as a D.W. Griffith film. *Guests Of The Nation* offers just a fleeting glimpse of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy. When one of the Volunteers visits Dublin to witness the execution of an IRA comrade, he comes across a young dandy in top hat and tails staggering home towards a Georgian flat. He drunkenly greets the Volunteer, oblivious to the deadly struggle being waged around him. *The Dawn* does not contain any references to the Anglo-Irish or Irish Unionists. This absence is noteworthy as it gives a false impression of a community standing unanimously against British rule in Ireland. In fact, none of the films depict the beleaguered Ascendancy or any of the frequent assaults against them. We do not see Unionists shot as informers, their property confiscated, or their homes burned as counter-reprisals, though those were all common occurrences during the War. The filmmakers seem reluctant to depict the harshest tactics of the IRA's campaign.

The films all ignore socio-economic issues. Rural and urban poverty, common during that period, remain unseen. Though the IRA was largely a working and lower middle-class organization, two of the films show wealthy IRA Volunteers. *Irish Destiny's* Denis O'Hara lives in a large house and his family dress and behave like prosperous merchants. The Malones in *The Dawn* are likewise genteel and the local IRA commander O'Donovan lives in a small mansion employing a maid and gardener. Here Republicans are depicted as more affluent than history showed them to be.

All the films glorify the Irish mother. *Irish Destiny* gives us Mrs. O'Hara (struck blind by grief), as well as an elderly lady who nurses Denis O'Hara back to health; *Guests Of The Nation* offers a cottage

matron who develops a mother-son bond with her British captives; and *The Dawn* provides Mrs. Malone, who forcibly disarms her son Billy and then stoically sprinkles Holy Water on her men folk as they leave to fight the English. The maternal characters nurture the young freedom fighters and buttress their families during unsettled times.

The roles of younger female characters vary from film to film, though each shows young women actively helping the IRA. In *Irish Destiny* the heroine Moira is passive and in constant need of protection by her IRA defender. However, another character, the daughter of a hackney driver, proves the IRA's top assistant and ultimately discovers Beecher's hideout. *Guests Of The Nation* is the only film to show a member of the Cumann na mBann, the Republican women's organization that spied, scouted, and otherwise supported the IRA throughout the conflict. Notably, *Guests Of The Nation* is the only screenplay written by a woman. Here a somber female dispatch rider delivers orders to the Volunteers, who take little notice taken of her gender. Women in *The Dawn* do not participate in the struggle, but do assist the Volunteers whenever possible. Eileen O'Donovan remains calm during police raids and resolutely breaks her engagement to Brian when he joins the police. A maid also bravely defies the Black and Tans, berating them and dumping a tub of water over their commander. Overall, young women in the three films are subordinate to the men, though they unwaveringly support the IRA. The failure of the films to adequately depict the Cumann na mBann's crucial role in the conflict probably reflects the sexism of 1920s and 1930s Ireland.

The Crown forces are painted in various negative shades. *Irish Destiny* shows the Black and Tans firing indiscriminately into Clonmore village and terrorizing the neighborhood. British soldiers in *Guests Of The Nation* fare better, as the two English captives quickly befriend their matron, her cat, and their two guards. However, "Guest's" other British soldiers do not come out so well. Captured IRA Volunteers are guarded and court-martialed by cold, unsympathetic soldiers who display none of the empathy of their IRA counterparts. In battle, the British are not as chivalrous as the IRA, firing on a Volunteer trying to aid his wounded comrade. *The Dawn* treats each branch of the Crown forces differently. The sole British Army character abhors the tactics of the Black and Tans, shouting at their leader, "*The only villain around here is yourself*". The Irish police are depicted much more sympathetically, as one constable criticizes the Black and Tans as "*a nasty lot*", while another provides

information to the IRA. However, the Black and Tans are seen as entirely villainous. Their leader casually tortures and murders IRA prisoners, and threatens women and children. He coldly announces, "I'll cut your throat for two pence. I'll cut theirs' for nothing."

The overwhelming negative portrayal of the Crown forces in the films indicates the poor impression they left behind in Ireland. In each movie, they are shown to be as bullies who threaten and intimidate the local population. We see the British fire on innocent civilians, shoot IRA prisoners, and ransack homes during raids. The dominance of such dark images illustrates a smoldering Irish resentment of the brutality of Crown forces during the war.

IRA Volunteers are the heroes of all three pieces. The Volunteers of *Irish Destiny* are shown in an especially uncritical light. Here they are well-dressed and polite, valiantly fighting as a formal army with a strict chain of command. *Guests Of The Nation* portrays a more believable IRA. The Volunteers march without collars, sleep in fields, and use a humble cottage as their jail. They are part-time soldiers trying to act like professionals. *The Dawn* follows this tact. "The Boys" are ordinary farmers and shop clerks, learning guerrilla warfare as they go along. Occasionally their care-free banter is interrupted by a brief and dangerous mission. They too sometimes sleep in fields, and stoically suffer their losses.

The IRA is strictly portrayed as a skilled and gallant guerrilla army. The films all show the Volunteers releasing captured British forces, though in reality this did not always happen (for examples, see accounts of IRA ambushes at Kilmichael, Dromkeen, Rineen, and Rathmore). The only prisoners executed by the Republicans are those in *Guests Of The Nation* and that action is a justified response to British brutality. The Volunteers win every one of their six battles with the British. We never see re-enactments of IRA *debacles* such as Clonmult, Mourne Abbey, or the Dublin Custom House. The only IRA losses are those Volunteers captured in hideouts or in the open. The productions seem reluctant to depict the IRA as being outfought or out-thought by their enemies, though this did occur during the War. IRA brutality and intimidation of its civilian opponents is also ignored in all three films. Though Volunteers sometimes robbed, burned, and shot civilian informers, none of these indiscretions are depicted. While *Guests Of The Nation* and *The Dawn* offer more accurate portrayals of IRA Volunteers, they do not delve into uncomfortable memories of Republican conduct, or the War's many ambiguities. Realism remains subordinate to nationalism.

CONCLUSIONS

All three films received warm reviews in Ireland. *The Dublin Evening Mail* reported, "'Irish Destiny' contains the highest elements of art, action, scenery and photography. It is a triumph for Irish enterprise." The *Irish Press* believed, "'Guests of the Nation' from the story of an epic of the War of Independence is itself an epic". The *Irish Times* wrote of *The Dawn*, "...I went prepared for the worst, and came away more delighted than I have after a film for a many a long day; for 'The Dawn', in spite of various crudities is as thrilling a show as I have ever want to witness...to everybody I say: See 'The Dawn.'" The popularity of each film shows a nation eager to relive its recent history through cinema.

The enduring theme of all three post-revolution films is pride in Ireland's 1919-

1921 struggle. While history has recorded many outrages committed by Republican forces during the Anglo-Irish conflict, Irish filmmakers were not interested in recalling those actions. Instead, they chose to celebrate the bravery of IRA fighters, the popular support of the independence movement, and the resilience of the Irish people in the face of British reprisals and terror. To these filmmakers, the Irish War of Independence was a 'good war.' That cinematic viewpoint reveals much about the national consciousness of post-revolution Ireland.

John Borgonovo

Book Launch: The author of this piece is visiting Ireland to launch two new books on War of Independence themes in Cork on 29th April. Readers are invited to attend. See the advertisement on page 8

Report of Public Meeting: Albion's Perfidy—The British Government And The Spanish Civil War; *speaker:* Enrique Moradiellos

Britain And The Spanish Civil War

A talk on British policy on the Spanish Civil War, given at the Imperial War Museum in London on 4th March by a Professor whose name I didn't catch, turned out to be much more interesting than I expected. I fell out of line in the 1970s with the way of looking at the war that prevailed on the Left, chiefly because I treated it as history, while the general tendency was to treat it as current politics. I treated it as an event which had happened for sufficient reason, and which had altered the framework of Spanish political life in such a way that future development was likely to be an evolution within the framework established by the Fascist victory, and that the least likely turn of events was a recurrence of civil war.

Such direct information as I had about Spain came from a group connected with ETA to which we gave some marginal assistance in the mid-1960s, and from a brief holiday in Spain for which I had no inclination, but which I found very interesting once I found myself there. Going by these superficial impressions, rather than by profound analysis, I took it that Franco had established a viable Spanish State, and that, whatever resentments there might be about the way he did it, he had constructed something that would persist. (I had already reached the general conclusion that profound analysis is at least as likely to mislead as to reveal.)

The Irish Civil War was bogus: the Spanish was authentic. There was a real division in Spanish life which gave rise to Civil War. One side turned to Italy and Germany for assistance and the other to

Moscow, but the internal division was not something that had been engineered by these external forces. The division in Ireland was entirely engineered from outside. Both parties in the Irish 'Civil War' shared the same ideal. Both sides were Republicans. They were only divided on whether to submit to a British military ultimatum.

There has been a tendency to treat the Irish Civil War as genuine and the Spanish as not, going against the substance of the matter. The former is obviously a product of ongoing influence of the British state on Irish academia. The latter (which I first came across in Upton Sinclair's massive series of novels on post-1918 Europe) has a more complex cause.

In Spain itself the issue was resolved *de facto* by the actual evolution of the state on lines provided for by Franco. There was no punishing of tyrants. Justice was not allowed to get on the agenda. There were no 'Truth & Reconciliation' encounters. None of the things which might have thrown the situation back into civil war was done. In recent years Spain has been applying transcendental legal standards to others but it did not apply them to itself. The tyranny eased its way into monarchical democracy. There was therefore a *de facto* acceptance that the Civil War had been a necessary event in the life of the Spanish state, and the outcome was accepted as the framework of evolutionary development.

Orwell, at the Spanish moment in his erratic career, said something to the effect that fascism would be an inevitable

outcome of the Civil War, regardless of which side won. It was an eccentric use of language, but I don't think it was nonsensical. His argument, as far as I can recall, was that, since the socialist revolutionary movement on the Republican side was not allowed to develop, the outcome of a victory for the Government would be a bourgeois authoritarian state, suppressing socialism on one side and keeping feudalism in check on the other.

The relationship of politics and history has remained very problematical in the case of the Spanish Civil War. It began 70 years ago and ended 67 years ago, and there is a sense in which one could say that the losers were on the right side, and they were long lived. Michael O'Riordan and Jack Jones are still with us, and they stand for something worthwhile. And who would take General O'Duffy in preference to Frank Ryan? And so the politics of 60 years ago is reluctant to become part of the history of accomplished fact. Survivors of the International Brigade came back and did useful things at home and acquired a strong moral status when the era of "premature anti-Fascism" ended in 1940, while the Francoite volunteers must have been demoralised by the subsequent turn of events outside Spain. And yet the Franco regime endured, and established a secure Spanish national state as a component of modern Europe, enforcing an adaptation to the fact of its existence on all regions and social elements in Spain.

I don't know why I went along to this Spanish meeting, having avoided such meetings since about 1980. But I heard a talk given by a historian—the kind of animal who doesn't exist in Ireland any more.

His theme was British policy towards Spain in 1936-9. He began by remarking that the Spanish Civil War exerted an influence on British political life comparable to that of the French Revolution. It was an intriguing suggestion, and I can see how it might be argued, but he did not develop it.

I have long been of the opinion that the history of Britain, for all the books that have been produced about it, is almost entirely unwritten. Maybe Ramsay Macdonald was a traitor, but in the Blair era his betrayal is forgotten—his treason not being comparable to Blair's. Blair's treason was entirely unnecessary, being the product of mere ambition. He did not betray the values of his Party so that Parliamentary government might survive. There was absolutely no danger of its not surviving. If Labour had lost a fifth election, the Liberals would probably have resumed the position of second party,

which they threw away during the 1914 War (the Liberals' War). But, when Blair took over and jettisoned socialist politics, John Smith had made a Labour victory a virtual certainty without going Thatcherite.

In 1931 there actually was a crisis in the state, and Macdonald's treason helped to resolve it (or at least contain it) within the existing forms. I do not suggest that it would not have been better for the world if it had not been resolved. I cannot see how anything could have been worse for the world than the way Britain conducted its affairs in the 1930s. I'm only saying that Macdonald's treason was not the product of mere ambition. It served as a kind of substitute for Fascism, preserving the Parliamentary form, while depriving it of its party-political substance. And normal service was not resumed until 1945.

Ernest Bevin became an anti-Fascist militarist in 1934. As boss of the Transport & General, he conducted his own foreign policy, between the Coalition and the leadership of the marginalised Labour Party, before taking over the running of the country, with Churchill as figurehead, in the crisis of June 1940. The event which determined him to campaign for war was the class war in Austria in 1934 became part of the anti-Fascist alliance of 1940. (Prince Starhemberg, a leader of the Austrian *Heimwehr*, published his Memoirs in London in 1942 as a contribution to the war against Hitler, making clear his regret that it was also a war against Mussolini, who had been the strongest supporter of Austrian independence from Germany, but was himself thrown into dependence on Germany by the refusal of Britain (guarantor of Versailles) to contain Germany.

All of this might be described in terms of absurdity or paradox, but it was nothing of the kind. It only appears so because history has been subordinated to Churchillian mythology (the mythology of the Churchillians, rather than of Churchill himself).

The Professor explained that Britain's Spanish policy, which was formerly one of Non-Intervention throughout, had three distinct phases in substance.

The Foreign Office saw the Spanish situation in 1936 as resembling the Russian situation in 1917, and hoped for a quick victory for Franco's insurrection to guarantee a stable framework for its economic interests in Spain, which was its main trading partner and arena of capital investment, and to ensure that it continued to hold Gibraltar.

When the insurrection failed to enact a *coup d'etat*, and the conflict settled down to a civil war, which was something like a

stalemate, neither side seeming to have the power to dominate the other, the British Government had, for domestic reasons, to conceal its alignment with Franco. At one point it even considered enforcing general non-intervention. But, in its over-all foreign policy, it had the problem of coping with three rising powers, Japan, Germany and Italy, which it lacked the will or the resources to deal with on its own, or even in alliance with France, and it was therefore cultivating good relations with Italy, and so turned a blind eye to Italian intervention in Spain.

This phase lasted until February 1938. From that moment to the end of the war, it was a definite supporter of Franco, under cover of non-intervention, and it recognised Franco's Government in February 1939, a month before the end of the war.

France adopted Non-Intervention under British pressure. And despite its one-sided application of this policy, denying arms only to the legal Government, was Britain's distinctive contribution to the war.

The Professor had a number of interesting quotations. The Prime Minister, Baldwin, instructed his Foreign Secretary, Eden, that under no circumstance must be bring Britain into the war on the side of the Russians. Churchill wrote to Eden, that France must be made to stay neutral, even if Germany continued to back the rebels. And the Tory Chief Whip said that the object was to secure the triumph of the insurrection and the crushing of Communism without formally dropping the stance of neutrality, which could not be dropped because of concern for labour agitation.

Thirty years ago I wrote some articles in which, as far as I recall, I said I thought Franco would have won even if there had been no intervention. But I think the Spanish Professor made his case that Franco won when he did, and in the way that he did, because of the British policy of starving the Government of arms and facilitating external Fascist intervention.

The Professor was asked if he thought it would have made a difference if there had been a Labour Government in Britain, and it seemed to me that he sought to be kind in the way he answered it. He began by remarking that the 'counter-factual' was not really his thing. He then made a number of observations which, if he had a conclusion from them, would have led to the answer that it would have made no difference. But he didn't say it.

Brendan Clifford

PS: The Professor quoted Maurice Hankey as saying, in the Spanish context, that a

situation was coming about in which it might pay Britain to throw in its lot with Germany and Italy. Hankey was Cabinet Secretary, but was much more than that. He had been Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence before 1914, then Secretary of the War Cabinet, and he invented the position of Cabinet Secretary. His position was like that of Cecil under Elizabeth—except that he had no Elizabeth to serve, and had to keep a succession of upstarts in order.

If Britain had actually thrown its lot in

with Germany and Italy, and thereby contained and directed them, it is unlikely that the outcome would have been anything near as catastrophic as the course it actually followed. And that, of course, is why the history of Britain in the 1930s has not been written.

If some German and Italian and Russian professors undertook to work on the British influence on their countries as this Spanish professor has done, a history of Britain would begin to emerge. It is unlikely to emerge from Britain itself.

The Irish Brigades, with Emily Lawless and Thomas Davis verses, and some by Kettle and Gwynn aping them. One of Kettle's is *A Nation's Freedom*. Here are the first two lines:

"Word of the Tsar ! and the drowse malign is broken ;
The stone is rolled from the tomb, and Poland free."

You may think, reading the above, that you have got some facts about the Great War scrambled. You haven't. The Tsar had no intention of freeing Poland. Pilsudski put his Polish Legion at the disposal of Germany and Austria-Hungary, on the grounds that the Tsar (any Tsar) was not going to allow Poland to exist. It was being 'Russified', as were Georgia, Armenia, Lithuania, and all the others in the 'prison house of nations'. Kettle goes on to make a comparison between Poland and Ireland, which verges on the blasphemous:

"Word of the Tsar ! My lords, I think of another
Crowned with dolour, forbidden the sun, abased,
Bloodied, unbroken, abiding—Ah !
Queen, my Mother,
I have prayed the feet of the Judgement of God to haste."

If Patrick Pearse had written the above, we would not have heard the end of it, but (in comedian Jimmy Cricket's phrase), there's more. Pearse, as we had been informed *ad nauseam*, when the great slaughter in Europe (and other parts of the world the City of London had its eyes on) was well under way, wrote about 'blood sacrifice'. He may have got carried away with the image, being called 'a blithering fool' by Connolly for his pains. But this is what Tom Kettle wrote, probably in 1914—when the Great War was months old:

"The altar is set ; uplifted again the chalice :
The priest is in purple ; the bell booms to the sacrifice.
The trumpets summon to death, and Ireland rallies—
Fool or free ? We have paid and overpaid, the price."

That is the liberal internationalist Redmondite talking, who Mr. Martin counterposes to the "fossilised pre-Norman, Milesian, spiritual Utopian myth" beloved of "backward, anti-liberal, black-hearted Irish Irelanders" like "Pearse, MacNeill, de Valera and—setting aside the spin—Collins."

We, of course, know that the Great War went on for four years (and that at the

Review: WAS 1916 A CRIME? by various writers
Aubane Historical Society Euro 6 / 4.00

The 1916 Polemic

There are about 200,000 Poles living in Ireland at present. The very title of this pamphlet would bamboozle at least 99% of them—I doubt if Joseph Pilsudski's reputation is the subject of the sort of abuse to which 'historical revisionists' have subjected that of his soul mate James Connolly. As for Patrick Pearse's reputation, people have been banished from society for publishing much milder material about the founders of other states and nations, than has been freely broadcast about him. (Even radical Americans do not really like having the shortcomings of Washington or Jefferson aired in public outside of the USA. Some things are simply 'not done'.)

The substance of this pamphlet in the words of sub-heading, is "A discussion from *Village Magazine*, July–December 2005", which is, in the cliché, 'on-going'. It was mostly between Jack Lane of the Aubane Historical Society, and Pierce Martin of Celbridge in County Kildare. Lane was putting a straightforward 'line' that 1916 (the Easter Rising) was a legitimate political act. He does not mention that Westminster had unilaterally extended its own life, which should have ended in mid-1915. Nor that Sinn Féin, and the Irish Volunteers, and the 'advanced Nationalist' 'mosquito press', on one hand, and the Unionists on the other, sneered at the Redmondites and Liberals for avoiding a General Election, on the grounds that they would be destroyed. The prognosis proved, in the General Election of 1918, to be accurate, the Redmondites being utterly destroyed: the Liberals condemned to a lingering half-life.

Pierce Martin's views seem to be deliberately perverse: nothing about Sinn

Féin or the Irish Republican Brotherhood / Fenians is acceptable to him. Sinn Féin and the Fenians had different strategies for Ireland before the IRB's absorption of Sinn Féin at the latter's 1917 Convention. This is an important point as in a letter dated 17th November 2005 Mr. Martin outlines how he saw Ireland developing if the Rising had not happened. He brings forward Tom Kettle as an exemplar, and mentions Willie Redmond. These men and most—

"...of their fellow national volunteers from across the socio-economic spectrum... politically rationalised their participation in the war. They saw themselves as giving a liberal internationalist substance to Irish nationalism."

The Fenians organised in Europe and the Americas, and participating in the Second Boer / South African War, could not, apparently, have given Irish nationalism such substance. There was, and still is to a great extent, a relationship between Fenianism and radicals, even revolutionaries, throughout the world. Thus today's Sinn Féin (among many other matters) talked the Basque ETA into a prolonged ceasefire with the Madrid authorities, and counts the African National Congress as a fraternal organisation.

But let Tom Kettle the liberal internationalist speak for himself. He engaged in hysterical propaganda for England's Establishment after it decided to 'explode out' the European war of Summer 1914 into a World War. England's major ally was reactionary anti-Semitic Tsarist Russia. Kettle and another Redmondite, Stephen Gwynn published a chapbook in early 1915, *Battle Songs For*

end of it Germany was not defeated. It was defrauded, as was Ireland). Kettle clearly assumed the fighting would be over quickly, if not necessarily 'by Christmas'. So he suggests, in this stanza, that Irish men go and get killed for the City of London, despite having already "overpaid the price" for freedom. And the freedom he was campaigning for was a glorified county council status for Ireland in the imperial system. Admittedly, Kettle and the advanced nationalists in the UIL, hoped for Dominion status—they were not going to get it. There is a case to be made that Kettle ought to have been out in 1916, that he knew he ought to have been out, and in effect, committed suicide in pointless heroics on the Western Front, soon after the executions. Mrs. Tom Kettle became in effect an honorary 'Widow of Easter Week' (those people the revisionists are so fond of shuddering about) though her politics were somewhat wayward.

An enterprising publisher should bring the 'liberal internationalist' Kettle's writings of this period to the attention of the Irish public. If you think what has been quoted is bad, there is more of this particular poem and others by Kettle, just as emetic.

Kettle in his short-lived journal of 1907 *The Nationist* admitted, in essence, that he agreed with Sinn Féin, but had a career to make in The Party. Joe Devlin 'invented' the Young Ireland branch of Redmond's United Irish League to keep the Kettles, Gwynns and Cruise O'Briens in the Party, dangling before them the prospect of parliamentary careers. (Incidentally, in 1907, in a letter to John Dillon, Devlin suggest absorbing Sinn Féin into the UIL as a 'think tank'.) Sinn Féin's policy was encapsulated in Griffith's *The Resurrection Of Hungary*, which suggested a dual monarchy, by way of a re-establishment of 'Grattan's Parliament' of 1782. Presumably Mr. Martin, and many others, can write nonsense about Sinn Féin, Kettle, and the Redmonds, because vast tracts of material pertaining to this period are out of print, including *The Resurrection*.

That is why Tom Kettle, who seems to have totally lost his intellectual bearings in the Summer of 1914, can be put forward as a 'liberal internationalist'. It is difficult to put a name to what he actually became, but the term West British chauvinist would cover most eventualities. He was a 'useful fool' for the British War Office, using Roman Catholic (rather than specifically Irish) imagery in his doggerel. Joseph Plunkett is sometimes sneered at for his 'I see His blood upon the rose' verse, but that is an image any Christian can respond to: it is hardly 'chalices' or 'purple vestments'—and if it was, there is no need to wonder what would be happening to Plunkett's reputation.

I have not mentioned a number of other interesting and information interventions by Manus O Riordan, Nick Folley, A Leavy, and Brendan Kelly (very substantial, well-argued, and annotated, which Pierce Martin dealt with by ignoring). Mr. Martin, a the letter dated 13th November 2005, claims "*the Castle authorities*" had no "*intelligence system in Ireland*"—what does he think the RIC (Royal Irish Constabulary) was?

Martin Mansergh's intervention in this correspondence should be mentioned, his first 22nd July 2005, is fairly bland. That of 15th December 2005 is interesting because he mentions his father "*an Irish and commonwealth* [meaning British Imperial—SMcG] *historian*" to the effect that Ireland undermined the Empire. He

slips into his argument the idea that we should honour and endorse the 1916 Proclamation of the Republic ("*minus taking sides with Imperial Germany*"). But taking sides with Germany was part of the intellectual substructure of the Rising. Casement and Connolly, cogitating the problem of Ireland's position (and that of other small states) at the end of a great war, came to the conclusion that a victory for Germany would be a victory for democracy, the rights of small nations, and even socialism. And the triumph of England (or of the City of London) would be a setback for all of those things. The trail of blood from Ireland through India to Kenya and Cyprus, and on to Iraq shows that they were entirely correct in their prognoses.

Seán McGouran

Review: Guests Of The State by T. Ryle Dwyer
Brandon £7.95

Prisoners Of War In Ireland

The perspective of this book is *Our Boys* adventure, rather than political analysis. On that plane it works very well, and the Irish State has little to be ashamed of in its (relatively) even-handed treatment of the combatants interned in the course of the Second World War. They were mostly Allied aircrew (British, some 'Commonwealth', a few French and Poles. The German contingent was bigger, something of an optical illusion, due to two shipwrecks at the very end of the hostilities.)

A major problem the Irish authorities had was attempting to deal with tensions within the two lots of prisoners. The Germans as the war progressed, tended to split into pro-, and anti-'Nazi'. That is the word used by Mr. Dwyer, but there seems to have been a relatively small number of active National Socialists among them. An aspect of the matter is religious, but this is not explored. Towards the end of the War, the trio of insubordinate ringleaders are characterised as 'Catholic'. Quite conscientious in the Central European manner, the Irish regarded them as heathens. Their pro-Nazi superior officer denounced them as 'Communists'. There was a major inter-German riot in 1945. A lot of the strain was due to the fact that a small, and rather cosy, group of prisoners was suddenly expanded to hundreds – a cargo ship and a U-boat had been towed into Irish ports and their crews placed in the care of the Army.

The Army could have done well without the chore, and rather resented it as the rule had been that ships found in distress off Ireland's (twelve-mile) territorial waters had been towed to the nearest port in Great Britain. While the

relationship between most of the German prisoners and their captors was friendly, the first 'ranking' officer Mollenhauer (an Oberleutnant) compensated for his lowly rank by bombarding the Irish authorities with complaints and demands. The Army thought most of them outrageous. Given that the officers and NCOs got (presumably weekly) allowances of £3.00, and Other Ranks £2.00 it had a certain amount of justice on its side. Some Other Ranks, especially the younger, unmarried ones, thought they were on a long holiday. Apart from the allowance, they got Army rations, and were allowed to use the facilities in the Curragh barracks. They could also take paying jobs: some had useful skills, but most did turf cutting. All were encouraged to improve their education, and third level students were allowed to stay in Dublin for up to three, then five days. Some skilled men worked in factories quite long distances from the camp and were allowed to stay away for the working week.

At the end of the War, the German prisoners had genuine complaints. The camp was overcrowded, and the buildings were showing the signs of wear and tear. Food was still available in quantity but was dull. Most of this had to do with the fact that the numbers had within a week increased nearly ten fold. All the Allied prisoners had been got rid of. The Irish authorities could not realistically have expected a sudden rise in the numbers of German prisoners. There were practical problems; as the prisoners were not going to be in the camp for a long time it was a bit of a waste of resources to refurbish their accommodation. Due to the large numbers of prisoners, privileges which

had been taken for granted for years had to be restricted.

Other problems were that the sailors, being 'distressed mariners', ought not to have been interned – the 'distressed mariners' legal loophole had been useful in bundling Allied airmen who had landed in water out of the State. (Despite what Ryle Dwyer implies here, in line with – largely – British writers, 'Éire' would have been quite happy to bundle all combatants out of the State. It was comparatively easy with the Allied service personnel: aircrew who came down in water were deemed 'distressed mariners', but what were they supposed to do with the Axis sailors and aircrew? An attempt was made to transfer Axis prisoners to mainland Europe, but the British authorities simply refused them safe passage. Éire, being neutral, had to contend with diplomatic pressure from the US / UK and the German legation. (There were Japanese and Italian missions in Dublin. They may not have acted in consort with the Germans but were hardly detached about the matter of Axis prisoners. Early on in the war the Germans could infer that unpleasant things might happen to the Irish State if neutrality was not strictly adhered to. The 'accidental' bombing of north Dublin in 1941 was a warning to toe a very fine line.)

To add to all these difficulties the new (1945) German senior officer, a man called Quedenfeld, of the Luftwaffe, was a martinet and a Nazi. He put the main 'trouble maker', Weber, on trial inside the camp and held him prisoner for nearly a week on a bread and water diet before the Irish authorities discovered what was going on. This was a serious diplomatic problem for those running the camp, they could not undermine Quedenfeld's authority, but they could hardly allow him to hand out severe punishments, even if it was for striking him and two NCOs. This sort of thing, and the attempt to involve the IRA prisoners, on the other side of a few rolls of barbed wire, in the internal politics of the prison camp determined the authorities to repatriate the prisoners as soon as possible. The trouble caused by the Allied and Axis prisoners had been out of all proportion to their numbers. The 'trouble' stretched all the way from the guardhouse at the Curragh camp to the Cabinet.

In June 1945 the UK demanded that Ireland hand over the Axis internees; it was refused. Dublin demanded safe passage through British territory, a guarantee that none would be imprisoned or executed, and that they would not be forced to go to the Soviet Zone. There were a number of hitches, which Dwyer appears not to be suspicious about, and he describes the attitude of the Irish Government as "*selfish*" in regard to the wishes of the men who did not want to return to Germany. But the Government

ruled Ireland, and was responsible to the Irish electorate—which got rid of Dev quite shortly after these events—and Ireland bore absolutely no responsibility for the state that Germany was in when these men again set foot in the place. They were also well provisioned, and guarantees had been demanded of the UK Government as to their safety in transit.

The British did not keep their promises, and material and money was stolen from the prisoners. Some complained about the Irish Government not keeping its promises, as they were lodged in a POW camp near Brussels. They asked the Red Cross to contact the Irish legation, which sped their freedom. The British kept to the bargain after being reminded of what it consisted. Later some former Curragh internees had 'adventurous' times in the Soviet Zone, and the Austrians had problems getting home. Despite all that, the German (and Austrian) prisoners had quite happy memories of Ireland, and even ran an old comrades group, and some returned to live in Ireland.

The Allied prisoners were, by and large, a radically different matter. They were largely airmen, and of the officer class. They were also only a matter of miles from the border with Northern Ireland, where many of them had been stationed. This encouraged the 'fly boys' (who were also to an extent 'glory boys') to attempt escapes—which exacerbated (to put it mildly) relations between the internees and, in particular, the Irish 'Other Ranks'. This included a virtual riot in the course of one escape attempt.

The internees at the beginning of the War were mostly 'Commonwealth' aircrew, who were not familiar with the lie of the land, or tended to think that 'Éire' was (or should be) a combatant. They were mostly Canadians, who, while anxious to get back into the fighting, had a rational representative in Dublin, John D. Kearney. They would have been aware of the fact that Canada declared war on Germany (according to this text) a full *week* after the 'Mother Country'. There was also the habit of the Dublin Government of using the 'distressed mariners' loophole in dealing with aircrew that landed in its territorial (or practically any other) waters. They included Free Poles, but some Free French and a number of Poles who were members of 'British' aircrews, were interned. They resented being interned and irritated their gaolers by constantly trying to escape and taking an arrogant attitude to the Irish. Flying Officer Paul Mayhew, an Englishman, was the only Allied internee for some time. In a letter he asked rhetorically if the Irish expected the RAF to 'bomb Cobh' at some stage. The censors must have smiled wryly at that: it was written twenty years after the RIC 'Auxiliaries' had burned Cork City.

A further annoyance for many of the airmen was that they tended to crash-land just south of the border, or in the case of the New Zealander Bruce Girdlestone, on the northernmost part of Ireland. He insisted that 'Southern Ireland' was south of Northern Ireland, but was told he was in 'Northern Éire' which was north of Northern Ireland. There was more in this vein, as reported by Girdlestone, which has all the attributes of condescending semi-racism. He was a dedicated escapee, but also had a patronising attitude to the 'Southern Irish', suggesting that they did not have the right to be neutral. He also took a patronising attitude to the Irish interpretation of history, keeping a picture of Oliver Cromwell in his room. He also disliked Roman Catholicism, something which Dwyer mentions in passing but which must have been of some consequence.

The Irish could legitimately have wondered what a young man from a pair of Edenic islands in the Pacific was doing fighting a war in Europe. He thought that 'no English speaking country' had the right to be neutral, and that he ought to have been set free. At that point the USA was neutral, and no doubt the biggest 'English speaking country' would also have interned him, if he had crash-landed his plane in Alaska or Washington State. The insolent attitude to Roman Catholicism on his part and that of some other members of the 'Escape Club' was probably the result of the old-fashioned 'Britishness' inculcated in 'colonials' in those days. (It was actually a form of Englishness – Kiwis thought of their country as England's front lawn-cum-sheep farm. One wonder's what Girdlestone thought of 'White Rhodesian' UDI.)

Another aspect of their (very easy-going) internment was that the Allied internees were able to wander at will for very great distances in the Curragh. The Germans tended to meet fellow-plebs. They met the 'Gentry'. For a variety of reasons they were welcomed into the houses of the remnants of the Anglo-Irish, of which there were a substantial number in the rich lands of Kildare. There is no doubt that many of these people were members of the Escape Club – even a Fifth Column, whose dislike for neutrality and De Valera's 'dictionary Republic' of Éire, led them into something very like treason. The Allied internees thought that the Irish attitude changed after El Alamein in 1942. (They were not the sort of people who took trifles like Stalingrad under their notice.)

Stalingrad probably did have something to do with the changed attitude to the internees, but so may have the news coming out of Europe to the Irish Cabinet about the atrocities behind the Eastern Front. There was also the fact that fewer German flights in western Europe meant

Editorial Commentary

Cory: Taoiseach Ahern has revealed to the Dail that the Inquiry into the Finucane assassination has been delayed because no reputable Judge is prepared to conduct it under the constraints of Tony Blair's *Enquiries Act*. The British legal profession has rejected the provisions which enable the State to control the direction of the Enquiry and limit the evidence presented. Judge Peter Cory recommended two years ago that there should be a Finucane Enquiry, and has continued to put pressure on the British Government to stand by its undertaking to him to abide by his findings. Visiting Belfast in February to deliver a lecture on Public Enquiries, he said:

"I was disappointed and heartbroken, not for myself but for the families of the people who died and for the wider community in Northern Ireland..."

"I was disappointed that the rules seemed to be changed which I delivered my report" (IN 23.2.06)

Apparently the security services refuse to cooperate with a public inquiry.

This column tried to find a report of Cory's lecture, but could only find this brief summary from Jane Winter of British/Irish Rights Watch:

"On 22nd February Judge Peter Cory delivered the McDermott Lecture at Queen's University in Belfast. In a spirited defence of public inquiries based on Canadian experience, the judge said it was better never to hold an inquiry than to leave the public believing there had been a whitewash. He identified four key elements for a successful public inquiry. First, it must be held in public so that the public could see the evidence, hear the witnesses, and be satisfied that the truth had been established. Secondly, it must be timely, so that matters do not fester. Thirdly, any recommendations made must be followed through. Fourthly, the public must be able to trust and rely on the tribunal to act fairly and to get at the truth. When these conditions are met, he argued, public inquiries are a force for good in the world, and there will always be a need for them. Although he did not refer to any of the five inquiries he himself recommended as a result of the invitation from the British and Irish governments to examine collusion cases, he gave several interviews in which he said that the government had moved the goalposts in the Finucane case."

Billy Wright: Looking for the Cory lecture, we found that Tony Blair has also interfered with the Wright Enquiry, recommended by Cory. Jane Winter reports:

"Billy Wright's father, David Wright, was given leave on 17th February to challenge the Secretary of State's decision to convert the Billy Wright Inquiry to an inquiry under the Inquiries Act 2005. Leave was given on the following grounds:

- The applicant had a legitimate expectation that the government commitment to accept the recommendations of Judge Cory included an expectation that the form of the inquiry comply with his recommendations.

- Arguably there was a commitment given to Mr. Wright and an intention [that] this inquiry would be compliant with Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Whether the legal structures governing the inquiry allow for this is also arguable.

- Arguably a mistake as to the law has been relied on by the Secretary of State in converting this inquiry. He and the tribunal panel may have misunderstood the scope of the powers of the respective tribunals under the Prison Act and under the Inquiries Act.

- Arguably it was procedurally unfair that the chair of the inquiry and the Secretary of State had exchanged correspondence prior to the Inquiry's public statement on its intention to convert (made by Lord McClean on the 22nd June) but the applicant was not consulted.

This is thus likely to be a very important test case. David Wright has appealed the judge's refusal to grant him leave on two other points:

- That conversion was a nullity as section 15 of the Inquiries Act (which requires the consent of the person who caused the Inquiry to be held) was not complied with. The applicant argued

the present Secretary of State should have obtained the consent of the Paul Murphy, the Secretary who set up the inquiry. Mr Justice Weatherup upheld the constitutional convention that all holders of the post of SOS were the same person.

- That the conversion was irrational. Given the grave concerns expressed by Amnesty International, British Irish RIGHTS WATCH, CAJ, Liberty, the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and senior judges from three international jurisdictions, including Lord Saville and Judge Cory, that the Inquires Act was fatally flawed, it was unreasonable to hold any inquiry where Article 2 was engaged under this legislation. Mr Justice Weatherup held that in this circumstance the court's role was in determining the compatibility of legislation with human rights standards and the decision of the Secretary of State to act under legislation lawfully enacted by Parliament could not be irrational.

"My thanks to Maggie O'Conor of CAJ for setting out the legal points so clearly."

Irish Times Anti-Semitism: "...the knife in [Joe] McCarthy's reputation is twisted by calling him an anti-Semite—though this disingenuously conceals the unhappy truth that the vast majority of Soviet agents in the US were Jewish" (21.3.06, Kevin Myers).

Jericho's Walls: Dan O'Brien of the (British) *Economist Intelligence Unit* wrote a column in the *Irish Times* denying that 1916 Rising could be regarded as legitimate under the Just War doctrine (13.3.06). Though also dealing with Iran, he had nothing to say about the undeclared war of attrition being pursued by Israel against the Palestinian population. And the paper's normally Oh-so-moral editorial (15.3.06) had nothing to say about the continuing collusion by the American and British Governments in what is going on. The latest disgraceful episode had the Imperialists breaking an international agreement which ended the Siege of Arafat's headquarters. Under this they provided oversight over the imprisonment of a number of Palestinians in Jericho Jail, which is nominally under Palestinian control. In a move coordinated with the Israelis, American and British guards withdrew and the Israelis immediately laid siege to the prison. After bombarding it and killing two, the jail surrendered and the Army made off with the 5 prisoners they wanted. All that Geraldine Kennedy could find about this flagrant breach of what she described as "*international law*" was: "*It is... disquieting how rapidly the Israeli army acted*" after the Amerangians withdrew. She didn't even describe what happened in plain language.

1916: Stuart Eldon, the British Ambassador who has such an intimate relationship with the Irish body politic, has accepted an invitation to the GPO reviewing stand during the 90th anniversary celebrations. It is not suggested that he will be apologising on behalf of the British Government for subjecting Dublin city centre to a naval bombardment during the Rising and killing some hundreds of civilians. This event is described in a reprint of an eye-witness account by John Redmond's nephew, L.G. Redmond-Howard, reprinted by Aubane Historical Society to coincide with the event.

Dublin Riot: After going to press last month, it emerged that the core of the rioters were not political activists—republican or otherwise—but football supporters and disaffected working class youngsters. This has given the Establishment of every hue something to think about.

Policing Board: Peter Hain has angered political parties, except Sinn Fein, by changing the make-up of the Board which oversees policing in Northern Ireland. In future members nominated by elected parties will be outnumbered by people appointed by the Secretary of State by 9 to 11. The UUP threatens to boycott the Board as a result (IT 14.3.06). Sinn Fein continues to boycott the Board. It is possible that the Board as now constituted will be more sympathetic to the Restorative Justice programme, which comprises one leg to a policy to bring Sinn Fein consent to the way policing is administered in the province. The other leg would be to devolve responsibility for policing to any future local administration.

Lord John Alderdyce: submitted himself to a lengthy interview with Jarlath Kearney of *Daily Ireland* (17.2.06). The Chair of the International Independent Monitoring Commission could not explain why his appointment was not the result of open competition, a requirement under Fair Employment legislation. Nor could he say how he came by the job, but suggested that "in an appointment of this kind it's very common for people, if you like, to be head-hunted, you know".

A second point clarified was that there is no redress procedure for those with a complaint to make about IMC reports, beyond complaining to "the two governments who are the appointing people". While the Commission avoided naming individuals, particular groupings were named, such as the Sinn Féin leadership. *Daily Ireland* asked:

"do you believe it is right that you should be absolutely free from suit and legal process?"

JA: Yes. It would be impossible to do what we are doing if we did not have [sic], that's why parliament, both parliaments, conferred immunity on us as an international body, very specifically because it would not be possible to do what we are doing. You see, if the normal administration of justice was able to address these questions there would be no IMC.

DI: Now, you're immune from suit or legal process. You have absolute immunity.

JA: Yes.

DI: So the legal process is in fact a very, very limited, if not nullified form of complaints mechanism. Do you accept that.

JA: That remains to be seen, because legal action has been commenced and, therefore, it will be for the courts to decide. My understanding of it is that there is immunity, but, and I think that was parliament's understanding when it voted on it in London and Dublin, but the courts will make the decision, not either of us."

It is not clear what legal case Alderdyce is referring to here. Conor Murphy of Sinn Féin is currently challenging the membership of John Grieve, the British representative of the IMC, on the grounds of a clash with his other interests. (Readers will recall that this former British police officer was in charge of an operation in which an unarmed IRA suspect was shot dead in his Earls Court bedsitter some years ago.)

Alderdyce was also asked about possible conflicts of interest between his political affiliations and IMC Chairmanship. He remains a member of the Alliance Party, is a member of the (British) Liberal Democrats and is current President of the umbrella group, *Liberal International* of which the (Irish) Progressive Democrats are Observer members. John replied he'd never had any complaints.

Was Milosevic Murdered? No one can be sure, but prejudiced press coverage did its best to dispel that belief held by his family and observers. Here were some of the *Irish Times* headlines: *Milosevic Death 'A Great Pity For Justice'* (Derek Scally 13.3.06); *Milosevic 'Took Drug To Get To Moscow'* (Derek Scally, 14.3.06; *Tyrant Who Turned Balkans Into A Bloodbath* (Chris Stephen 13.3.06).

An expert on 'international law' said on Channel 4 that the difficulty with the Milosevic Trial was how to strike a balance between conducting a fair trial and delivering justice. What he meant was that a Guilty verdict was the necessary outcome of the Trial, but the evidence to support such a verdict had not been presented because it could not be found. In death Milosevic could be said to have cheated 'Justice' of a verdict which it seemed increasingly unlikely to be achieved, even by the methods of a Show Trial.

Begrudgery Geraldine Kennedy welcomed ETA's permanent Ceasefire in an editorial (IT 23.3.2006), without once mentioning the encouragement given to that movement to embark on the peaceful path by the Provos.

Green Greens? Trevor Sargent, the leader of the Green Party, recently wrote:

"Waste and corruption are a legacy of the current Government and I fear that corruption in Fianna Fáil runs so deep that it would

be difficult to join it in government without compromising our party's principles.

"Last year, after I announced that the Green Party would not enter government with Fianna Fáil under my leadership, many people asked me if I would change my mind if they cleaned up their act. My view remains that Ireland urgently needs a change of government.

"Fianna Fáil is still beholden to powerful vested interests and until they decide to remove those particular monkeys from their backs, they cannot be considered as a possible coalition partner..." (IT 22.3.06).

So far the Greens have refused to join Labour and Fine Gael in a pre-Election voting alliance, but Sargent hinted that Sinn Féin might be a possible partner:

"I have more confidence that Sinn Féin will eventually sever its links with blue-collar crime than I have in Fianna Fáil breaking its links with white-collar crime".

Despite the regular appearance of Fine Gaelers, and even the odd Labour man, before the Tribunals, Sargent had nothing to say about their suitability as partners.

Prisoners Of War

continued

fewer potential internees. De Valera (his own External Affairs Minister) in an interview with Maffey (officially 'British Representative in Ireland') in September 1939, said the British were (momentarily) in a morally superior position to the Nazis. He had observed their behaviour at the League of Nations, and probably thought, as the leader of a small nation, they were much of a muchness. As a serious Catholic he would have found the Nazis more repellent than the British, particularly after Pius XI's denunciatory 1937 encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge* [With Burning Anxiety]—which attacked the racist and neo-'pagan' elements in National Socialism. He was also a serious democrat, despite being described by Ascendancy remnants as a Dictator (complete with capital 'D'.)

Whatever the precise reason, from the entry of the USA into the War, the use of the 'distressed seafarers' element in the international law of the sea tended to be applied to anyone who landed next or near a piece of water. They included a USAF flying boat that had on board the highest-ranking officer ever to land in 'Éire'. The nearest soldiers were from an Irish-speaking unit. The Americans were very impressed by the fact that they all stuck rigidly to their codes, and never once used 'proper English'. Another loophole, taking their line from the Swiss in regard to the Luftwaffe, was sending back pilots using training planes (this was stretched to cover delivery of disarmed military planes.) No Americans were interned – all were allowed to go back to Northern Ireland – something that further annoyed the other Allied internees. Hempel, the senior German diplomat took a fairly relaxed attitude to all this, but his deputy Henning Thomsen was a Nazi who kept a weather-eye on what the Allies were allowed, and gave the various ministries and the Curragh authorities grief if he thought they were too lenient with the other combatants.

The camp authorities had plenty of problems with the Allied internees, most of whom were, admittedly, young men and not very politically-minded. (The Irish could have asked what men from western Canada and the south Pacific were doing involved in a war in Europe—and would probably have got incoherent answers.) They could not understand that the Irish Government was being pressed by Axis and Allied diplomats, and the IRA, or that neutrality was universally supported except by the Ascendancy remnants who clustered in the Curragh and Dublin. One Allied internee married a Catholic girl, but refused to do so in a Catholic Church, mainly to irritate her relatives and the authorities. (It does not seem to have struck him that some of the 'authorities' may not have been Catholic.) The local Anglican Church facilitated him in doing this (something worth keeping in mind the next time we are told that the 'Protestant minority' were victimised by the Irish State.)

A Newspaper Debate About The Somme

[The following letter appeared in the *Irish Examiner* on 8th March:]

The government proposes a new postage stamp and other steps to commemorate the Battle of the Somme. But unless this experiment is finely calculated it could, like the attempt to put a loyalist parade through O'Connell Street, go horribly wrong.

Should all of the foreign wars in which Irish people participated be commemorated, whether or not there is now a consensus in favour of the objectives for which they fought?

Should we commemorate those Irish who fought on the pro-slavery side in the American Civil War? Should we commemorate the battles of Cremona, Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudinard, Malplaquet and Fontenoy?

The first question we must ask is whether we understand what was at issue in the Irish involvement in these battles.

War is about killing people. Killing people is a serious thing and there has to be a very good reason for doing it. Though the issue continues to be debated, the political consensus in favour of the 1916 Rising has been confirmed.

But what about the Somme?

By that point in the Great War, the decision had been made by the Irish General Kitchener (are we going to honour him?) and others on the British side that Germany could not be beaten by military science, and the only way to win the war was by attrition.

This meant that the fighting had to be arranged, not to obtain a strategic advantage which would bring the killing to a stop, but to maximise killing on all sides.

The calculation being that the Central Powers, the European Union of the day, had a smaller population than their enemies to draw from, and would be exhausted first. Thus the purpose of the planned conscription in Ireland was to provide raw material for butchery.

This is Britain's Crime Against Europe, accurately predicted by Roger Casement in his book of that name.

The Somme is a prime example. In twenty four hours of fighting there were about ten thousand Irish casualties. On a one-for-one killing ratio, the Irish must have been responsible for about ten thousand Bavarian, Pomeranian, Saxon and other casualties.

Do we now stand over those killings to the extent that we wish to publicly honour the killers? Were those deaths justified?

What was it all for?

About half of the ten thousand Irish casualties were for King and Country. In other words they were fighting for the British Empire, the 300-year project of world conquest, colonisation, ethnic cleansing and genocide which reached its apex in the first half of the twentieth century.

This part of the Irish war effort was supremely successful, as the British Empire gained vast territories.

By glorifying the tragedy as a positive event in history we are in danger of a miscalculation which would make the recent events in O'Connell Street look like a Sunday afternoon stroll in the park.

Perhaps the way ahead is, like Holocaust Day, to acknowledge the Great War as a Crime Against Europe, in the tradition of Irish foreign policy pioneered by Casement and Connolly.

Pat Muldowney

[The following reply appeared on 13th March:]

Pat Muldowney... raises troubling questions in relation to the Somme but also to Easter 1916. The events of 1916 are too important for us to ignore and it is right on this 90th anniversary that we seek to confront them. In his poem, *The General* (1917) Siegfried Sassoon, who won the Military Cross in 1916, writes:

"Good morning, good morning!" the General said,
When we met him last week on the way to the line.
Now the soldiers he smiled at are most of 'em dead,
And we're cursing his staff for incompetent swine.
"He's a cheery old card" grunted Harry to Jack
As they slogged up to Arras with rifle and pack.
But he did for them both with his plan of attack.

We may apply these lines with a vengeance to the events of July 1 1916 when 50,000 men paid the price for the plan of attack. WWI did not produce any military leaders with the genius or humanity of a Nelson or a Wellington. The mixture of folly and callousness of a French or a Haig is still hard to comprehend and almost impossible to forgive. Clearly we are not commemorating them.

Thus we are commemorating the heroic fortitude of the common soldier in the service of his country (whether England, Ireland, Scotland, or Wales, but not Britain). Here in the 26 counties it makes more sense to commemorate Gallipoli (April 25 and August 7, 1915) for it was in Gallipoli above all that patriotic Irishmen gave their lives in the doomed struggle for Irish Home Rule....

Gerald Morgan School of English,
Trinity College, Dublin

[Pat Muldowney came back on 16th March:]

Gerald Morgan says... that we should commemorate "the heroic fortitude of the common soldier in the service of ...Ireland..." in the Great War, and he commends Gallipoli to us if we cannot stomach the Somme. But there is no way in which Ireland was served by killing Germans, Turks, Austrians and Hungarians in 1914-18. Ireland had no quarrel with those people. Ireland's quarrel was closer to hand.

Whether or not they were courageous, the Irish in the Great War were not killing in a just or worthy cause. We would not commemorate those Irish who killed for the pro-slavery side in the American Civil War, not even if their heroic fortitude knew no bounds. The unspoken assumption in Gerald Morgan's letter is that, though their generals were stupid, cruel butchers, the common soldiers fighting on the British side were fighting in the cause of right.

But why is Britain always right, and her enemies always evil? There is a humorous couplet by G.K. Chesterton: "How odd of God to choose the Jews;/ How could He fail to choose the Gael!" Britain's assumption of the power and authority to determine Right and Wrong in the world by violence and conquest—for such contradictory objectives as the slave trade in the 18th century, abolition of the slave trade and promotion of the opium trade in the 19th, saving Christian civilisation in the 20th century, and free speech, democracy and human rights in the 21st—is predicated on the assumption of the unique virtue of a Chosen People. This goes back at least as far as Cromwell and Milton. In his first speech to Parliament in 1653, Cromwell said that "England was called upon by God, as had been Judah, to rule with Him and for Him." Milton's *Paradise Lost* speaks of "God's special Providence for England... His chosen People". This is the mind-set that makes it possible for the British and their apologists to come to terms with world conquest, genocide of several continents, and the centuries of practically unremitting warfare in other peoples' countries that the Great War exemplifies;—and to accept it all without shame but with the characteristic chirpy good humour of the poem quoted by Gerald Morgan: " 'He's a cheery old card' grunted Harry to Jack ... But he did for them both with his plan of attack."

The 1916 Rising and the War of Independence which it initiated have a very different moral basis. This was the second such movement to achieve a measure of success in modern times. The first was Haiti. The earlier American Revolution was a civil war among the British, in which each of the contending parties had genocidal policies towards the native inhabitants of America. The British-American civil war of the 1770s followed a divergence of interests between the colonists and their British kith-and-kin arising from the war of colonial conquest and genocide that both parties waged against an Indian alliance led by Pontiac in the 1760s. About the same time the Guarani Indians in South America fared better than Pontiac in their anti-colonial war led by the Irish Jesuit Thaddeus Ennis. Surely it is remarkable that, while the mindless, criminal butchery of the Somme and Gallipoli are recommended to us for admiration, one of the worthiest and most notable feats of arms with which any Irish person was ever associated is practically unknown. ■

In Poland, for example, child benefit is just Euro 11 a month; in Latvia it is Euro 9; in Lithuania it stands at around Euro 27, but varies depending on income; and in Slovenia it is worth between Euro 16 and Euro 90, depending on income.

Migrant EU workers may apply to the Department of Social and Family Affairs to apply for the child benefit and childcare subsidy immediately, although payment of the Euro 1,000 childcare subsidy will not begin until the middle of this year.

The applicant must be working, or self-employed, in order to receive the benefit. Therefore, the Government insists, it will not operate as a draw for people who wish to benefit from social assistance here.

The Department requests the children's birth certificates and an Irish employer's statement confirming the person is working and paying social insurance.

Officials in Ireland then communicate with authorities in the relevant EU state to assess how much is due to be paid, taking into account the employment status of the other parent.

The Department of Social and Family Affairs currently pays approximately 125 supplements in respect of children resident abroad where a parent is employed in Ireland, according to new figures released yesterday, and is currently facing a backlog of 2,000 claims.

The State will spend more than Euro 2 billion on child benefit and a further Euro 265 million on the childcare subsidy.

Even a major increase in the rate of claims of child benefit and the new subsidy is likely to be just a fraction of how much the State benefits in tax paid by migrant workers.

FAMILY BENEFITS

"In May, 2004, the requirement to be habitually resident in Ireland was introduced as a qualifying condition for certain social assistance payments paid by the Department of Social and Family Affairs, including One-Parent Family Payment. In general, to qualify for a payment under its condition, you must have been resident in Ireland or in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for the two years immediately prior to applying for a payment.

"Since May, 2005, One-Parent Family Payment has been reclassified as a Family Benefit. Child Benefit is already classified as a Family Benefit.

"As a result of this change the habitual residence condition is not applied to claims for One-Parent Family Payment made by EU/EEA nationals, or by Swiss nationals, who are employed or self-employed in Ireland and who are subject

to the Irish PRSI (social insurance) system. They can also receive the payment if they become unemployed and are receiving Unemployment benefit" (*North City News*, Cork, January, 2006 edition).

THE 'COY' BENEFACTORS

"The Irish health and social welfare services are not dazzlingly Beveridgean in their liberality. The social services are organised on the Plimsoll line notion that below a certain figure people should not be expected to live. Above this level they do not get too much encouragement to survive either" (Tim Pat Coogan, *Ireland Since The Rising, 1966*, Pall Mall Press).

Awareness about entitlement to child welfare has grown since Fine Gael revealed that immigrants were entitled to the €1,000 payment for children under the age of six—introduced in the budget to address the rising cost of childcare.

The Fine Gael accusation was based on the charge that the FF/PD Government had got its figures wrong and that the application of the Benefits to the 'New Irish' would entail a substantial increase for the exchequer.

The Children's Minister, Mr. Brian Lenihan then accused Fine Gael of being racist.

Taoiseach Bertie Ahern strongly defended the provision whereby migrant workers are entitled to the State's new childcare payment during heated Dáil exchanges.

He said it would cost about Euro 1 million out of a budget of Euro 350 million.

"So we were going to be real Scrooges and change a 36-year-old regulation to save Euro 1 million in a calendar year.

"We did not do that. If we did, there would be people in here calling me the biggest racist that ever was. So let us not have a lecture on this one."

"NO DOLE FOR 3,600 WELFARE TOURISTS"

However, Bertie and the boys were caught out: he did try to avoid his obligations under EU regulation. In October 2005, the Government attempted to implement a two-year habitual residency rule—and he was found out!

"Ireland has rejected 5,600 benefit claims under its new rules on 'welfare tourists'.

"The controversial clampdown was introduced 20 months ago when 15 new states joined the EU.

"Since then 25 per cent of 22,810 claims for welfare benefits have been turned down.

"Almost 3,600 failed applications were for the dole.

"And Brussels chiefs are questioning the rules, brought in when the Government feared an influx of East Europeans seeking State support.

"Claims for child and single-parent benefits, disability allowance and carer's

allowance have also been rejected.

"Social Affairs Minister Seamus Brennan said Brussels had raised a 'number of issues' concerning Ireland's compliance with EU laws protecting workers and families" (*The Irish Sun*, 24.10.2005).

Mr. Ahern said the regulation, EU 1408 of 1971, stated that migrants from EU member states working in a country—in this case Ireland—whose dependent children were resident in their own country were entitled to claim child benefit here in respect of their children, either in full or as a top-up if there was an equivalent payment at a lower rate in their country of origin.

Ruling out a "vouched arrangement", he said it would automatically exclude women in the home. "*I don't think that is very bright.*"

During heated exchanges with Mr. Kenny, the Taoiseach said they could not have it both ways:

"Let us stop this... We cannot have a position when Irish going abroad have reciprocal benefits, right, left and centre, but when somebody from another member state comes in here, we close it off. Let us not try to be backing two horses on a one-horse race" (*The Irish Times*, 1.2.2006).

MIGRANTS' RESPONSE

The response of Magdalena Kierdelewicz, of the Polish Information Centre was brilliant, she said many migrant workers did not know they were able to claim such benefits as a result of welfare restrictions for workers from Accession States.

"I think it has come as a surprise, because so far the official information about it was that as long as the habitual residency condition test was in Irish law, there was no benefit for workers from accession countries.

"We have some people who claimed benefits for their children and were successful in their claims. We couldn't get the official information from Polish or Irish governments at the time, but maybe we didn't try hard enough", she said.

Ambassador Witold Sobkow said Polish people who were coming to Ireland were here to work rather than claim social welfare benefits.

"Their aim is to come here genuinely to work, to save money and go back home. At the moment I would exclude any kind of welfare tourism. There is nothing like this happening at the moment", he said.

In response to whether he felt there would be an increase in the number of child-benefit applicants, he said: "If it is a legitimate benefit for workers, I would not exclude this. But before we never had any interest in people claiming benefit." (*The Irish Times*, 1.2.2006).

SIPTU GAINS 15,000 NON-NATIONAL MEMBERS OVER 18 MONTHS

The country's largest Union has gained 15,000 members from the growing number of foreign nationals working here in the last 18 months. SIPTU General Secretary Joe O'Flynn said the issue of exploitation of foreign workers and evidence of falling pay rates in certain sectors must be addressed in the upcoming talks on a new social partnership agreement.

The union will hold a special conference next Tuesday at which the National Executive will recommend to delegates that it should enter these negotiations. The Government invited the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) to talks a fortnight ago, but the support of SIPTU with its 200,000-plus members would be vital for the strength of the wider union movement. (*Irish Examiner*, 24.1.2006).

MIGRANT WORKERS AND BENEFIT ENTITLEMENTS

Workers from the 10 new EU states are entitled to claim social welfare benefits here if they lose their jobs.

The change in the law came after the EU Commission forced the Government to overturn a decision denying the benefits to EU citizens.

Previously the Government had insisted citizens of other EU countries must live in Ireland for at least two years before qualifying for social welfare payments.

This restriction was part of legislation introduced by the Dublin Government in 2004 amid fears that EU expansion could lead to so-called 'welfare tourism'.

However, the EU Commission questioned the decision on the basis that workers from EU countries must be treated the same, regardless of which EU country they work in.

The rules governing welfare benefits for migrant workers are laid out in Regulation No 1408/71 of the EU treaty. This states that people residing in another member state are "subject to the same obligations and enjoy the same benefits under the legislation of any member state as the nationals of that state".

The regulation applies to legislation relating to social security that concerns sickness and maternity benefits, invalidity benefits, old-age benefits, survivor's benefits, benefits for accidents at work and occupational diseases, unemployment benefits, family benefits and death grants. It does not apply to medical or social assistance.

The European Court of Justice has also ruled in favour of parents in similar cases relating to child-benefit payments, principally the joined test cases of C-245/94 and C-312/94 involving Ingrid However and Iris Zachaw against the German Land of Nordrhein-Westfalen. The ruling in 1996 extended the scope of EU law to include child-rearing allowances.

The law governing social welfare payments was clarified last November, 2005, and now workers can claim the supplementary welfare allowance in the event of losing their jobs.

This SWA payment of Euro 165.80 can also be topped up with rent allowance and an emergency needs payment if necessary. However, a person must have worked here or in their country of origin to benefit.

Previously, if someone's job fell through the person would have no social welfare entitlements. *Without independent means, these people were referred to the Department of Justice which would arrange travel home.*

"If a job falls apart after a short while, previous to now you wouldn't have had any links to this country and enough contributions to get benefits", a spokesperson from the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs said. "Now, under EU law, if you have been a worker here you will now be entitled to supplementary welfare allowance. The idea is : you have decided to make Ireland your home and came over to get a job—but something went wrong, as it can do.

"In normal circumstances, someone cannot claim SWA for the first six weeks if they have left a job. If you are claiming unemployment, they would look for evidence that you are looking for a job."

On the question of welfare tourism, the spokesperson added: "It's always a factor, and we would be keeping an eye out for that kind of thing because it is a worry. But there's no evidence of that so far, people are genuinely coming to work but have had bad luck on occasion.

"It seems that people are coming with very high expectations of getting a job quickly, but FAS are now in Eastern European countries telling people how much money they'll need to tide them over" (*Irish Independent*, 16.1.2006).

There is a substantial difference in the size of child benefit payments between Ireland and the Accession Countries.

In Ireland, the child benefit payment for a first child will be Euro 150 a month from next April, 2006. In Poland, however, the child benefit is just Euro 11 a month and is means-tested.

The number of non-nationals applying for child benefit whose children aren't resident in Ireland has quadrupled in a year.

The Department of Social and Family Affairs is receiving around 170 such applications per week, compared to 40 per week a year ago. Most of the new claims are being made by immigrants from the European Union Accession States, mainly from Poland.

The same rules mean Irish parents working elsewhere in the EU but whose children are in Ireland are entitled to similar benefits.

Child benefit payments are worth Euro 141.60 per month per child, due to increase to Euro 150 next month.

It's estimated that 25% of Polish workers in Ireland have children at home. In Poland, child benefit is just Euro 11 per month, while in Latvia it is Euro 9. In Lithuania, parents receive Euro 27 per child depending on income. The average wage in Poland is Euro 650 month.

There has been a steady increase in the rate of child benefit claims from non-national parents whose children are living outside the State—from Euro 40 per week at the start of 2005 to Euro 80 per week at the end of 2005.

The rate of applications nearly doubled over the past two months, from 100 per week in January, 2006, to the present level of about 170.

By contrast, 350 applications are received every week from Irish and EU nationals whose children live in the State and a total of 65,000 applications for child benefit were made last year.

Out of a total of Euro 3.3 billion, Euro 290 million in child benefit was paid to children of non-nationals since May 2004 when the accession states joined the EU. It is estimated Euro 4.3m was paid to children not resident here.

Under EU legislation, non-nationals are also entitled to Family Income Supplement. About 1,300 non-nationals are in receipt of this weekly payment of Euro 108.75 out of a total of 17,445 families.

CHILDCARE SUBSIDY

The introduction of the new Euro 1,000 childcare subsidy for under-sixes, which will be paid automatically alongside child benefit, has sharpened focus on the payment, who it will benefit, and how much it will cost the State.

Migrant workers from EU states will be able to receive both child benefit (around Euro 150 a month in Ireland) and the new childcare subsidy (Euro 1,000 annually, or Euro 83 a month).

There are various ways in which a worker can claim the benefit. They may choose to receive the child benefit in full, or as a "top-up" if there is an equivalent payment but at a lower rate in their country of origin.

logy in the Department of Health.
Padraig Lenihan, Galway (Irish Indep. 30.1.2006)

'FLYING HIGH': THE RYANAIR EFFECT

A new wave of immigration will help drive property price growth of 8% this year, IIB Bank predicted yesterday.

The number of migrant workers here already 'dwarfs' UK levels, said IIB economist Austin Hughes.

Yet this "extraordinary number may well be just the first wave", he said, announcing his 2006 forecast for the property market.

Around 137,000 Poles came here last year, using airline seat capacity of 1,500 per week. In 2006, that capacity will increase over 500% to 8,000 seats per week, stimulating an even greater influx of immigrants, Mr. Hughes noted.

This will create demand for rental properties as well as new homes.

"The phenomenon is similar to a 'Ryanair effect on property prices noted in certain parts of France and Italy following the introduction of low-cost flights'". (Irish Independent, 25.1.2006).

HOW MANY IMMIGRANTS?

"Deprived of my British citizenship, I rang up the Irish Embassy and asked if I could have Irish citizenship. 'Bejusus, yes,' an official replied, 'We're terrible short of people over there'—Spike Milligan.

We are told the state needs 30,000 to 50,000 immigrants a year to sustain its economic growth—but that was in early January!

A special EU Commission seminar held in Dublin on 9th March 2006, predicted one million non-nationals living in Ireland within 25 years.

And our proportion of immigrants could be higher than Austria, Sweden or the US. People settling in Ireland from abroad now make up 9% of the workforce.

And along comes the NCB Stockbrokers with their report, *2020 Vision, Ireland's Demographic Dividend*, presented by NCB economists Dermot O'Brien and Eunan King. One wit reckoned it would have made a Soviet state planner cry with joy.

Our population will grow from 4.1 million today to 5.3 million in 2020. To house this enlarged proletariat, housing production will average around 60,000 units until then. And to transport the masses we will need three million cars on our roads by 2020. Driven by these heroic achievements, the economy will grow by an average of 5 per cent until 2020.

Sam Smyth of the *Irish Independent* says "the accumulated wisdom of the

economists and others who have studied the potential of our future say we need another 300,000 foreign workers over the next 10 years" (24.1.2006).

Failure to attract 575,000 extra migrants will cost the economy billions over the next decade, FÁS Director General Rody Molloy told an Oireachtas Committee.

According to the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), the 500,000 migrants and returning Irish workers who have come to Ireland since 1997 have raised GNP by up to 3%.

However, addressing the Oireachtas European Affairs Committee yesterday, Mr. Molloy warned that failure to attract a further 575,000 migrant workers over the next decade could have the opposite effect on the economy.

"Our growth rates will deteriorate substantially if we don't have these people", he said.

"Economic growth would not have been sustained without the inflow of large numbers of migrants... if we didn't have these people, there would be huge labour shortages."

Mr. Molloy also warned of the danger that Ireland would soon be unable to attract the migrants it needs if adequate measures are not put in place to help them.

"In the not too distant future, we could find ourselves actually competing for these workers. If we get that wrong, we will have more of that nonsense that was thrown up in the Irish Times last week", he said. [Support for Permits, Ed.]

Mr. Molloy said FÁS had seen "very little sign of displacement" and pointed out that in previous years other EU nations had assisted large numbers of Irish migrants.

"They were very generous with us and rather than trying to stop people coming in, they helped us", he said. (Irish Examiner, 2.2.2006).

Over the 12-month period to the third quarter of 2005 almost half the increase in total employment was accounted for by foreign workers.

Of the 45,000 extra non-Irish nationals employed, more than 10,000 were employed in construction and another 10,000 in industry or agriculture, with the rest being employed in the services sector.

Today the population of Poland is 10 times as great as Ireland's; Bulgaria and Romania (with a population of some 31 million) hope soon to be EU members, and Ukraine, with a population close to 50 million is knocking on EU doors.

"Madam,—In your Editorial of January 23rd we read: "According to official employment and skills agencies, an inflow of 50,000 workers will be required each year to keep the economy growing in a healthy fashion". This is an

inaccuracy which is constantly repeated in the media.

What is actually said is that those numbers would be necessary to maintain growth at current levels. However, many economic commentators and agencies have questioned the wisdom of this unrelenting pursuit of growth and have advocated a more sustainable level.

These include Garret FitzGerald, Moore McDowell, Aidan Punch of the CSO and, most recently, the ESRI."

Áine Ní Chonail, PRO, Immigration Control Platform, Dublin 2. (Irish Times, 25.1.2006)

NO PLANS TO RESTRICT

Minister for Justice Michael McDowell has stated there were no plans to restrict migrants from the current EU member states but said the Government was still undecided as to whether it would introduce labour migration restrictions on countries that join the EU in the future, such as Bulgaria and Romania.

BUNGALOW BILLS

"Without migrant workers, we would not be able to generate jobs and wealth to such an extraordinary extent" (Carl O'Brien, Irish Times, 21.1.2006).

Is the continuous and non-stop building of 'luxury' apartments part of this Wealth? David McWilliams the 'boy Einstein' of the Irish media writes that: "We are building more houses per head than post-war Germany did when trying to rebuild itself" (Sunday Business Post, 22.1.2006).

A substantial amount of the construction boom is pure speculation—it is not about social need. Imagine comparing the Free State to post-war Germany! Not only were the Germans attempting to provide for the needs of their homeless, they embarked on a huge project to build up German industry and jobs. They had a social conscience and it wasn't primarily about profit for its own sake.

The Irish speculator and off-shore bagman does nothing for his society unless there is mouth-watering incentives like Section 23 in Construction. Our capitalist class have raised greed to new levels: they must be paid to make profit.

Jobs for fellow citizens—are you mad—the Yanks, Japs and Germans will do that. A 400 million grant here and there, and of course the 12.5 Corporation Tax rate. Germany's Corporation Tax is up near 30%—it has to be to provide the necessary revenue to allocate the likes of the 40 Billion Euro subsidies paid so far to Dublin.

On actual figures that is over three times what the Marshall Plan contributed to the 16 nations, including West Germany in the years 1948-1951.

continued on page 33

he used the annual St Patrick's Day visit to Washington DC to battle to save them from deportation" (Irish Examiner, 17.3.2006).

Republican Senator John McCain insisted the workers could only be included in an overall agreement dealing with the 12 million such foreigners believed to be in America.

He said he was hopeful the legislation he and Senator Ted Kennedy are championing will prevail over more draconian attempts to tighten immigration laws.

The Arizona Senator said illegal Irish and foreign workers needed to be encouraged to join mainstream society to end their "exploitation" on its margins.

"No disrespect to the other immigrants that make up the American melting pot, but if anyone has a claim to a visa amnesty it's us.

"We gave the U.S.A. its greatest president, we founded its navy. Henry Ford came from an Irish family" (Gerry O'Carroll, former Garda, *Laying Down The Law*, Evening Herald, 15.3.2006).

"Are there Irish citizens here being exploited? There are I've talked to some of them", McCain said after meeting the Taoiseach.

Mr. Ahern pledged to keep up pressure on the issue as he conducted a day of intensive lobbying which saw him meeting other leading political figures as well as being guest of honour at a Congressional lunch attended by US President George W Bush.

Senator Kennedy said: *"The status of the 50,000 to 70,000 undocumented Irish in America needs to be adjusted".*

On 8th March 2006, Capitol Hill, Washington, became a sea of green and white when thousands of undocumented Irish immigrants came out of the shadows to petition Congress for immigration reform.

Wearing T-shirts emblazoned with the words *"Legalize the Irish"*, they came from Boston, New York, Chicago, San Francisco and many places in between.

They were rewarded with appearances from some of the most influential figures in Congress, including the two front-runners to succeed President Bush—Senators John McCain and Hillary Clinton.

"It is so heartening to see you here. You are really here on behalf of what America means, America's values, America's hopes", Ms Clinton said.

The rally was organised by the Irish Lobby for Immigration Reform, a three-month-old grassroots group that has transformed the campaign on behalf of Irish immigrants.

"Ms Clinton said the Irish should join with other immigrant groups to keep pressure on Congress to pass a bill that would strengthen border security but

allow the undocumented to work legally in the US" (Irish Times, 9.3.2006).

The Taoiseach wrote in the Irish Times on March 16 of his Government's achievements on migration:

"Through a series of unprecedented policy initiatives, this Government has set out to improve the hitherto neglected area of Irish emigrant welfare.

"Initiatives such as the pre-1953 pension, free passports for our emigrant senior citizens, the establishment of a dedicated Irish Abroad Unit, and the 12-fold increase in funding since 1997 underline our determination to deliver for the Irish abroad.

"Thousands of US businesses simply could not continue to function without this labour" (Irish Times, 16.3.2006).

U.S. ECONOMY RELIES ON ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION!

The US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) concedes that about one million people succeed in entering the US illegally each year. They contribute to a permanent population of some twelve million illegal aliens, by the best estimates.

Illegal immigration does not appear to present the kind of crisis that demands immediate attention from the lawmakers.

About 60% of all illegal aliens are Mexicans and the heart of the problem lies in the 3,140 km (1,950 miles) borders shared by the US and Mexico.

Agricultural employment traditionally provided a reliable source of income for Mexicans in the US croplands. In 1942 this migration was legalised in the form of the "Bracero Programme" which involved temporary visas for Mexicans working on farms. The programme was begun to relieve wartime manpower shortages, but, under pressure from agricultural interests enamoured of the cheap labour it provided, it was extended to 1964. During 22 years some 4.8 million Mexicans were legally recruited and encouraged to make the trip north.

Mexico like the 26-Counties, was neutral in that War. The analogy of our providing labour for the British war industry is not lost either.

The 25,000 Irish illegals are a bit of an embarrassment to both Governments—in the overall context the US does not regard them as important. Twelve million illegal workers in the US economy helps dampen the urge of organised labour, you don't have to go to the US to see that! Or you will before long.

ECONOMY

The Irish economy's phenomenal job creation powerhouse has the capacity to race past an exceptional milestone next year when for the first time there could be two million people employed in the State.

Just 20 years ago, in 1986, Ireland was home to a little over one million people working in the state, at the end of 2005 this

figure was 1.9m. The two million mark could be achieved before the end of this year.

The flow of labour has reversed, and Irish emigrants are returning home in droves, alongside Eastern Europeans in their tens of thousands.

The number of foreigners who are seeking to register for work in Ireland by applying for Personal Public Service Numbers (PPNs) is staggering.

A total of 66,000 new PPNs were issued from May to October, 2005, the majority to citizens of the new EU states, and the numbers are now running at close to 11,000 a month.

In easy-to-grasp terms, this means that enough workers to replace the entire population of Carlow town are entering the country every month.

In the course of the year, at current rates, as many foreign workers as all the people living in Sligo and Roscommon are legally registering for work every year.

LET THE 'GOOD TIMES' ROLL!

The good times look set to continue—for the short term at least.

One of the country's top economists yesterday predicted that our booming economy will grow by a further 6% this year.

Bank of Ireland chief economist Dan McLaughlin said rapid growth in household incomes and consumer spending are the main factors driving the domestic economy.

Presenting his forecast for the economy in 2006, Mr. McLaughlin said Ireland was enjoying the best of both worlds, with German-style saving and US-style spending habits.

"He said the shortage of labour was due to high marginal tax rate, which amounts to 48% when PRSI and health levies are included. Against this, there is no shortage of capital as this is only taxed at 12.5%" (Irish Indep. 24.1.2006).

IMMIGRATION: SOCIAL FALLOUT

Sir—Your political correspondent Brian Dowling (January 24) betrays the unquestioned assumptions towards mass immigration of our political and media elite. Hundreds and thousands more of migrant workers, he claims, are needed to keep the economy rolling.

They aren't. They are wanted by a smallish but powerful minority to continue to force feed the highest possible trajectory of economic growth, regardless of social implications.

Eighteen months ago, most governments in 'old' Europe weighed the social consequences of mass immigration and chose to restrict movement from accession states for a time.

Ours gave, and gives, as much thought to social implications as it does to financial accounting or information techno-

continued on page 34



The Ministry for Immigration?

The Oireachtas Committee on European Affairs is to call for the appointment of a full Cabinet minister with responsibility for immigration and integration.

The Committee has spent several months studying immigration into Ireland and has concluded that it is one of the single biggest issues facing this country in the coming years.

"Its final report is due out within the next few weeks and is expected to recommend that a new senior Government department be created.

"It would be responsible for dealing with the many issues facing Irish society as a result of large-scale immigration in recent years.

"A draft of the report, seen by the Irish Examiner, argues that the appointment of a minister to the Cabinet would be a strong political statement reflecting the importance that should be attached to this issue" (Irish Examiner-24.3.2006).

A source close to the Committee told the *Irish Examiner* that the scale of the challenge is enormous.

"Immigration needs to be gathered into one Government department. You need that kind of weight of Cabinet status, especially when you have a million people coming into Ireland over the next 10 years", the source said. "Everybody understands it will have to be dealt with."

The report says no real thinking has taken place at senior policy level to the consequences of economic change or of a downturn in employment.

In an implicit criticism of present Government policy, the Committee, chaired by Fine Gael TD John Deasy, suggests that its focus on immigration has been predominantly economic.

However, it points out that population growth has other effects, including increased demand for housing, more congestion, and more demand for State services.

In addition, the Government has yet to produce a coherent policy on issues like integration and assimilation, it says.

"A million people coming"; "No real thinking"; "one of the biggest single issues"; "focus on immigration . . . predominately economic"—Is the "land of Nod" about to awake?

NON-EU NATIONALS

Since Monday, 23rd January 2006, non-EU nationals (Africans, Asians and Russians, etc.) who are long-term residents of EU countries are guaranteed equal access to employment, education and training alongside the citizens of these countries.

Ireland, despite its all embracing stance for the ten Accession Countries, along with Britain and Denmark, has opted out of the regime agreed under the 2003 EU directive on third-country nationals residing in the Union.

As with many other EU regulations, the latest Directive presents a set of paradoxical contradictions for Europe.

For long-term EU residents, the Directive partially resolves the unacceptable *status quo* under which they were required to pay taxes but enjoyed restricted rights vis-a-vis EU citizens in access to services financed through their contributions.

Yet, the new Directive makes a laugh-

ing stock of the rights extended to the new member states' citizens under the transitional arrangements of the Accession Treaties. Non-EU nationals residing in Europe (with the exception of Ireland, Denmark and Britain) for more than five years will now have more rights than a European citizen of, for example, Polish or Czech nationality.

This anomaly will prevail until 2009 when the "transitional arrangements" of the accession treaties are set to expire.

MEDICAL PROFESSION

This issue is particularly prevalent in relation to non-EU medical personnel in Ireland, where the visa is used by the medical establishment to protect their vested interests.

The Neary Report found that non-EU doctors working in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda did have concerns about the practices of the infamous Dr. Michael Neary but "*were unwilling to jeopardise their career prospects by saying anything critical regarding consultants in their host country*".

Foreign doctors in Ireland are obliged to have a consultant's reference before they can obtain any further positions.

The author of the Neary Report, Judge Harding Clark, has recommended "*that the reference should be replaced by a certificate of competence in listed procedures and treatments and areas of expertise*".

Dr. John Hillery, President of the Medical Council said non-EU doctors—

"are very dependent on the continued goodwill of their consultants for further advancement in the profession.

"This is an issue for all junior doctors, but with the connection there is between employment and visa status, the pressure on non-EU graduates is multiplied" (Irish Examiner, 6.3.2006).

U.S. ILLEGAL IRISH

"Taoiseach Bertie Ahern was last night told there could be no special deal for the 50,000 Irish illegals in the US as continued on page 35

Subscribers to the magazine are regularly offered special rates on other publications

Irish Political Review is published by the IPR Group: write to—

14 New Comen Court, North Strand, Dublin 3, or

PO Box 339, Belfast BT12 4GQ or

PO Box 6589, London, N7 6SG, or

Labour Comment,

C/O Shandon St. P.O., Cork City.

Subscription by Post:

Euro 25 / £17.50 for 12 issues

Electronic Subscription:

Euro 15 / £12 for 12 issues

(or Euro 1.30 / £1.10 per issue)

You can also order both postal and electronic subscriptions from:

www.atholbooks.org