

## Madam & The Rising

Jack Lane  
page 7

## North In The Dail?

Joe Keenan  
page 15

## Could Poland Take Over Ireland?

Pat Maloney  
Back Page

# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

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## The Dublin Riot

The Dublin riot against the attempted Orange march showed how successful the Dublin Government has been in discrediting Provisional Sinn Fein ever since Albert Reynolds was ousted by the *Irish Times*.

The idea was that the prestige of Sinn Fein would carry the Republican community into the constitutional sphere through the working of the Good Friday Agreement. But the Agreement is not working, and the Taoiseach and his Minister for the Interior have been consistently representing Sinn Fein as a major criminal organisation which masterminds bank robberies etc. The consequence of this is not to break Republicanism, but to turn Republicans against the Agreement in increasing numbers and diminish the influence of Sinn Fein on them.

The Justice Minister said that the riot was the work of "*dissident Republican elements*" (25.2.06). This was the first time he ever treated the Provos themselves as anything but a dissident and criminal element. His reckless campaign against the Provos has had the effect of maximising Republican dissent from the Agreement and preparing the ground for a new formation.

The Orange Order is not now what it was back in 1970 when we urged that it should be treated as an institution of Irish folk culture. It was then a moderating influence within Unionism. It is now the opposite.

The 'innocent victims of terrorism' organisation, one of the organisers of the march, is strictly sectarian in its outlook. It rejected a proposal that it should extend its concern to the victim of the Dublin/Monaghan Bombing victims of Loyalist/British collusion. The organiser of the march rejected the finding of the Barron Report on that event.

The Taoiseach and his Justice Minister both expressed outrage that "*people carrying our national flag*" should have disgraced it by rioting. As a matter of historical fact, the Tricolour is the flag of the Easter Rising and the 1919 Declaration of Independence, and, whatever one thinks of the Free State, it certainly is not a continuation of the Republic of 1919-21. It is the continuation of a new State, founded on British authority in 1922.

The Tricolour, the flag of the Republic, was adopted by the Free State as its flag, even as it repudiated the Republic, and recognised the Union Jack as the legitimate flag of the 6 Counties in 1925. That recognition was revoked by the 1937 Constitution, which asserted a right of general Irish sovereignty with the Tricolour as its flag. But that general claim of sovereignty was repealed in 1998, and the Free State ceased to be co-extensive,

continued on page 2

## Countess Markievicz And Fianna Eireann

Two of the Volunteers executed by the British in 1916 were Con Colbert and Sean Heuston. These two were minor ranking and very young figures in the Rising. But, unlike the unfortunate Willie Pearse, brave man that he was, who was probably shot just for being Patrick Pearse's brother, these two were shot for a very good reason indeed. They had been suborning the youth of Ireland in the

interests of the national movement as Baden Powell was trying to do in both Britain and Ireland in the British interest.

Fianna Eireann was founded in 1909 by Countess Markievicz, aided by Bulmer Hobson and Sean Mc Dermot. Colbert and Heuston were the officers commanding *the Fianna*. Markievicz has been mentioned on several occasions recently in this magazine and I had intended to look more closely at her life and write about it. I can say that she had a greater influence on my formative years than anyone outside of my family—though she

## John Waters' Cartoon-Liberalism

The debate on the offensive cartoons depicting Mohammed, which were first published in a Danish newspaper, has been conducted on an unrealistic basis: and no one has been more unrealistic than *The Irish Times* columnist John Waters. The impression has been given that the West is a beacon of enlightenment and free speech, while the Muslim world is shrouded in obscurantism and intolerance. Waters, in a discussion on the Late, Late Show, suggested that if he were an editor he would publish the cartoons on principle. But what is the principle?

Waters indicated that the principle was "free speech". He then gave a brief homily on how the West had developed through the conflict of ideas. But what ideas would be suppressed if the cartoons were not published?

There are no ideas in the cartoons. They are merely offensive to adherents of the Muslim faith. Perhaps it is part of the western tradition that people have a right to be offensive. If that is what Waters is saying he is on very shaky ground. While the debate on the cartoons was being discussed, the English historian David Irving was given a prison sentence in an Austrian court for the crime of "holocaust denial", and Ken Livingstone was suspended from his office of Mayor of

continued on page 2

had been dead for decades before I was born.

The details and character of her life can be left for another time or for someone else. These will be interesting but cannot explain the influence that she had on my life and the lives of thousands of others almost half a century ago.

Countess Markievicz was also sentenced to be shot in 1916 but, as in the case of deValera, the British balked at actually shooting her.

continued on page 2, column 3

## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>The Dublin Riot.</b> Editorial	1
<b>John Waters' Cartoon-Liberalism.</b> Editorial	1
<b>Countess Markievicz And <i>Fianna Eireann</i>.</b> Conor Lynch	1
<b>President's Speech On 1916.</b> Ted O'Sullivan (unpublished letter)	3
<b>Bunkum &amp; Balderdyce.</b> Editorial	5
<b>The 1916 Debate: <i>Madam's View Of The Rising</i>.</b> Jack Lane	7
<b>Lord Laird And Commemorating 1916.</b> David Alvey (Letter, <i>Village</i> )	9
<b>Lord Laird's Moles.</b> Report of Archon in <i>Southern Star</i>	9
<b>Muriel McSwiney And Desmond Greaves.</b> Anthony Coughlan (Letter)	9
<b>Shorts from <i>the Long Fellow</i></b> (French Census; Rabbitte & Socialism; Rabbitte & Fine Gael; Rabbitte & The Archbishop; Harney & Health; Reclaiming 1916)	10
<b>Us And Them.</b> Brendan Clifford (Part One)	11
<b>We Point The Finger. . .</b>	13
<b>The 'Love Ulster' Riot.</b> Seán McGouran	14
<b>Of Pacts &amp; Tracts &amp; Constitutions.</b> Joe Keenan (Part 3 of North & Dail)	15
<b>More On Enigma.</b> Robert Burrage, Madawc Williams, Pat Muldowney (Letters)	17
<b>1916 Controversy.</b> Andrew McGrath (Letter, <i>Village</i> )	23
<b>Commemorating 1916.</b> David Alvey (Letter, <i>Village</i> )	23

*Labour Comment*, edited by Pat Maloney:

[Could Poland Take Over Ireland](#) p28

[Underpayment Of Foreign Construction Workers](#) **Manus O'Riordan** (report) p24

### The Dublin Riot continued

even *de jure*, with the nation symbolised by the flag. To say this is not to question the legitimacy of the Dail as a democratic institution, only to state the historical fact of what the flag symbolises. It ante-dates the Free State Republic by a long chalk. It was very foolish of the Government to make an issue of it in the way it did. Dragons lurk in that direction. It is not a Partitionist flag. Others have as good a claim to it as the Free State Republic—a claim that is certainly not weakened by the abandonment of them by the Free State.

See also: [The Love Ulster Riot](#) by Seán McGouran on page14.

### John Waters' Cartoon-Liberalism continued

London for a month for insulting a sensationalist journalist by comparing him to a "Concentration Camp guard".

Of course, there are other, more informal methods, of censorship besides legal censorship, as John Waters well knows. In 2003 an article by Waters on the remuneration packages of Executive Directors of *The Irish Times* was suppressed. But the hypothetical editor of 2006, who was prepared to go to the stake to defend free speech, appeared to be less heroic in the actual situation he faced in 2003. According to a Sunday Business Post report, the Editor of *The Irish Times*, Geraldine Kennedy said that:

"...she had withdrawn the article for reasons of 'libel, accuracy and taste', although it is understood that Waters offered to make any changes the editor thought fit" (Sunday Business Post, 16/11/03).

In our view he showed a much more realistic view of liberalism in this country in an email he wrote to a French academic on 2nd June 2001. Not only does he give a more realistic view, but he also shows a keen awareness of his role in the general scheme of things:

"It is important to understand that The Irish Times is not so much a newspaper as a campaigning institution committed to making Ireland come to resemble the aspirations of its more privileged citizens. There is, accordingly, no tradition of giving voice to different opinions in *The Irish Times*. What there is, is a desire to present the "truth", to have this "truth" accepted, and to discredit all viewpoints, which do not accord with this. In order to achieve this, paradoxically, it is necessary to create the illusion of democratic debate. This is where I come in. The purpose of my column in The Irish Times is to demonstrate to the readers the consequences of error, while at the same time illustrating the "tolerance" of those who know and love the "truth". In this way, the "truth" is affirmed all the more. My views in

*The Irish Times*, have a function analogous to a vaccine, which aims to immunise the patient to the effects of certain conditions by implanting the essences of these conditions in their systems. Thus, the readers of *The Irish Times* are immunised against any dangerous forms of thinking which, if allowed to take serious hold of their consciousness, would render them incapable of acting in their own best interests" (cited by Jean Mercereau in *Évolution et singularités d'un journal de référence irlandais: L'Irish Times 1859-1999*).

So much for western-style, cartoon-liberalism!

### Countess Markievicz And *Fianna Eireann* continued

In 1905 Baden Powell formed the Boy Scout Movement. His purpose was to create a mass youth organisation inculcated with the ideals of British Imperialism and give them an alternative to the chaotic, selfish lifestyle which was beginning to exist among the youth of the time, a generation starting to reap the benefits of Empire, but having no part in its making. It took for granted the proceeds of Empire but wasn't inspired by Empire. (Shades of Brown's and Cameron's worries about the youth of today?)

Baden Powell formed his ideas in the Boer War and the march of Empire into Africa. (He also witnessed what were little more than children being used to effect by the British military.) A particular kind of person was required to colonise Africa—a person who was idealistic, was driven by a mission to spread civilization, and was so certain of the rightness of that mission that he would have no problem doing what had to be done, especially killing lesser beings, to spread British rule. And colonizing required far greater numbers than the mere administration of Empire.

In India the climate was unsuited to European settlement, but there was a paternalistic approach to the Indians until the Indian Mutiny. Thereafter it was Imperial exploitation, pure and simple. 'Civilising' notions did exist in relation to Africa but only in the minds of an insignificant minority. Africans, like the aborigines in Australia, had to be removed and

replaced—except when they were needed as a workforce.)

For a long time the public schools and some of the grander day schools organized their pupils into disciplined military units, drilling and training in arms, and developing a psychology appropriate to running an empire. (Only a year ago I saw a group of boys being drilled by a soldier at the back of the Academical Institute in Belfast.)

Colonization requires the physical and psychological training of a much wider section of the society, as well as inculcating a spirit of adventure. This is what Baden Powell set out to achieve.

There had been several attempts to colonise Ireland. Mostly the colonists "went native" and the projects failed. (Though there was some success for a while in parts of Ulster.) Then Cromwell by massacre tried to drive the Irish to the West of the Shannon river; and Trevelyan tried to starve them to death. But these schemes also failed.

By the last quarter of the 19th century the colonization of Ireland was abandoned and it was decided that the Irish, like the Scots, could become sufficiently Anglicised to be incorporated into the imperialist project alongside the colonists of South Africa, Australia and Canada. There was a sufficient element in political Ireland which was becoming enthusiastic about such a project—in exchange for local Home Rule or some kind of Dominionian status. Recognising this, Baden Powell extended his organization to Ireland.

(Baden Powell's movement was orientated towards the Established Church—though its membership was open to all. The Methodists set up their own parallel scouts called the Boys' Brigade. This was, if anything, more rooted in the imperial adventure than the Scouts. I can remember seeing many photographs of groups of them carrying rifles.)

This is what inspired Countess Markievicz to found Fianna Eireann; an Irish scout movement which would be drilled physically and psychologically to serve the interests of an independent, anti-imperialist, Ireland.

It is this ideology that distinguished *the Fianna* from the rest of the Nationalist Movement of which it later became a part—and always a semi-detached part.

Sinn Fein, which was founded three years earlier by Arthur Griffith was certainly not anti-imperialist. And the Volunteers founded four years after *the Fianna* were not anti-imperialist either—

• Biteback • Biteback • Biteback • Biteback • Biteback • Biteback • Biteback • Biteback

The following letter failed to find publication in the *Irish Times*

## President's speech On 1916

Kevin Myers in his February 7 article attacks the Rising's leaders over a reference in the Proclamation to "gallant allies in Europe". "How could they possibly call the butchers of Belgium "gallant allies"?", he asks.

It is generally agreed that approximately 6,000, mostly males, lost their lives at the hands of German troops as they proceeded through Belgium in Aug-Sept 1914. Mainly they were victims of executions intended as reprisals to suppress shooting from irregular forces. To the Germans, this was in line with their interpretation of the military conventions then prevailing.

Most victims had not carried arms. The real level of Belgian irregular activity remains unclear. Recent efforts to prove German perceptions of non-uniformed sharpshooter firing on them were virtually all imagined have not convinced everyone.

Allied propaganda took reports of the above and added invented stories such as tales of nuns being raped, infants being impaled on bayonets and children's hands having their hands hacked off. Published widely, they nurtured an anti-German hysteria. In Dublin, German butcher shops were ransacked.

At the time, in their writings, James Connolly and Roger Casement dismissed this atrocity propaganda. Casement visited an area of Belgium in late 1914 where reprisal executions had occurred. While acknowledging German excesses, he condemned the inventions in a powerful essay; "The Far-Extended Baleful Power of the Lie", some months before the rising.

A greater atrocity of WWI, which cost in the region of a million lives, mainly those of women and children, was the 'hunger blockade' of Germany and Austria-Hungary maintained by Britain's Navy. Foodstuffs were denied access as part of a deliberate policy of targeting civilians, which was illegal by the standards of the time.

**Ted O'Sullivan**

though its IRB and some other elements were.

Sinn Fein was of the view that the Irishman was every bit as superior a human being as the Englishman. And it veered between notions of Dual Monarchy—an equal partnership with Britain in civilizing the world; and the idea of Ireland becoming an imperialist state in its own right—like Belgium.

It differed from the Redmondite Irish Party because the latter was prepared to accept an inferior role to that of Britain in the new world order. But the later cross over that many made from Redmondism to Sinn Fein was not very traumatic for most people and in the North was almost no change at all.

(The war in the North after 1969 made Sinn Fein more Republican—but not as much so as many may think. Only the relative success of the armed struggle in the Six Counties has weakened an ingrained inferiority complex that has always existed in the nationalist community there. Its Redmondite mindset has been weakened but by no means eliminated.)

The Volunteers compromised with the Irish Party almost immediately, and 90% of them went off to Flanders to fight, and die, and be maimed, for the King and his country or countries.

And why not? The Volunteers were not formed to achieve an independent Irish Republic. They were a response to the Ulster Volunteer Force which opposed Home Rule for Ireland as that would put the previously politically dominant Protestant Irish in a subordinate position to the Catholic majority—albeit in a State that was still a British Dominion, under an English King, and a partner in British Imperialism.

The rump of the Volunteers which rejected joining Britain's war on Germany reorganized itself as a force for Irish independence. It retained its Sinn Fein imperialist element but was dominated by the latter-day Fenians of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). It did not believe that Britain was fighting for the rights of small nations—least of all the rights of the Irish small nation.

(It also looked back a century or more to the United Irish element in the Volunteers of the 1790s who did not see any good coming from supporting Britain's war with France, and saw any salvation for Ireland coming only from "breaking the connection with England", as Wolfe Tone put it.)

The Fianna contained few if any of the contradictions that permeated both Sinn Fein and the Volunteers, as it was avowedly anti-imperialist from the beginning.

Indeed anti-imperialism was the main reason for its existence. Markievicz's connection with Sinn Fein and the Volunteers was tenuous to say the least.

Organising the youth of Ireland meant organizing outside of respectable nationalism and respectability in general, so she aligned herself with the Trade Union movement of Larkin and Connolly that was beginning to sweep the country—the Union movement of general workers in the cities and the countryside—the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

So in the Rising, she was not with the Volunteers but was second-in-command to Michael Mallin, the Commander of the Irish Citizen Army—the army of the Transport Union. Mallin was also executed by the British.

This connection meant that *the Fianna's* roots were far more in the working class than other elements of the nationalist movement. This remained the case right through the organisation's existence.

(A brief word here on the 1916 Rising itself. It is portrayed as a "glorious sacrifice" by a gallant few. Holding Dublin for a week against the greatest army in the world was no mean feat. But it was more than that. The Volunteers in North Dublin swept all before them. DeValera's battalion on South side of the city dominated the battle throughout. The vulnerable headquarters at the GPO was successfully evacuated. There is no reason to think that the Rising could not have lasted several weeks, and if it had done so, the country units which were stood down on Easter Sunday would have come into play. I know for sure that the Volunteers in Kerry, Cork and Limerick were waiting for news from Dublin to rise up, and assume that the situation was the same in other areas. Pearse decided to surrender on purely humanitarian grounds as the British Navy began to pulverize the centre of Dublin. If one wants to look for comparisons, how long did the British Army hold out in France in 1940 before breaking and running to Dunkirk and leaving its French allies in the lurch? And when a small Japanese force attacked Singapore some time later, the much superior British force did not fight at all!)

I first saw *the Fianna* as a child of about five years old when the King's Bridge in Dublin was renamed after Sean Heuston. (The nearby railway station was later similarly renamed.) A cousin of mine from Cork was in charge of the event at the head of boys in green tunics and slouch hats.

By the age of eight I was a member. I can remember being taught the basics of

history, the code of honour and scouting essentials by a man called Henry Gough. I realized years later that this "man" was all of fifteen years old. And that was one of the things that distinguished *the Fianna* from other scouting organizations. It was an organization for boys led by boys. (It later became open to girls as well.)

It pledged its allegiance to the Army Council of the IRA but only in that body's capacity as the inheritor of the Second Dail Eireann and in no other capacity. Occasionally the IRA tried to impose its passing will or whim on *the Fianna*, especially in the period when Desmond Greaves was attempting to control the Republican Movement. Such interference was always resisted, often after a few bloody noses were suffered. On their side.

The *Fianna* also continued to take its members from the working class youth. The big Irish scouting movement was the Catholic Boy Scouts of Ireland and was dead respectable. It wouldn't have touched our type of member with a bargepole.

The Baden Powell scouts also continued to exist (and may still do for all I know). They were called the Boy Scouts of Ireland and kept alive a pro-British spirit among the small Anglo-Irish community. It would be interesting to know

how many of those involved in the Reform Movement and the Orange Order of recent times came through this organization.

The *Fianna* took seriously its tasks of recruiting working class boys, giving them some kind of discipline, teaching them self-reliance, and letting them know their history. It had a high turnover and was not a recruiting ground for the IRA—as was often suggested. Of the hundreds of boys who were in *the Fianna* with me, I can think of only five or six who joined the IRA—excluding those like myself who came from Republican families.

Even its officers, most of us leaving at 16 or 17, did not go into the IRA or have any further connection with the Republican Movement. And many "respectable" Republicans wouldn't let their sons within a mile of the scruffs that made up *the Fianna*.

(All this applies to the 26-Counties. In the North, *the Fianna* was an illegal organization and I know very little about it there.)

I left *the Fianna* when I was 17, and though I've seen the uniforms from time to time over the years, I don't know what has happened to it. I hope it has survived. It is needed today every bit as much as when Countess Markievicz formed it in 1909.

Conor Lynch

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All Welcome

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## Bunkum And Balderdyce

Northern Ireland is part of the British State but is marginal to British politics. That was the case when it was peaceful under Protestant communal dominance from 1923 to 1968. It remained the case when representatives of the Catholic community declared war on Britain and waged it with unexpected intensity for a quarter of a century. And it is still the case now that the War has ended. The outcome of the War is not a settlement. Northern Ireland is not a thing in which a constitutional settlement is possible. The outcome is a great shift in the power balance between the two communities.

The Catholic community is no longer supervised, or restricted, or officially harassed by the Protestant community, except insofar as the Loyalist paramilitary elements act in collusion with the British security apparatus. And that marks a great change. The respectable Unionist middle class no longer rules over the Catholic community as it used to in its good old days. And, in this new situation, the qualities of entrepreneurship and civic ability, once alleged to be attributes of Protestantism, are now much more in evidence in the other community.

We did not support the War, or encourage the movement that led to it—as 'constitutional nationalists' like Lord Fitt did—but we find the assertion that the war achieved nothing patently absurd. We hear the assertion, both from Unionist intellectuals like Professor Bew and from the SDLP, that, because the War did not achieve a united Ireland it achieved nothing, and even that it delayed the unification of Ireland, which the 'constitutionalists' were on verge of achieving in 1970. This is the compensatory fantasy of ideologues who have failed in their own projects.

In terms of its origins, the War must be judged a success. Its origins did not lie in Articles 2 & 3 of the Eire Constitution. It was not an irredentist war. It is true that Jack Lynch made irredentist claims when stirring it up in 1969, but in 1970 he changed his mind under British pressure, washed his hands of all he had done, and prosecuted those he had ordered to do it.

The word 'irredentist' is bandied around meaninglessly, but ominously, by Dublin intellectuals nowadays. An irredentist war is a war waged by a state for a territory that it considers to belong to it by national right.

The Dublin Government, supported

by those who are most hostile to irredentism, is hell-bent on celebrating the Battle of the Somme, which was the most horrific event in the greatest irredentist war ever fought. Without the French irredentist claim on Alsace-Lorraine there would have been no Great War in 1914, and the glory of the Somme would be unknown to us.

The other irredentist element in the Great War was the Italian claim on the Austrian territory. Britain supported that claim in order to bring Italy into the War and allied itself with Mussolini for that purpose.

The Italian State invaded its *irredenta*—its "unredeemed" territory. Jack Lynch, while claiming the Six Counties as the *irredenta* of his State, did not launch a war to regain them. The issue might have been resolved more effectively if he had done so. But he didn't.

The War originated within the *irredenta*, being produced by systematic misgovernment of the *irredenta* by the State which held it.

Nothing like that happened in Germany or Austria. As Roger Casement pointed out, Alsace settled down as an integral part of the German Empire, with its own extensive self-government, after being forfeited to Germany by France through its war of aggression against Germany in 1870.

That was not surprising, since the population of Alsace was predominantly German speaking. But the population of the Italian *irredenta* (Trentino and Tyrol) was not predominantly German speaking, and yet it participated in the politics of the Austrian State. The territory did not come to Italy by internal insurrection. It was conquered by the Army of the Italian State.

Without irredentist wars by the French and Italian States, Alsace would have remained German and the Trentino Austrian, for the reason that each lived politically within the democracy of its state.

In Northern Ireland, by contrast, there was an insurrection against systematic misgovernment by the British State, and that insurrection was condemned by the 26 County State, despite the irredentist claim on the 6 Counties which was part of its Constitution until a few years ago.

If, instead of an insurrection provoked by British misgovernment, there had been

an irredentist war waged by Dublin pursuant to its Constitutional claim, and the war ended with the 6 Counties still part of the British State, it would be reasonable to judge it a failure.

But an insurrection against systematic misgovernment, sustained for a quarter of a century against the coercive apparatus of both States, and repudiated by the irredentist State, must be judged on other terms.

Of course the insurrection took on a United Ireland aim, but we know very well, from close observation at the critical period, that its cause was not the ideal of a United Ireland. "*British Rights For British Citizens*" is hardly an anti-Partition slogan. It was the denial of those rights that caused the insurrection.

We took no part in the Civil Rights agitation, but we took that Civil Rights slogan in earnest—much too earnestly for the Constitutional nationalists who wanted British rights for Irish citizens. And we demonstrated that the government of the 6 Counties within the democracy of the British State was something that British governing circles would not entertain, and that both the SDLP and the Unionist Parties opposed it vehemently.

The SDLP was fixated on Northern Irelandism. It ruled out a settlement within British politics. *Northern Irelandism* means the conflict of communities. And all that is achievable within that conflict is an alteration of the power balance.

Provo Sinn Fein arose out of the conflict of communities, but sought an escape from it through all-Ireland politics. It has achieved a substantial alteration in the communal power-balance, which is deniable only on the basis of amnesia—or of the briefings on which BBC functionaries conduct interviews. And it has established a form of all-Ireland politics for the first time in 80 years. It has secured a political basis for itself in the political life of the irredentist state which has repudiated its *irredenta*.

As we said at the outset, Northern Ireland is marginal to British politics. That is because its voting is a meaningless activity conducted outside the conflicts of the British party system. There are no votes in it, so it doesn't count. We were always of the opinion that bombing could not shift it from the margins. Britain is a militaristic state and a militaristic society. War is its element. We do not say there was no merit in bombing it. Punishment of the irresponsible conduct of a State—most of all a democratic one—deserves something other than routine condemnations. But no quantity of bombs from Northern Ireland could equal the effect of the possibility of a handful of seats

changing hands between the Tory and Labour Parties. Britain is a state consisting of a system of party politics, and anything outside the party system is only a marginal nuisance.

And of course Britain does not believe in peace, except as a slogan for making war. It is not organised for peace. It is organised for power. What it means by peace is power which has been achieved. Peace in any other sense it treats as Utopian.

Knowing what Britain was—even while attempting to bring the 6 Counties within its political system—and knowing what the only possible internal content of politics in Northern Ireland was—we were sceptical of the Good Friday Agreement from the start. Eight years later we are not surprised that it is not working. The only surprise—and it is not a great surprise—is that Sinn Fein should have achieved such clear electoral dominance over the SDLP under an arrangement devised by the SDLP.

Meanwhile, government goes on as usual. *IRA Raid Gang Was Ready To Kill Hostages, Orde Tells Writer*. That was an *Irish News* headline on 17th December. Orde is the Chief Constable. He said well over a year ago that the Provos robbed the Northern Bank. And the Taoiseach and his Minister of the Interior added the information that Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness planned it, but they neglected to pass their evidence over to the Chief Constable so that he could arrest them. However, the Chief Constable has arrested a couple of people in connection with the robbery, none of whom have been named as members of the IRA. And one of them turns out to be one of the hostages, i.e., of the bank staff, that he had earlier said the gang was ready to kill.

\*

There was considerable excitement about a year ago, when a hoard of a couple of million pounds cash was found in a house in Cork. It was said at first to be part of the robbery, but later it was said that the possibility that it was from the robbery was being investigated. It seems that the investigations are still ongoing with no definite result. But what honest reason could anybody have for keeping millions of pounds cash in a box?

The Celtic Tigger has not yet caught up with itself in these matters. Or, rather, the Tiggers, the Winnie-the-Pooh petty-bourgeoisie of the media, have been left behind by the Tigers. The economy is booming, and the Tigers who make it boom are incomprehensible to the Tiggers who look on and moralise—or sentimentalise.

The man with the millions in cash was a money-lender, and also a well-known public figure who was strongly critical of

the way banks were going. He facilitated economic transactions by lending money in cash, and it has not been suggested that his loans were secured by the Mafia methods. The millions in cash that so impressed the Tiggers amounted only to the price of a few houses, with the way prices are going in Cork these days—and there is now a brisk business in property transactions between Ireland and England—and even with Europe.

Presumably these transactions are conducted within the informal economy. But it is Utopian to suppose that there could be a booming economy without a substantial informal dimension. And informal money transactions are not the same thing as money laundering.

The man in question is not being held in custody and has not been charged with anything. And the Tiggers have not commented on this.

\*

Meanwhile the affair of the two IMCs goes merrily on

A body with the formal title of Independent International Decommissioning Commission was set up under the GFA and a Canadian General was appointed to head it. It was invariably known as the International Monitoring Commission, or the initials IMC.

An inquiry into RUC/Loyalist paramilitary collusion to murder obnoxious Catholics was also set up, and also under a Canadian, Judge Cory. Judge Cory took the trouble to see how things stood in such matters in 'the Northern Ireland state'. He refused, politely but firmly, all offers of assistance from the British Government and its institutions, set up his headquarters in the Canadian Embassy, selected his own staff, conducted an inquiry independently of the state, and produced a Report which he gave to the Government many months ago, which the Government has refused to publish.

There was nothing to be done with Judge Cory but to get the compliant media, North and South, to keep him out of the news.

This could not be done with General de Chastelain, who has an ongoing function under the GFA. So, when he conducted his investigations independently of the Governments, as the agent of what we were told was an International Treaty, the governments retaliated by setting up a kind of counterfeit body with the same initials: Lord Alderdyce's dependent Independent International Monitoring Commission. This could only have been done for the purpose of generating public confusion, and for having a rival body to General de Chastelain's, which would do for the

Governments what the Chief Constable did domestically—issue politically convenient reports.

Alderdyce's IMC consists of himself and three political appointees from the intelligence services of Britain, the Republic and the USA.

De Chastelain drew up a report on IRA decommissioning in January, and gave a copy to Alderdyce's IMC, along with the Governments. Its publication was delayed to coincide with the publication of the Alderdyce Commission's report.

It is a virtual certainty that Alderdyce's political committee would have confirmed de Chastelain's report that decommissioning had been accomplished, if it was judged that the Democratic Unionist Party could be pressed to agree to work the devolved institutions. But the DUP was intransigent. The Alderdyce Committee therefore drew up a rival report, disputing de Chastelain's conclusion that the IRA had fully met its commitments. It did not do this on the basis of evidence refuting de Chastelain, but on the basis of unsubstantiated doubts that decommissioning was complete. (This hinges on the fact that a negative cannot be demonstrated. It can never be shown that nothing else exists.) And Alderdyce set about spoiling de Chastelain's positive report by leaking his own response to it before it was issued.

Brian Feeney (ex-SDLP but not Sinn Fein) rather lost his bearings when he rushed on the BBC in December 2004 to say that the Provos had done the Northern Bank job and that the GFA had therefore been premature. And he now treats The Alderdyce Committee as being independent. The headline of his *Irish News* column on 8th February was *IMC Suits Last-Ditchers In The DUP*. He takes Alderdyce to be a loose cannon, rather than a servant of the state doing what he knows his master requires. And he asks: "What happens next year when the DUP is ready to sign up to a deal with SF only for the IMC to emerge and provide another dollop of what Martin McGuinness called 'Balderdice'?"

What will happen then is that Lord John will say what is required of him then. He is a hollow, pretentious individual without the substance to buck the state. And, if he tried to do so, he would find life becoming less pleasant. The British State knows how to handle wayward impulses in its minor servants.

The IMC got an outing on the *Vincent Browne Show* on Radio Eireann (1st February).

Browne hasn't taken the trouble to



understand the public set-up in the North, any more than any other politician or political commentator in the South since Sean Lemass harassed the old Nationalist Party into taking on the official role of Loyal Opposition in the old Stormont Parliament, in which there was no actual role for an Opposition.

Browne veers irrationally between two contradictory attitudes—Sinn Fein is the only hope, and Sinn Fein is a curse on the land. Interviews invariably run the same course—reasonable discussion giving way to a rant as he is overcome by the thought of all the suffering there has been. They might be summarised thus:

It's great what you're doing Gerry. We'd be in a bad way without you. But there's just one little thing. Ah, Gerry, Gerry, why can't you say it. Why can't you just say you're a murdering swine? We all know it, so what's the point of denying it?"

**Vincent Browne**, Wednesday, 1st February 2006, questioning Aengus O Snodaigh, Sinn Fein TD (transcript)

*Vincent Browne:*

...One of the points made by the International Monitoring Commission is that the IRA is still engaged in intelligence gathering on politicians and other public servants...

...Aengus, the fact is that the International Monitoring Commission, based on Intelligence information, have said that the IRA is engaged in intelligence gathering, that the IRA hasn't decommissioned all its weapons, and that the IRA continues to engage in criminal activities...

*O Snodaigh:* And who is this body? Three spooks and a Lord. One is a former deputy Director of the CIA, which kidnaps people and tortures them around the world. The other is the head of an anti-terrorist squad—

*Browne* (impatiently): Ah, alright. It doesn't make—

*O Snodaigh:* No, it does make—

*Browne:* These people are getting their information from the Intelligence Services, North and South.

*O Snodaigh:* Unsubstantiated, inaccurate rumours. Yet the person who has been dealing directly with the various armed groups, and now unarmed group, the IRA, General de Chastelain, issued a statement saying that he met even the Gardai, who confirmed that they had no knowledge of any IRA arms being retained. So are we to believe Jeffrey Donaldson and unknown spooks, or unknown PSNI members, or—

*Browne:* But sure General de Chastelain was reliant on the same spooks—

*O Snodaigh:* No, no, no. He was reliant on the people he had met, and also Gardai.

*Browne:* No, he was relying on the same

spooks. That was the point I was making to Jeffrey Donaldson.

*O Snodaigh:* He was not.

*Browne:* But of course he is.

*O Snodaigh:* If you read John de Chastelain's statement—

*Browne:* But, he—

*O Snodaigh:* And who do we believe? The institution that was set up by the Good Friday Agreement, or—

*Browne:* But Aengus—

*O Snodaigh:* —or an institution that was set up specifically to help Unionists get over a problem they had with the GFA.

*Browne:* But you're critical of the International Monitoring Committee being reliant on spooks. And you're relying on the Decommissioning Commission. But I'm saying the Decommissioning Commis-

sion also was reliant on information obtained from spooks, as to the quantity of Arms that the IRA had.

*O Snodaigh:* And also on what the IRA said to them, if you look at John de Chastelain's statement. And—

*Browne:* Why should anybody pay any attention to that?

*O Snodaigh:* What's the point in having the Peace Process if you're not willing to trust each other? And that was the whole aspect. Whereas there's never been trust with the Monitoring Commission because it was a breach of the Good Friday Agreement. It was set up specifically to undermine it, if you want. And it continues to do so in this report.

*Browne:* Alright.

Jeffrey Donaldson. Is it likely that there will be negotiations in the next while?

## The 1916 Debate: *Madam's view of the Rising*

Madam Editor of the *Irish Times* gave us her views on the 1916 Rising on the 11th February, following Mary MacAleese's speech at University College, Cork. The editorial was called, *Going Beyond The Myths Of 1916*. It is a classic of its kind. It begins:

"'Enjoy the conference and the rows it will surely raise', President Mary McAleese urged at the conclusion of her recent speech on the 1916 Rising in UCC. She cannot have been disappointed by the subsequent rows; whether she or anyone else should 'enjoy' them is another matter?"

Madam was clearly not enjoying the rows, as they involved some support for the Rising. She goes on:

"Until recently, people were being killed on this island in its name and others were—still are—willing to die to fulfil their interpretation of its goals".

Can she really believe that the killings in Northern Ireland were down to the Rising? Was there a sudden outbreak of feverish enthusiasm for the Rising around August 1969 that got the mass of the people all riled up for the next 30 years? That is the only implication of what she says.

"One can agree easily with the President's view of the 1916 Proclamation as a document that was ahead of its time in terms of universal suffrage and inclusivity. Unfortunately, she used that fact to launch a surprisingly crude piece of myth making, breathtaking in its revisionism of recent history. Giving the Proclamation credit for the largely liberal society, stable democracy, prosperity and opportunities we have today is a gross rewriting of the history

of the past 20 years. Not alone does it studiously ignore intervening decades—when Irish nationalism proved itself capable of being every bit as narrow in social, cultural and economic terms as its critics claimed—it turns on its head the fact that most of Ireland's recent changes grew out of a reaction against the narrowness of the vision that developed from the Rising."

So we got where we are today despite the Rising and the ideals of the Proclamation? The Proclamation is here casually assumed to be responsible for what happened in *'the intervening years.'* But the Proclamation of the Republic was a declaration of intent that ran into some problems, to put mildly. Its initial promoters were executed and militarily defeated. Then its supporters had to fight a war to begin to implement a Republic. Then another *"immediate and terrible war"* was threatened against Republicans, and the leaders abandoned the Republic under this threat and all the reactionary forces of the society congealed together to ensure a non-Republican government and of course the *Irish Times* was to the fore in this *"carnival of reaction"* to quote Connolly from another context. This determined the nature of the *"intervening years"* for the formative years. So why does Madam make the Proclamation of the Republic take responsibility for those years?

What was the Proclamation itself? It was a Fenian/Irish Republican Brotherhood Proclamation with a dose of socialism via Connolly. The Fenian political model was French republicanism inspired by Louis Blanqui via James Stephens. Blanqui was the renowned and unremitting

foe for decades—literally the terror—of monarchy, aristocracy and church. Also, the Fenians were almost a Protestant-led organisation and those leaders who were not Prods were of the 'Pagan' O'Leary denomination of Catholicism. (This was no mere nickname. He really was a pagan.) No wonder the church damned them ferociously to "a hell that was not hot enough and an eternity that was not long enough for them". One thing of which there was not a smidgen of in the Proclamation was Catholic social teaching because no bishop was within an ass's roar of its creation.

As regards the 'narrow' accusation; this sits oddly if applied to Fenians who operated on three Continents; Connolly who operated on two; and Casement who operated on three. Few political tendencies in the world were broader and more cosmopolitan than the one that formulated the Proclamation.

Yet Madam gives this document as the source and the cause of the type of society that was created following the defeat of its supporters—a defeat over which her paper gloated and spurred on with all the zeal of a jackal who had tasted blood. The resulting political set-up was totally alien to the spirit of the Proclamation. It is turning history on its head to suggest otherwise.

Then the recent changes in society are presented as being at odds with it. But let's look briefly at the historical narrative—the actual cause and effect of how the society developed. Republicanism reasserted itself in the society as Fianna Fail grew in power and its adherents were unashamedly proud of the Proclamation and the Rising. And what did they do in their 'intervening years'?

There are three things usually credited with being the cause of the positive features of our present state that Madam would no doubt approve of—and sometimes has the arrogance to imply that the *Irish Times* brought them about.

Free Trade initiated by Sean Lemass is usually the first accepted cause. He was a participant in the Rising and subsequently an assassin in Collins's *Squad* in defence of the Republic. He implemented Protectionism successfully and would have implemented whatever economic policy suited the economic development of the country at any particular time. He saw the Rising as the how and the why to do such things. The Rising, independence, protectionism, free trade were all a seamless garment as far as he was concerned. If the actual architect of the whole Free Trade development saw it this way, why do those who had nothing whatever to do with it see some great contradiction in the process?

Free secondary education is the next development that is given credit for our present state. It was implemented by the Donagh O'Malley, Haughey, Lenihan grouping and was directly inspired by the commitment in the Proclamation to "treating all children of the nation equally". O'Malley said so several times (though, technically, the phrase applied to the Northern Protestants in its original context). Another little-acknowledged achievement by their grouping is the empowering of women by Lenihan's inheritance changes, based again on treating all citizens equally.

The European Union is usually the next accepted cause of Irish prosperity: Again carried through by the direct descendants of the Rising. The reference in the Proclamation to its "gallant allies in Europe" certainly helped Irish credentials with those allies in the EU, and they proved to be most gallant indeed in providing the billions that transformed this society. And, as the EU itself was set up to counter the interference of 'Perfidious Albion' in European politics, Ireland fitted in like a glove—given her experience and reputation in this regard.

So, far from the current society being at odds with the Proclamation, it is clearly indebted to it for its increased independence, its more secular nature, and its European orientation. The society has still a long way to go along these lines to live up fully to the spirit of the Proclamation, given the Fenian/Socialist spirit behind it. In reality the Proclamation is coming into its own.

Madam goes on:

"We should ponder, the President suggested, the extent to which "today's freedoms, values, ambitions and success rest on that perilous and militarily doomed undertaking of nine decades ago and on the words of that Proclamation". Yes, we can find inspiration for these attributes in the words of the Proclamation; we could also find them, should we care to look, in the so-called Glorious Revolution, the American Declaration of Independence and the French Revolution. To suggest that the liberal democracy that we have in Ireland now stems only from Easter 1916—as the President implied but did not say—is ridiculous."

Could we find the same inspiration in the Glorious Revolution? This was a rebellion/invasion (without a mandate) against the tolerant policy of James II, the legitimate monarch. The attractions of that rebellion did not travel far. For Ireland it meant war, confiscation, the Penal Laws and general sectarianism and social terrorism for over two centuries. None other than the great defender and apologist of that Revolution, Edmund Burke, described it in Ireland as: "a machine as

well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man". And he never experienced the Famine. For the rest of the world it meant the full development of slavery and colonialism.

And Madam expects us to look at, and be inspired by this regime? The Rising was essentially an attempt to overthrow that Revolution in Ireland. How could the society admire what it had suffered under for centuries—and voted overwhelmingly to get rid of at the first opportunity they got in 1918? What planet does Madam inhabit?

And does Madam need to tell Fenians and Republicans to be inspired by the French and the American Republics? They were always the models for Republicans—they lived these revolutions—and it was precisely these influences that inspired the Rising. Is Madam suggesting that it is a complete accident that, despite all efforts by enemies of Republicans, such as Blueshirt fascism, to prevent it, we have the liberal society we have today? The prevention of Fascism and War might be an achievement that the *Irish Times* might one day give Fianna Fail credit for. And we have one of the most stable, long-lasting democracies in the world, despite being one of the youngest. Is all this going against the grain of the founding act and founding declaration of the state? If it is, then we are a crazily lucky people, despite our best efforts to discredit and ruin ourselves for the last 90 years. Get real, Madam.

She ends on a typical pompous note:

"We need tolerance, openness and inclusivity—not characteristics truly associated with the Rising and its legacy, whatever about the fine words of its Proclamation. What we do not need for the 21st century is another series of myths woven from 19th century visions of nationalism. Let the debate continue."

But the debate in the *Irish Times* lasted just a few weeks. Did it peter out or was it snuffed out by Madam? Readers of this magazine will know of plenty evidence to suggest the latter.

Another editor, Vincent Browne began a debate 9 months ago in *Village* and it is still going strong. How come? I think there is an overlap of readership between the two publications and *Village* has a tiny circulation by comparison. The explanation is in the difference between the editors. Browne began the debate himself and clearly wants to see the issues argued through in an open-ended way. He does not have the mindset of a censorious know-all. Neither is he a begrudger of anything or anybody that deserves credit.



It is Madam who has all these characteristics by the bucketful and that is why we have such ignorant and intellectually threadbare editorials as the one on 11th February. It makes Kevin Myers look profound. Madam should let him continue do the thinking for her and her paper on these issues and not join in as a pale imitation. It is not a very becoming position for an editor. But then, Madam has long seemed oblivious to being in such positions.

**Jack Lane**

**The following letter appeared in  
*Village* (23.2.06)**

### **Commemorating 1916**

I would like to challenge the idea, most recently expressed by Lord Laird of the British House of Lords in an Irish newspaper, that the 1966 commemoration of 1916 was instrumental in causing the eruption of political violence in the North.

As a schoolboy at that time my memory of the event is of a valuable educational experience that made me feel good about the society I had been born into. Throughout my time in school I never heard a word of prejudice against England or Protestantism and the same was true for my experience of the 1966 anniversary.

I do remember picking up echoes of a fascinating debate on how our admiration for the high ideals of the 1916 leaders should be channelled into social improvement. If we are to look for after effects of the commemoration I would see them in a renewed commitment to the ideals expressed in the 1916 Proclamation. I suspect that much of the passion for social reform that marked Irish public debate right through the seventies stemmed from 1966.

If I must find fault with the commemoration it would be with the practice of making plaster saints of the 1916 leaders. Pearse, Connolly and the rest are for more interesting when seen as politically motivated individuals acting in a specific set of circumstances than as the mystical figures of later propaganda.

Regarding the outbreak of violence in the North, the event that made inevitable the formation of some form of defence force for Northern Catholic communities was the invasion of the Falls in 1969 by loyalist mobs assisted by members of the security forces. All other possible causes of political violence pale into insignificance compared to the realisation by Northern Catholics that they were defenceless against loyalist attack.

Lord Laird is not the first British commentator to have difficulty in understanding that that this part of Ireland is actually independent of the UK. He is clearly perplexed by our President's support for the event that led to the formation of the State. I suggest that if his Lordship is resolved to take action against commemorations that lead to unnecessary violence, he should begin by opposing the carnival of militarism that is Remembrance Sunday in Britain.

**David Alvey**

## **Allegations of IRA moles in RTE and Govt. offices**

**Archon writes in the *Southern Star*:**

"Do you know that RTÉ has two senior executives who are also members of the IRA? Or that there are 200 IRA moles in Government departments up to and including the Taoiseach's office? Or that three lecturers in a Dublin college for journalism are poisoning the minds of young people with Sinn Féin propaganda?"

"Certainly Johnny Laird, a Unionist peer, believes such to be the case and before Christmas, under the protection of parliamentary privilege, said so in the British House of Lords. Laird, who goes under the amusing title of Lord Laird, has a reputation for making slanderous allegations against people with whom he disagrees, knowing that House of Lords privilege ensures that those who are publicly abused have no recourse to protect their reputation.

"He has previously named journalists and academics as "republican sympathisers" and made a string of other allegations against leading members of Sinn Féin. He says he bases his remarks on information supplied by the Gardaí and clearly enjoys the cushion of parliamentary privilege, a procedure that he used when he targeted Frank Connolly's Public Inquiry Centre as a "Sinn Féin intelligence gathering operation". He did that some time before our own Justice Minister destroyed in a cowardly fashion Connolly's livelihood and reputation, also with the assistance of the comfort blanket of parliamentary rights.

"Under House of Lords and Oireachtas privilege, individuals who are pilloried by public representatives in the Dáil or Westminster cannot resort to legal action to clear their names although it is considered bad constitutional precedent to identify people without serious corroborating evidence.

"Amazingly, the Unionist Peer of the British Realm claims the proof for his assertion that RTÉ has been infiltrated by "extreme republican sympathisers" lies in the highly negative reaction by sections of the media, in particular RTÉ, against the Minister for Justice, Michael McDowell. "It is not a coincidence", he said, "that instead

of being lauded for his anti-republican speeches, Minister McDowell has found himself the subject of vilification in the Irish media."...

"Interestingly, while most sections of the Irish media considered his attack on RTÉ as the ravings of a loony lord, the *Sunday Independent* published Laird's comments in full, even going so far as to repeat the names of the three lecturers he slandered—a move that may or may not have had something to do with the fact that he is a public relations consultant for Independent Newspapers!

"For someone who can't stand anything with a republican tinge Laird, a former advisor to David Trimble, has no problem accepting money from Irish republicans; from Minister Eamon Ó Cuív, in particular. From 1998 to 2004 he fronted the Ulster-Scots Agency, an organisation he set up to promote the Ulster-Scots 'language'. The agency is funded by grants from the Northern Ireland Department of Culture and Ó Cuív's Department of Gaeltacht Affairs and has a budget of over two million euros, a quarter of which comes from the Irish government.

"Oddly enough, no one had heard of the Scots-Ulster 'language' before Laird resurrected it in 1998..."

"In 2004 Laird resigned from the Ulster-Scots Agency shortly before British government auditors sharply criticised it for excessive spending on entertainment, 'research' into Orange lodges in Ghana and for 'festive events' during the marching season. Its budget was cut by £600,000, prompting Laird to complain that the British and Irish governments were betraying Protestant culture. He defended his own bill of £692 for taxis to Dublin as due to a concern about his personal security which he linked to his practice of wearing a kilt!..."

(extract, 20.1.06)

You may be surprised to learn that Lord Laird was subsequently given credibility by the Irish Times (4.2.06) by being invited to write an article commenting on President McAleese's speech on 1916: **Editor**

### Letter To Editor

## **Muriel MacSwiney And Desmond Greaves**

Angela Clifford's reference to Desmond Greaves and Muriel MacSwiney in her interesting article on the latter in the current issue of the *Irish Political Review* is not exactly correct.

Mrs Clifford writes: "I have been told that, when Muriel was hard up some years later, Greaves allowed her to live in his flat on the basis that she did his housework."

My recollection of what Desmond

Greaves told me on this matter is that he helped Muriel MacSwiney financially—probably in the 1940s or 1950s—by giving her money for occasionally coming in and tidying up his flat in London. It was his way of helping the widow of Terence MacSwiney without making her feel that she was under a personal obligation to him. He certainly never had Muriel actually "live in" his flat, for while he had considerable respect for her, he considered her highly strung and politically erratic, and too leftist and anti-Catholic in her views for his liking.

**Anthony Coughlan (10.2.06)**

## Shorts

from

### *the Long Fellow*

#### FRENCH CENSUS

The census figures for France were released recently, showing a population of 62.9 million (the second most populous country in the EU after Germany).

The statistics make interesting reading. 96% of children were born to women within the 20 to 40 age group: so very few teenagers giving birth. The amount of births exceeded the number of deaths by 270,000 and net immigration amounted to another 97,500. France with a fertility rate of 1.94 has the second highest in the EU. Ireland has the highest with a rate of 1.99, compared to an EU average of only 1.5.

The French have been congratulating themselves on their pro-family welfare policies. The relatively high fertility rate is seen as a vote of confidence in the future. However, a note of caution has been sounded. The main reason for the natural increase in the population is that the French are living longer. But in order to reverse the ageing of the population the fertility rate needs to be above 2.1. So there is no room for complacency among either the French or the Irish.

We all must try just a little harder!

#### RABBITTE AND SOCIALISM

The leader of the Labour Party often pours scorn on Bertie Ahern's claims to be a socialist. It is therefore interesting to look at Rabbitte's vision of Socialism. According to Rabbitte socialism is about the individual achieving his full potential. Equality of opportunity rather than of outcomes is his vision. This is certainly not this column's view of Socialism. Socialism is about the advancement of the working class as a class. Greater social mobility may be a by-product of socialist policies but it is not the objective. Socialism has a collective rather than an individualistic vision of society.

The question remains. In what way is Rabbitte's "Socialism" different from Ahern's?

#### RABBITTE AND FINE GAEL

Which political party is the most right wing in relation to health? It is not easy to say. Mary Harney, the Minister of health and leader of the Progressive Democrats, has dragged her heels on "risk equalisation" but finally attempted to implement it when she could not hide from herself the huge profits that BUPA's Irish operation was making. The risk equalisation policy involves BUPA compensating VHI for the younger profile of its customers. The objective is to ensure a system of "community rating", whereby the sick and elderly would be subsidised by the healthy and the young. It is not quite social

insurance but it prevents segmentation of the market or, in other words, private insurance companies cherry-picking the young and healthy at the expense of the elderly and less healthy.

But the leader of Fine Gael, Enda Kenny, has declared that he is opposed to "risk equalisation" (Sunday Independent, 22.1.06). Where does this leave the prospective coalition between Rabbitte's "socialism" and Fine Gael?

#### RABBITTE AND THE ARCHBISHOP

But at least Rabbitte is more left wing than the free market orientated Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin. Martin thinks that "borders should be open" and that "lower labour costs are indeed a significant factor in giving vitality to an economy" (Sunday Business Post, 8.1.06). Vincent Browne in his column seems to think that these sentiments are somehow left wing and that Rabbitte's proposals to restrict immigration are somehow "right wing" and "xenophobic". Unfettered labour mobility throughout the EU would be fine if the EU were a State, with the same laws and wage levels throughout the Union. But it is not, and the disparities have increased dramatically since the accession of the Eastern European States. The effect has been a "race to the bottom" with workers from the low-wage economies undercutting workers in 'old Europe'. Ignoring these realities will only leave the field open to the real xenophobes and racists.

A recent letter in *The Irish Times* suggested that Rabbitte should have confined himself to beefing up the labour inspectorate, but all this will do is ensure that at least the minimum wage is paid and minimum working conditions are adhered to. There is certainly nothing wrong with that, but most semi-skilled and skilled Irish workers have legitimate aspirations above the minimum required by the law. This column has been very critical of Rabbitte but in this instance he is correct and it is no accident that Labour's standing in the opinion polls has recently increased as a consequence.

#### HARNEY AND HEALTH

It's quite amazing the extent to which *The Irish Times* facilitates the Minister for Health in outlining her policies. The problem is that the more she talks the less sense she makes, even on her own terms. In her negotiations with the consultants she referred to an OECD report indicating that Irish consultants are the best-paid in the world. The same report showed that Irish nurses were the third highest paid (*The Irish Times*, 16.1.06). One of her objectives seems to be to create a category of consultant solely dedicated to the Public sector. The idea is to avoid the current situation whereby consultants have an economic incentive to spend more time with private patients. This is a good policy. The problem is that all her other policies such as generous tax incentives for private hospitals have the effect of increasing the

rewards for consultants in the private sector. It looks like her policy of "public only" consultants will either fail or will be only achieved at an exorbitant cost in order to compensate the "public only" consultants for the income they would otherwise have earned.

#### RECLAIMING 1916

It looks like elements of the Establishment have finally woken up to the neglect of our political culture even if it appears that their interest appears to be motivated by opportunistic political reasons. Apparently the 1916 Rising needs to be reclaimed from the "men of violence". But Sinn Fein has as much right as anyone to celebrate 1916. And why did Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, Labour, and the PDs neglect this seminal event in the foundation of the State for so long? As 'Johnny come latelies' they are in no position to lecture others.

However in politics, as in so many other things, what one does matters much more than the reasons for doing it. For this reason President McAleese's speech must be welcomed.

As interesting as the speech itself, was the media reaction to it. The Independent Newspapers Group attempted to ignore it, but this was not an option available to *The Irish Times*, which has to retain some semblance of being the 'paper of record' (or "paper of reference" as former editor Conor Brady prefers to describe it).

Predictably, the speech was greeted with a hysterical and hostile reaction from Kevin Myers, who referred to our head of State's comments as "imbecilic". It could be said that this was just a personal opinion except that Myers's article was advertised on the front page of the paper with his "imbecilic" quote. *The Irish Times* had also articles denouncing the President's speech from Lord Laird, David Adams and Stephen Collins. An editorial (*The Irish Times*, 10.2.06) denounced the President's speech as Anglophobic. Apart from columnist Martin Mansergh, defenders of the speech were confined to the letters pages.

Among the letters was a very interesting contribution from Eoin Neeson (*The Irish Times*, 6.2.06). He made the point that the 1916 Rising was not intended as a blood sacrifice. One of its objectives was:

"To hold out militarily for a minimum of three days, thus satisfying the requirement that would enable Germany to fulfil its promise to give Ireland a hearing at the post-war peace conference as an independent belligerent nation. (Hence also the reference in the proclamation to "gallant allies in Europe")."

Neeson goes on to make the point that the idea that the 1916 was a "blood sacrifice" was:

"... one of the most effective and enduring examples of black propaganda this country has been subjected to in modern times."

## Us And Them

When the towers of the World Trade Centre were hit by aeroplanes in September 2001 there was jubilation in Palestine. The Irish foreign Minister, Brian Cowen, was there at the time. He was horrified. He gave Yasser Arafat a telling-off for letting it happen. Back in Dublin the representative of the Palestinian authority was hauled into RTE studios and given a public wiggling. His plea that the Palestinian Authority was not a totalitarian state which controlled the feelings of its subjects was treated as a lame excuse, an evasion. And the President went on the television and let it all hang out in what was clearly an unprepared interview. The interviewer had the good sense, or the good taste, not to ask her to comment on the appalling conduct of the Palestinians. It required little knowledge of the affairs of the world, and little affinity with the wretched of the Earth, to appreciate why Palestinians should have felt a lifting of the spirit as they saw the planes driving into the World Trade Centre. Perhaps it was undiplomatic of them to express their feelings on the streets. But then, they are not diplomats, but victims of what is in their experience an utterly brutal world order. The President, however, is supposed to be a diplomat. She is the ceremonial head of a State which has been increasingly serving the brutality of that world order, and is Supreme Commander of the Army. And, since she was not called upon to comment on the Palestinians, she might at least have stayed silent.

But her remarks made her the darling of Dublin 4. Until then she had been detested as an uppity Northern Catholic, but it was then felt that she had matured into the job, and her approval-rating shot up amongst the opinion-formers. But now she has undone her good work with her commendation of the Irish terrorists of 1916.

I take it that her 1916 speech was authorised by the Government. Her Twin towers remarks obviously were not. Here are some of them:

"Q. Unfortunately we're likely to be into a spiral of retaliation. What kind of response, or what kind of attitude should Ireland have in the coming days, weeks and months?"

McA. Well, I think our immediate reaction has to be of course of prayerful and loving solidarity with our friends, our relations, our neighbours in the United States... I think part of us too feels almost a tidal wave, not just of grief, but of anger, and even despair, that hatred could run riot so rampantly through our world... And I suppose our hearts go out tonight to those who face, particularly the leaders of the world, and

particularly the leaders of the United States, who face now really quite awesome questions, and quite awesome decisions, because these are decisions which will affect not just the American people, but clearly will impact on life for all of us. But we are dealing here with global terrorism, and so it does call for in many ways a global response. And part of that response surely has to be our solidarity, our determination, that our open way of life, our democratic values, that the fear and pity and dread and terror that these people, the terrorists, intended to instil in our hearts, that we will not be hostages to them, that we will show in the way in which we support each other, in the way in which we care for each other, in the way in which we love and are decent to each other, that the values of common human decency will prevail.

Q. We're on the—

McA. It's a dreadful thing, isn't it, to think, Una, it's an awful thing to think that there are people celebrating this tonight. I mean it just shows you the different worlds that we inhabit, when there are young children, and young men, and young women, somewhere in this world of ours who actually think that that act of vile, vile awfulness is something to celebrate. That just shows you how far apart we are in our thinking.

Q. Well, I'm sure everybody in the Republic and in the island of Ireland will agree with you. But, in terms of real politics, we are on the Security now. Is there a role for the UN?"

The President said that it was a matter of friends and relations, and global terrorism which had attacked not just the USA but all of us, and that we must all show our mettle in addressing a world in which there are such different views of the event:

"Because I find it—you know, I find it almost impossible to believe that there are people who would come out on the streets and celebrate—and celebrate this act of—just the vile, cowardly criminality of it—and who could think so little, so contemptuously of human life, including their own lives. That we have to address. And we'll never address it on our own. But we will be able to address it. We'll address it together. That's what we're called to do tonight. And, more importantly, we're called to have faith in our ability to do that. And I think that we have to stand firmly in our faith, in our collective ability to address that..." (9.11.2001. [Editor: does this discourse not remind you of Dame Edna Everidge?])

Those dreadful people, at the bottom of the globalist regime, who did not tear their hair in sympathy with the brief, superficial moment of suffering experienced by their oppressors, have done it again. By

overthrowing Fatah and electing Hamas they reveal that their feelings remain as they were in 2001.

Hamas is the Moslem Brotherhood. And the Moslem Brotherhood belongs in the rubbish bin of history. We all know that. And yet, somehow, it won the Palestinian election.

But what else could the Palestinians have done? They could, of course, have boycotted the election. But that would not have met with our approval either. It is necessary to vote to be modern. And it is necessary to be modern. So they voted.

And Fatah is corrupt. So were we told, night and day. Fatah could not be dealt with while Arafat was there, because it is corrupt. And his successor was kept at arm's length because Fatah corruption did not pass away with Arafat.

A democratic renewal that would sweep away corruption was called for. And that is what was given.

The alternatives were Fatah and Hamas. I suppose Fatah might reasonably be said to be what we mean by corrupt. It is, at any rate, the secularist and Westernised stratum of Palestinian politics. It is civilised according to our standards. It talks our language. And it shares our habits.

Hamas is not corrupt. Connected with that fact is the fact that it is not what we consider civilised either. It is by our standards a mediaevalist, obscurantist movement which lives in the ideology of organic society, rather than in the ideology of individualist contractual relations in the market, where "*the nexus of callous cash*" payment prevails.

But that is our periodisation. It is a Christian idea that has no meaning for Islam, which began in our Dark Ages, and was an adequate framework of meaningful life for millions upon millions of people for more than thirteen centuries, until we decided to break it up.

It is said that the problem is that it has had no Reformation. But how could it have what we mean by a Reformation? *The Book* was never withheld from it. It has always been a religion of *The Book*. And its book is not a concoction, produced after the event and then disseminated in translation. The Muslim event is *The Book*, and *The Book* is now exactly as it was then, but for the addition of some vowel signs for ease of reading outside the Arabian peninsula.

Regarding the cartoons, the cliché of the month is that freedom of speech for one is freedom of speech for all. And,

because we attach so much importance to freedom of speech that we allow Christianity to be ridiculed, we are therefore entitled to ridicule Islam.

But the truth is that the ridiculing of Christianity has nothing whatever to do with the principle of tolerance. It has to do with the fact that Christianity died on us long ago as an actual medium of life. It became intolerable to us. It became an existential necessity to us to ridicule it.

This happened, as far as I can see, through its being carried to inhuman extremes in Protestantism. In its Catholic form, and its national forms in the Orthodox Churches, it was a viable compromise with pagan humanity. But, in the uncompromising form in England, it broke down. Protestantism did not have the inbuilt blasphemy that is part of Catholicism. (Ulster Protestants are shocked by the levity of even Catholic priests with regard to sacred matters.) It did not take things with a pinch of salt. It had no leeway—no tolerance in that other sense. Therefore it became intolerable. And I see no special merit in tolerating ridicule of what one finds intolerable.

Islam did not become burdensome to its adherents. What has become burdensome to them is the Westernised strata, drawn out of Islamic society and placed in authority over them by Western power, for Western interests, and therefore corrupt. But ineffectively corrupt in one sense. *Ineffective* in the sense that a functional value system for bourgeois-national states was not cultivated amongst the populace by means of this corruption.

Corruption was the medium in which the English Constitution was created during the century and a half following the Glorious Revolution. Without the systematic corruption, which was developed into an art by Walpole during his long Prime Ministership, the English State as we know it could not have come about. By means of corruption Walpole blunted the edge of conflicting principles, and gradually subverted the theocratic impulse of middle class Nonconformism. English Liberalism is the fruit of the corruption by means of which the oligarchic state of the gentry fertilised developments away from theocracy. What the Whigs liked to call "*Liberty*" did not arise from the freedom of the populace, but from the manipulation of the populace by graft and corruption. "*Liberty*" was a value of the oligarchic state, not of the society. It was an alien intrusion in the middle class—to adapt Lenin's maxim about Socialism and the working class—and corruption was the means of intrusion.

A Whig historian of Whig politics in

the mid-19th century actually located the point at which the Whigs dropped the policy of corruption in favour of the policy of middle class meritocracy—the work of corruption having been done.

The corruption of the Western-oriented governing strata of states in which the populace are Muslim does not have the effect of fertilising the ground for Liberalism. It has the contrary effect of strengthening the receptiveness of the populace to Islam. Perhaps this is because the corrupt governing strata are not independent, but are required to serve Western interests at every turn in ways that infuriate the populace. Or it might be that Islam provides so well for a satisfactory way of life that it is not susceptible to the progressive influence of corruption as the intense but brittle doctrinaire Protestantism of England was.

Palestine and Mesopotamia appeared to provide the best ground for the development of Liberal states because of their cultural diversity. But both have now been made into Islamic strongholds by post-Christian mischief-making. Iraq was developed as a liberal state by the Baath regime. The regime was destroyed by the US/UK (with Irish assistance) because it was a "*tyranny*". It was a liberal tyranny, much as England was for a century and a half after its Glorious Revolution, while the ground of liberal democracy was being laid. The governing politics of the tyranny in Iraq had not yet been regularised—in England it took half a century to regularise them—but the life of the populace was increasingly being conducted on Western liberal lines. The invasion deliberately destroyed the liberal state, with the effect that the liberal values associated with it were discredited, and the Islamist values, which had been declining, were re-invigorated.

In Palestine, the values proclaimed by Britain in the Great War were deliberately and calculatingly set aside by Britain and a strategy of racial conquest was set in motion, and facilitated by the League of Nations and the United Nations. Nevertheless, the cultural complexity of the native population that was being displaced gave rise to a resistance movement with a Western secularist outlook. The leaders of that movement were systematically assassinated by agents of the Jewish State, in various other States in which they found refuge, while an Islamist movement was fostered in the Occupied Territories by the Jewish authorities as a replacement. When the Islamist resistance at home grew into a more effective resistance to Jewish colonisation than the Fatah secularists abroad, Israel brought Fatah home under the Oslo Agreement in order to use it to suppress Hamas. The intention was that Arafat was to be the Palestinian Kevin

O'Higgins. But he refused to make war on Hamas on behalf of Israel, and for that reason he was declared to be corrupt etc. His successor was more or less appointed by Tel Aviv and Washington, with the promise that a Palestinian leader acceptable to Israel would be given concessions that were refused to Arafat. That promise was not kept.

Then there was the election. The West poured millions of dollars into the election fund of the party it had been branding as corrupt. But Fatah lost. Hamas, like Sinn Fein in 1918, won by a landslide on a clear programme that could not be mistaken. Then, just as in 1918, the powers-that-be, who had for years been jabbering about democracy, declared that it would have no dealings with the winning party unless it threw aside the programme on which it had won the election and adopted the programme of the losers.

And so Islamism has been brought to dominance in Palestine and Iraq, as it had earlier been brought to dominance in Iran by the overthrow of Dr. Mossadeq by Western interests in the 1950s and the imposition of the regime of the Shah, with its exhibitionist Westernism, leading to revolution.

Iran is now being threatened with invasion because of its nuclear power programme, which could enable it to make nuclear weapons eventually. In the days of the Shah it signed the Treaty against nuclear proliferation, that was hawked around by Frank Aiken on behalf of USA/UK, on the level of: "*Wouldn't be nice if there were no nuclear weapons, or indeed no weapons at all*" Of Utopian simple-mindedness, in other words. Nuclear disarmament was not a possibility then, and it is not now. The purpose of non-proliferation therefore is to keep most states in the world defenceless.

Noel Dorr, who did a stint as Chairman of the UN Security Council when Ireland was briefly a world-power after the WTC event, appeared on the Vincent Browne show to defend the "*concern*" that is felt by the US/UK/EU about the Iranian nuclear programme. Under pressure from David Morrison, he admitted that there was no evidence that Iran had a weapons programme, but there was "*concern*". He did not explain the grounds of the "*concern*". It was enough that there was concern. El Baradei, who runs the UN agency, is concerned, just as US/UK/EU are. It is natural that he should be concerned when his powerful masters are, even though he produces no evidence of an Iranian nuclear programme as independent grounds for concern.

It is a replay of Hans Blix and the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. It was

evident that Blix was virtually certain that Iraq had neither w-m-d, nor a w-m-d programme, and he said so after the event. But at the relevant period he did not say so. He equivocated and therefore facilitated the invasion. It was not his intention to facilitate the invasion. He just wanted to keep the UN in the game, knowing that, if his reports were too definite in a way that was unacceptable to US/UK, the UN would be marginalised. But, by not being definite, he gave a degree of credibility to US/UK "concern" and facilitated them in marginalising the UN.

Fianna Fail doesn't like to say much about these things. It has a complicated argument that, in facilitating the US invasion of Iraq without specific UN authorisation, it asserted its neutrality, because, if it had stopped the invasion face from using its facilities, that would have been a hostile act against the US. Neutrality means facilitating US warmaking. The Bush doctrine that whoever was not for him was against him ruled out anything else.

John O'Donoghue demonstrated by syllogism that Ireland was not a party to war on Iraq. Ireland cannot make war unless authorised by a motion in the Dail; but there was no Dail motion authorising war; therefore Ireland was not a party to the war on Iraq. It puts one in mind of the ontological proof of the existence of God.

Only Senator Mansergh likes to write about it. But he is not a conceptual high-flyer like O'Donoghue. He is a rather pedestrian intellectual who prefers the safety of clichés.

In his *Irish Times* column of 17th December 2005, we read, regarding the use of Shannon for torture flights:

"In a context where Ireland has close and friendly relations with the U.S., and, for example, is looking for the regularisation of the position of the undocumented Irish there, we should not take unilateral decisions against the U.S., without proof, or even *prima facie* evidence to contradict official denials at the highest level that prisoners have been transported through Shannon in the process of "extraordinary rendition". It is perfectly legitimate, however, to underline our strong concern that continued use of unconventional procedures and suspicions of outlawed practices are fuelling the conflict in Iraq and further afield and diminishing chances of successful extrication.

"Despite vehement criticisms of the US and its allies, its conduct does not begin to compare in savagery with the suicide attacks against civilians or the abduction and beheading of hostages that have been tactics of the insurgents...

"The president of Iran showed a dangerous lack of restraint, in calling for Israel to be wiped off the map, its citizens

transported to Europe, and denying the Holocaust, which is a crime in many countries.

"The state of Israel was created by the international community, which, as the invasion of Kuwait showed, will not allow any state to disappear. The government of Iran is unfortunately reappearing in the guise of a dangerous and fanatical theocracy, and will find that there is a serious external cost to such wayward behaviour."

The Iranian theocracy re-appeared a quarter of a century ago. It threatened to spread through Arabia, but was contained by the secular tyranny in Iraq, which mobilised its suppressed peoples for a long war against Iran with the support of the West. The secular tyranny was then part of our civilisation and Iran was the demon. When Iran had been checked, it was decided that the Iraqi tyranny must be overthrown, and the US Ambassador gave it the green light to act against Kuwait, which began stealing its oil while Iraq was pre-occupied with Iran. For the purpose of destroying the Iraqi regime, Iran, the demon of the 1980s, was transformed into a victim by Western propaganda in the 1990s, and the casualties of a war supported by the West became victims of Saddam's murder regime. Then, when the Iraqi State was destroyed, Iran was restored to its demonic status. (The German Chancellor, a wan Christian Democrat from Prussia, has described Ahmadinejad as another Hitler. Was Nazism a theocracy then?)

Does Senator Mansergh hold that theocracy is a form of state that can no longer be permitted to exist? And what does Iranian theocracy consist of anyway? A kind of House of Lords of the clergy (who organised the overthrow of the autocracy of the Shah), which supervises the workings of the democracy, as the British Lords supervised the Commons for centuries after the Glorious Revolution. (The British Foreign Secretary, who has more understanding than he is allowed to act upon, seems to understand this.)

As to the Holocaust, it certainly has been made a crime to question it in many European states, and a British historian is now doing six years in an Austrian jail for it. That means that the Holocaust has been transferred from the sphere of knowledge to the sphere of faith. It has been removed from history and become sacred mythology, and, by being made an Article of Faith, it has of course been made doubtful. Faith and doubt go together.

I read the various editions of the book in which David Irving was said to have denied the Holocaust and found in them descriptions of the killing of immense numbers of Jews by the Nazi regime, along with the assertion that there is no

documentary evidence that Hitler ordered this to be done, though he certainly created the atmosphere and the circumstances in which it was done. If that is Holocaust denial, then the Holocaust is something different from the killing of immense numbers of Jews, and it belongs to a mindset that is inaccessible to me.

It is said on television that Irving denies in lectures what he described in his book, but only a snippet or a couple of seconds is ever shown. Perhaps he is schizophrenic. But I only know what is in his books.

He told the television cameras, after he was sentenced, that Austria was a Nazi state. That is not entirely accurate. It is Fascist. The Austrian class war resulted in the establishment of a Fascist state in 1934. But the Fascism was of a patriotic Austrian character, and its independence of Germany was actively supported by Mussolini until Britain sold the pass. After the *Anschluss* the Fascists and Marxists found themselves in Concentration Camp together, and they made an agreement to rule Austria in collaboration if they got the chance. And that is what they did for half a century after the War, when Austria was perhaps the best-governed state in Europe, and the most contented, and the most determined to conceal the past in the interest of the present. At one moment it had as President somebody that Simon Wiesenthal declared to be a Nazi war criminal, Kurt Waldheim. Waldheim's Prime Minister was a Jew, Kreisky. Kreisky responded to the allegation by asserting that Wiesenthal himself had been a Nazi collaborator. Perhaps it wasn't true, but was it less true than what passes for history in Ireland these days? And it demonstrated a fair degree of determination not to let the past disturb the present. Is not that what our revisionists claimed to be their object?

**Brendan Clifford**

To Be Concluded

**WE POINT THE FINGER...**

The raid on the Securitas premises in Tonbridge, Kent netted the raiders (allegedly) £50m. There has been much speculation about this matter. The police are hot on the trail of a man seen on (the ubiquitous in Great Britain, CCTV—closed circuit television) film wearing a 'false' police uniform. He may have been wearing a gingery wig and false beard. (Then again, me may not... The Kent police are keeping an open mind...).

NOBODY—suspiciously—has mentioned that the *modus operandi* of this raid is exactly the same as that of the Belfast Northern Bank 'heist' of December 2004. (And some smaller bank jobs in the Republic of Ireland in the course of 2005.) Where is Michael McDowell when you need him?

We accuse the clear and obvious perpetrators of this huge robbery—step forward the Provisional IRA! (What do you mean it doesn't exist anymore?)

# The 'Love Ulster' Riot

An organisation called 'Love Ulster' attempted to march through Dublin on Saturday, February 25th. It was to mark the deaths of Unionist / Loyalist victims of the violence in Northern Ireland since 1969. (The fact that the UVF has been killing people—including ordinary Protestants—since 1966 is never acknowledged by such groups.) The authorities, led by Klansman McDowell, who is fighting the next General Election, claimed that this was going to be a peaceful demonstration (why there was a riot-squad on hand must remain a mystery) but there was a counter-demonstration.

Radio Éireann replaced a half-hour programme which was to be dedicated to Conor Brady's book on the Irish Times with one on the riot. Charlie Bird, RTÉ's main political correspondent was involved in the riot and called an "Orange cunt" by mysterious persons whom he could not in all honesty claim had "Northern accents". (Yes, Mr. Bird, yet another 'revolutionary' of the late 1960s, was so traumatized that he could not lie to order—what is Irish journalism coming to?). Extremist Northern elements, it was heavily implied, were behind this riot (the genuine article, O'Connell Street is one building site, and advantage was taken . . .). It does not seem to have struck the RTÉ journalists that Northerners have been putting up with Orange / Loyalist demonstrations for a long time.

It also does not seem to have struck them to actually investigate the 'Love Ulster' movement, which is based on a publication, *The Shankill Mirror* (of which more will be written shortly) which is definitely a UDA operation. It had printed (outside of Northern Ireland) hundreds of thousands of copies of a special edition on the 'Love Ulster' theme. It was essentially a 'Hate Taigs' sheet, accusing all and sundry of selling their beloved bit of a province to the Republic. (In this wee, enclosed world the fact that the Republic is inhabited, and certainly ruled by people who want a price-tag on everything—they wouldn't take 'Northern Ireland' as a gift—except possibly as a tax-losing subsidiary.)

The main speaker for the marchers was Jeffrey Donaldson MP, who—interviewed afterwards—hammered at the fact that 'Republicans' were refusing to allow them to exercise their democratic rights to 'Love Ulster' in the province of

Leinster. He was not asked to explain why Unionist victims needed to be commemorated more than, just for instance, the people killed in the Dublin and Monaghan bombings. (It has been claimed that the Monaghan bombs were made on the property connected with the organisers of this demonstration.) He is never asked why he left the anti-Republican (read 'Catholic') UUP to the join the very 'anti-Republican' DUP—nor why he felt he did not need to put this move to the test of a bye-election. Donaldson complained that the families and children of victims were on the demonstration, and that the opposition had no compunction about frightening them. Surely the onus was on him and the other organisers to ensure their safety? They knew quite well that the march would be perceived as a provocation.

A string of TDs (all men) were interviewed, and the *leitmotif* from all of them, from the Klansman to even Seán Crowe of Sinn Féin, was that Dublin is 'a modern, liberal, republican, capital city', and this sort of thing is not acceptable. It was unclear if they all meant the sheer embarrassment of having a riot in the city centre, or the overspill (allegedly) from the brutal realities of the North.

McDowell's attitude to Ulster Protestants is essentially racist, asked about racism in Irish society last year he claimed that it only really existed among working class Unionists. He is, of course, a 'visionary Republican' so his whinging about rioting in the streets may not include a rational assessment of what goes on in London, the capital of a Kingdom. Rioting is a regular occurrence in London. Paris had its largest riots for nearly forty years in 2005, maybe France is not republican (or visionary) enough for the Klansman, who probably regards Jacques Chirac as a dangerous socialist.

Seán Crowe pinned the blame for the rioting on the 'micro-group RSF', (Republican Sinn Féin, which is not all that 'micro'). RSF has been exercised by this demonstration for months now, but whether or not it planned a riot, or even took part in one, was simply not proven. A person from RSF was interviewed, but I did not hear the interview, and cannot inform the reader whether or not she or he was breathing heavily from exertions on the streets. 'Anarchists' were also blamed for the riot. Like the poor they are always

with RTÉ.

'Love Ulster' got out of this series of events precisely what it wanted: it can claim that the demonstrators were denied their civil rights. (Jeffrey Donaldson even used the phrase, which—metaphorically—has burned the tongues of Unionists for decades. Young Jeffrey is an unusually political and politic Unionist: he handled his interview like a virtuoso, going out of his way to praise the *Gárda Síochána*, and the 'ordinary people of Dublin'. But blaming 'Republicans' for interfering with the demonstration.)

It is a pity that the UDA front, 'Love Ulster', was given the political gift of a riot in Dublin—especially as the hard chaws who no doubt 'accompanied' it did not get hit, in any sense of the word: the cops, and shops—and the Dublin office of the Progressive Democrats—bore the brunt of the violence. But the total incomprehension of RTÉ, and the Dublin Establishment politicians in regard to 'the North' was quite startling. 'Love Ulster' and the groups that make it up are not asking for equality of treatment for Unionist victims of the war in the North. They are in essence claiming that their victimhood is more important than that of the Catholics, who are Fenian terrorists. They enjoy marching through 'Taig territory', which now clearly includes Klansman McDowell's 'modern, liberal, republican, inclusive, capital city'.

The most pleasing thing about having had control of their own little political slum was ensuring that the Taigs knew their place. It was largely done by marching (by the *Orange*, the *Black*, the *Blue*, the *Purple*, and the *Red*—the Apprentice Boys) with drums and pikes, and latterly with hordes of young drunks, through Catholic residential areas. It was mostly villages and small towns, but the larger urban areas got their share. One of the most noticeable things about living in east Belfast was that the Orange bands played recognisable tunes. They mostly made lots of noise within earshot of Taig areas. Despite all that, Taigs in 'the North' tended to take a relaxed attitude to the Orange demonstrations which were only tangentially provocative. (And what with Popes being burned in effigy, and ritually denounced at the various 'fields' it probably was inherently provocative for the genuinely devout.) That is why shoving responsibility onto mysterious extremist 'Northerners' may—one hopes—backfire on the 'Free State' establishment.

Seán McGouran



## Northern Nationalists In The Dáil

### *Under-Represented, Mis-Represented, Un-Represented*

#### Part Three

## Of Pacts & Tracts & Constitutions

In the period between the Dáil vote endorsing the 'Treaty' (by 64 votes to 57, on 7th. January 1922) and the shelling of the Four Courts (occupied by Republican forces on April 14th.) by the Free State army, with British guns and ammunition (on 28th. June 1922), Collins tried to substantiate his view of the Treaty as the "*freedom to win freedom*".

He made an election pact with de Valera in respect of the elections scheduled for June, to the Southern Parliament of the 1920 Government of Ireland Act, aka the Third Dáil, which was ratified by the Second Dáil on 20th. May 1922, and proposed a united panel of pro- and anti-Treaty Sinn Féin candidates who would simply agree to differ on the issue of accepting the 'Treaty'. The agreement was that the new Government of the Free State established by the 'Treaty' would reflect the existing pro- and anti-Treaty proportions.

This was the period in which Collins' constitution for the Free State was being drafted. According to T. Ryle Dwyer:— "*Collins tried to use the election deadline to rush the British into accepting a constitution compatible with [de Valera's] Document No. 2*" (*De Valera, The Man And The Myths*, p109). And this without comment. From a man who intrudes his view wherever it suits him no view here intrudes.

Clearly, it did not suit him to comment on the incongruity here of the British having the final say on the content of the constitution of Ireland.

Not such a Free State after all.

Collins' draft constitution, as submitted to the ultimate arbiter of all things constitutional, stated: "*...the legislative, executive, and judicial authority of Ireland shall be derived solely from the Irish people*". But Collins had to submit this to a British Government for its approval. Where then was the legislative, executive, and judicial authority of Ireland solely derived from?

Another clause in Collins' draft constitution declared that only the Irish parliament could commit the Irish people to war. And Collins' draft constitution excluded the Treaty Oath.

Britain's response to all this was to exercise the full measure of that

sovereignty which the Treaty had allowed it to retain.

And so the Treaty Oath was included in the document. Moreover the Treaty its very self, guaranteeing British sovereignty over the Irish (Free?) State, was scheduled to the Constitution, as the primary source of the legislative, executive, and judicial authority of Ireland. The Treaty that was stapled to the draft constitution was explicitly declared to take precedence over the document it was stapled to. In any dispute between the provisions of the Constitution and those of the Treaty, the Treaty ruled. Britain ruled.

It has to be remembered that the 'Treaty' was not between the British government and the Dáil Government of the Irish people in arms. The negotiations had effectively been that, because the negotiators on the Irish side were careful to remember who and what they represented, but not the document which emerged, under threat of "*terrible and immediate war*", from those negotiations. The Treaty was between the British Government and its creature, the Southern Irish Parliament as established by Britain's 1920 Government of Ireland Act. Though Dáil Éireann voted to ratify the 'Treaty', Dáil Éireann was never a party to the Treaty. And its ratification of the 'Treaty' was a self denying ordinance of suicidal proportions.

#### BREAKING THE PACT

Collins' Constitution was amended to accord with the will of the primary source of the legislative, executive, and judicial authority of Ireland. This was accomplished in a series of meetings held in London during May and early June 1922. The shape of the Constitution, its path to something other than freedom, was clear early on but Collins dragged the process out until 15th. June 1922. His pledge to have the 'Treaty' published before the election was then met by publishing it in time to appear in the press on the morning of the election (June 16th.). On June 14th., speaking in Cork, Collins repudiated his electoral pact with de Valera. This was eight days after both of them had issued a joint appeal in support of the Pact, though Collins then knew beyond any doubt that his Constitution had been transformed into a British charter. *The Path To Freedom*, it seems, was a somewhat rocky road. Rockier than Piaras Beaslai or whoever cobbled Collins' book together was prepared to recognise.

#### FREEDOM TO DREAM?

Not that *The Path To Freedom* was at all strong on recognising much in the way of reality. This is from the first chapter:—

"Under the Treaty Ireland is about to become a fully constituted nation.

"The whole of Ireland, as one nation, is to compose the Irish Free State, whose parliament will have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of Ireland, with an executive responsible to that parliament. This is the whole basis of the Treaty. It is the bedrock from which our status springs, and any later Act of the British Parliament derives its force from the Treaty only. We have got the present position by virtue of the Treaty, and any forthcoming Act of the British Legislature will, likewise, be by virtue of the Treaty. It is not the definition of any status which would secure to us that status, but our power to make secure, and to increase what we have gained; yet, obtaining by the Treaty the constitutional status of Canada, and that status being one of freedom and equality, we are free to take advantage of that status, and we shall set up our Constitution on independent Irish lines.

"No conditions mentioned afterwards in the Treaty can affect or detract from the powers which the mention of that status in the Treaty gives us, especially when it has been proved, has been made good, by the withdrawal out of Ireland of English authority of every kind. In fact England has renounced all right to govern Ireland, and the withdrawal of her forces is the proof of this. With the evacuation secured by the Treaty has come the end of British rule in Ireland. No foreigner will be able to intervene between our Government and our people. Not a single British soldier, nor a single British official, will ever step again upon our shores, except as guests of a free people."

So the freedom of which he spoke was the freedom to dream? Dreams that could have been dreamed as easily in 1906 or 1926 as in 1922. Or perhaps, as the book was published posthumously, it was a case of being free in the sweet by and by?

The "*freedom to win freedom*" was something that Collins for six months imagined he had. But really he hadn't the freedom to get the text of his draft constitution past the British censors. For six months in an illusion of freedom Collins hurtled from pillar to post, living his life as freely as any man in a pinball machine possibly could. And really his freedom extended no further than the adaptation to his pugnacious temperament of a self-denying ordinance of suicidal proportions.

#### PACT WITH CRAIG

From pillar to post he ran, from pact to pact, from Craig to de Valera.

Collins met Craig on three occasions in 1922: January 24th., February 2nd.,

and March 30th. According to Patrick Buckland (*A History Of Northern Ireland*, p43, using a quotation for which he gives his own biography of Craig as the source): Craig said of the first meeting in London that Collins "*made it clear that he wanted a real peace and that he had so many troubles in Southern Ireland, that he was prepared to establish cordial relations with Northern Ireland, and to abandon all attempts to coercion, but hoping to coax her into a union later*". Which is probably accurate, given that the two agreed to scrap the Boundary Commission (which Collins, whatever he may have known or believed to the contrary, always assured Northern Nationalists was going to bring Fermanagh and Tyrone at least into the Free State) in favour of direct negotiation between the two governments.

At the second meeting, just over a week later in Dublin, Collins told Craig what he had been telling Northern Nationalists about Tyrone and Fermanagh and Craig at once stopped talking and went home. The Boundary Commission was back in business (the business of hanging about waiting to be set up).

The murder of members of the MacMahon family by Specials and regular police officers operating under Detective Inspector Nixon out of Brown Street Barracks (on March 24th., 1922) led to a third meeting on March 27th. This was convened by the British Government and was held in the Colonial Office in London between Craig, Churchill, Griffith and Collins. It resulted in a wonderful document which began "*PEACE IS TODAY DECLARED*".

And so it was. Declared. Peace was. In much the same way that Ireland under the Treaty became a fully constituted nation.

These anyway are the terms of the Peace Pact as given by Buckland:—

"The pact provided for the enrolment, with the help of a new committee, of a proportion of Catholics in the Northern police forces; the compulsory wearing of uniforms by and the numbering of all policemen in the North; the proper control of arms and ammunition; a specially constituted court for trial without jury; and a joint committee of Catholics and Protestants to investigate complaints of intimidation and outrage. IRA activities in Northern Ireland were to cease, for Collins boasted absolute control over the IRA. Political prisoners were to be released by agreement, and expelled persons re-admitted to their homes and jobs. The British government was to allow the Northern Ministry of Labour £500,000 for relief works, one-third for the benefit of Catholics, two-thirds for Protestants." (op cit p.44)

CRAIG ARRESTS COLLINS' MEN  
Some notion of the pact's effectiveness

can be gauged from the fate of its Catholic Advisory Committee. This was set up under the pact with Catholics nominated by the Provisional Government. Those Catholic members of the Peace Pact's Catholic Advisory Committee were then arrested by the Northern Government, or their homes were shot up by that Government's Special Constabulary, or both.

So, really, another dead letter day for peace in Ireland.

Anyway, getting back to reality, or at least a more reasonable facsimile thereof, on 30th. January 1922, six days into the first phase of the Craig-Collins pacts, Eoin O'Duffy, chief of staff of the new national army, wrote to Collins (head of the Provisional Government in which Richard Mulcahy was Minister of Defence; he hadn't yet taken the title Commander in Chief, but he was just that):—

"I have information from many sources this morning that there is grave consternation in the counties of Monaghan, Cavan, Fermanagh and Tyrone over the continued detention by the A-Specials of Commandant Hogan, and the Officers of the 5th Northern Division, and they demand authority from me to take immediate action to bring public opinion to bear on the situation...

"You understand that I have arranged for the kidnapping of one hundred prominent Orangemen in Counties Fermanagh and Tyrone. This was to take place last Tuesday, the 24th inst., but on account of the agreement arrived at between Sir James Craig and yourself I postponed action until tomorrow, Tuesday, 31st inst. and failing to hear from you to the contrary the kidnapping will commence at 7 o'clock tomorrow evening...

"The North and South Monaghan Comhairle Ceanntair jointly demand that the Boycott be not lifted in Co. Monaghan until the men that did so much to secure the present measure of freedom be released from the custody of the pogromists. I am anxious to reply to my Monaghan friends tonight.

"I should add that there are 54 affiliated Clubs in Co. Monaghan and each of them are sending two delegates to the Ard Fheis. This means 108 votes fore [sic] Monaghan for the Treaty..." (quoted in Coogan, *Michael Collins*, p344; the Ard Fheis is the one held on 22nd February 1922, which, although it had, as Collins admitted, a strong anti-Treaty majority in attendance, did not actually vote on the Treaty because of yet another pact, between Collins, Griffith and de Valera, which postponed scheduled elections for at least three months so that both Treaty and Constitution could be put to the electorate in good time, and we've seen how that worked out).

Coogan comments very reasonably that:

"...the letter from the Chief of Staff speaks volumes for the attitudes amongst his own supporters with which Collins had to deal. O'Duffy was telling him in plain language that if he needed those hundred Monaghan votes to help him uphold the Treaty and, *ipso facto*, law and order in the South, then, in the North, illegality and disorder would have to be countenanced and the one hundred Orangemen would have to be kidnapped" (ibid, p.344).

But then, whatever about the South, the North in this period had surely reverted to a state of nature. And what have law and order to do with a state of nature? Pray tell.

SINN FEIN NORTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Forty-two people were kidnapped (detained at the Big Fella's pleasure?) in the ensuing raid which Sir James regarded as a "*deliberate and organised attack on Ulster*". Which it certainly was. More was to follow.

On March 3rd., Richard Mulcahy, Minister of Defence in the Provisional Government wrote to Collins:

"Aiken was tremendously relieved yesterday at the Ulster hitch. Previously in the day he came to speak to me about the Ulster position generally and the following are the points which he stressed very earnestly and asked me to stress with you:

"A better consultative body regarding Ulster than whatever one at present exists is absolutely necessary for the Provisional Government...this body is absolutely essential to preserve a link between a very strong body of Ulster Sinn Féiners and the Provisional Government.

"In your future dealings with Ulster you should not recognise Joe Devlin or his clique...there can be no vigorous or harmonious policy on our part inside Ulster if his people occupy any position in our circle" (quoted in Coogan, op cit, pp342-343).

(Frank Aiken from South Armagh was at that time O/C of the 4th Northern Division of the IRA. Later he was Chief of Staff of the post-war anti-Treaty IRA and then a Minister in successive Fianna Fail Governments. The consultative body already in existence was a very anti-treatyite *Sinn Féin Advisory Committee* which had been set up following Sinn Féin's February 1922 Ard Fheis by a group of northern Sinn Féiners led by the great Eamon Donnelly. Its work was very quickly undermined on behalf of the Provisional Government by Kevin O'Shiel. It has to be said of O'Shiel, who was also at the sharp end of Dublin's under-resourced Boundary Commission staff that, through his work with the Sinn Féin Courts and Police, he was a major force in the constructive activity that made a popular success of the wartime Dáil.)

On March 10th. then General O'Duffy sent Collins an official memo announcing that a *Military Council for the North* had been established with Frank Aiken in command. Aiken's deputy was Seán MacEoin from Co. Longford (the fierce blacksmith of Ballinalee, for whose release from prison Collins had threatened to scupper the Truce; he became Chief of Staff of the Free State Army in 1928 and later twice stood unsuccessfully for the Presidency). This seems to have been the body which handled the smuggling of arms into the North (which were supplied by Liam Lynch's Southern Division in exchange for British arms handed over to the Free State forces. According to Coogan, quoting an affidavit from the 2nd Northern's Thomas Kelly, one of the best of the IRA smugglers was Charles J. Haughey's father, Seán).

At some point in April 1922 Seán MacEoin was promoted to Major-General in the National Army and appointed GOC of Western Command. Frank Aiken did not declare himself and the 4th Northern division of the IRA against the Treaty until near the end of July. So, if the Military Council for the North continued through April, Frank Aiken may have had a Free State Major-General as his deputy. Interesting times.

More interesting than Calton Younger is able or prepared to admit in his *Ireland's Civil War* where he quotes outrageously disingenuous statements from McEoin, such as this among others:

"The new agreement provided for the cessation of I.R.A activities in the Six Counties and for the reorganisation of the Belfast police. In mixed districts half the police were to be Roman Catholic— "How this was to be sorted out, I don't know", says McEoin. "It is surprising that Craig agreed but he did and it certainly showed the extent of the goodwill which was between North and South and that Craig recognised that partition shouldn't be permanent"... (p262).

## NORTH-EAST ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The "*better consultative body*" which Frank Aiken had suggested, set up by Collins as the *North-East Advisory Committee*, held the first of only two meetings on 11th. April 1922. It was chaired by Collins and consisted of most of his cabinet (Griffith, Mulcahy, Fitzgerald, McGrath, and O'Higgins, 14 representatives of the Provisional Government in all) on the one side and 3 Bishops, some priests, some Shinnners and some IRA men on the other. Bishop MacRory, Archdeacon Tierney, Dr. Russell McNabb, Cahir Healy (soon to go cruising for a few years, interned on the prison hulk, the *Argenta*) and Seamus Woods (O/C of the 3rd. Northern Division)

Letters To Editor**More On Enigma****Robert Burrage:**

Corrections re Northern Star / Irish Political Review article Feb 2006 page 3 on Enigma titled "The Theorem That Won World War 2" [by Pat Muldowney]:

The article states that Enigma was made known to the British public "a few years ago". I can recall it being mentioned in a British television series in the late 1970s called something like 'The Secret War'. It was also mentioned in F. W. Winterbotham's 1974 book "The Ultra Secret".

One reason that it was not mentioned before then was because the technology was sold by the UK to some of its former colonies without the UK revealing that they had been able to crack the machine and hence they would be able to decrypt the messages of their own customers. Another reason was to deny the Soviets as much information as possible as regards UK decryption abilities.

The Poles did indeed break the earlier commercial and military versions of the German Enigma, obtaining both machines and code books in the pre-war period. This Polish achievement and the prior history of encryption, including under Islam, is described in Simon Singh's excellent 'The Code Book' [[http://www.simonsingh.com/The\\_Code\\_Book.html](http://www.simonsingh.com/The_Code_Book.html)]. Polish cryptographers were, by 1938, reading some 75% of German Enigma Radio transmissions.

However, in 1938 the Germans added two additional wheels to Enigma and Polish Intelligence could no longer decrypt the messages on mass. In July 1939 the Polish results so far were shared with the French and British, but they did not provide a working and fast decryption system that could decrypt messages in bulk.

Alan Turing at UK Bletchley Park came up with the idea that traffic analysis could be used to guess some parts of messages. A machine could then be used to test what possible settings of the wheels would have produced intercepted character sequences. Turing also showed ways of precluding a vast number of possible wheel combinations and starting positions.

"The Code Book" also details British encryption successes post-World War Two. These included public-key cryptography, invented by UK GCHQ's James H. Ellis, which the UK kept secret. Public-key cryptography only became known when it was reinvented later in the US.

Poland was no more able to defeat German Enigma than it was able to defeat German infantry or tanks.

**Madawc Williams:**

*Britannica* (DVD 2002) does credit the Poles: "In the early 1930s Polish cryptographers first broke the code of Germany's cipher machine Enigma. They were led by mathematician Marian Rejewski and assisted by material provided them by agents of French intelligence."

Other stuff definitely does mislead.

More information can also be found on: [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rejewski>]

**Pat Muldowney comments:**

Re Robert Burrage's letter, I remember the TV programme he mentions. It was part of the cover-up which gave all the credit to Turing & Co., and part of the overall WW2 propaganda giving the moral and military credit to Britain. German infantry and tanks were completely successful against the British forces in Europe, and were eventually stopped by the Soviet Union. Despite the propaganda the Rejewski story came out a few years ago, and, rather lamely, some of the due credit has been attributed to him since then. I think the assessment stands: that Rejewski's pioneering work saved about 2 years in breaking the codes.

were some of the better known of these.

Coogan (*Michael Collins*, pp. 356-358) and Enda Staunton (*The Nationalists of Northern Ireland*, pp. 57-60, 64-65, 67, 78) give similar accounts of the meeting. Staunton concentrates more on the Northern aspects of and input into the meeting, on it as a turning point in the history of Northern nationalism. Coogan

is rather less detailed and describes the meeting more from Collins' point of view and as a turning point in the history of Southern nationalism. Both ways of going at the material are legitimate and interesting. So, Staunton first:

"At the first and penultimate meeting of the Provisional Government's North-East Ulster Advisory Committee, Belfast delegates stressed the total separateness

of the Sinn Féin and IRA organisations in the city and how the former organisation, since the Truce, had expanded to 12 clubs with over 1,000 members, many of them people “not in the firing line’ during the War of Independence but now ‘prepared to die in the last ditch”.

“...The conference highlighted the inefficiency of the Pact from the Catholics point of view—no inquiry had been held onto [sic] the Brown Street murder gang, raiding by the Specials had not stopped and release of prisoners had not taken place. The responses to this varied from those—in the minority—willing to break the Pact outright, and those, such as Dr McRory [sic], prepared to push the demand for an inquiry ‘to breaking point’ but worried of the consequences for Belfast Catholics if they were seen to break it. In the attitudes expressed, both to this question and the related one of Catholic recruitment to the Specials, it revealed the east-west of the Bann divide which was to become of greater importance in the years that followed. As one delegate commented, “The Pact is all about Belfast”. While delegates from there saw no difficulty in getting their followers to join the constabulary if certain conditions were met, Gillespie from Cookstown and Healy from Fermanagh were adamant that only the Hibernians in their area would accept such an offer.

“An exchange involving a Derry delegate, the prominent Sinn Féiner Patrick Hegarty, encapsulated the difference:

“The IRA split last week”, he said, “and there was dread the pogrom would start once more, but inside one hour the IRA and the Hibernians and the people of Derry that are deadly opposed to each other united again. At the last pogrom in Derry half a dozen houses was all that was burned of Protestant property and that was one of the principal reasons why the city remained quiet. The Freemason Gang has more to lose.”

“It was quickly pointed out by Bishop McRory [sic] and a Belfast priest that the analogy was invalid. Derry enjoyed easy access to the Free State and had a Catholic majority. “One might as well be talking about London”, McRory [sic] commented. The question was raised of how the Roman Catholic population would approach the issues of “education” and “local government” within the new constraints imposed by the Treaty. McRory [sic] had been worried about the position of St Mary’s Training College. It had been largely on his urging that the boycott affecting up to one-third of Catholic secondary schools had been introduced in February. His message now was simple. “If there is any disposition not to recognise the Belfast government in this matter or in any other matter, I am quite prepared to stand out and let our people suffer on. For I understand”, he added ominously, “there is every likelihood of their being recognised in other matters”. Events

behind the scenes proved him right. Lord Londonderry had already approached the Provisional Government for an accommodation on the education question. In the light of such developments Archdeacon Tierney of Enniskillen told the delegates he “would close with the northern authorities at once” if schools under the Catholic managers got the right to adopt the programme and timetables of southern Ireland.

“Further confirmation of McRory’s [sic] point was provided at the meeting itself in the rejectionist remarks and cold shouldering attitude of the southern ministers. For instance, on the issue of local government there was, it was stated, a limit to the extent to which Dublin would subsidise the dissident northern Councils. Despite the encouragement given to public bodies in the north to declare allegiance to Dáil Éireann, no “regular policy” had been inaugurated to deal with “local government up there”, as Cosgrave admitted. Neither “the purse of Dáil Éireann” nor that of the Provisional Government was “a bottomless one” in the changed situation, he told them. Healy voiced his feeling of grievance at this situation. “They were put out of existence for recognising An Dáil and today we hear that the Dáil recommends a policy of surrender. It may be a good policy but it is not a palatable policy”...

“Despite all its reservations and objections, Dublin typically balked at the idea of recommending that the dissolved councils be reinstated. That entrenched upon the “policy of abject surrender” deprecated by Cosgrave. Instead it was to be “left to the chairman of each body” to decide. If they had a nationalist majority they would get back under the terms of the pact, O’Higgins assured them, otherwise the strategy of the Boundary Commission would be better served by leaving the Commissioner appointed by Belfast in place” (Staunton, pp57-60).

“Bound up with any consideration of the position of Catholics in Belfast was the position of the IRA there. At the meeting of the Ulster Advisory Committee in Dublin in April 1922, Woods had described the Pact as agreeable to the majority of the Catholic population. Whereas during three years of war the IRA had “put up little fight as the civil population backed the enemy” the situation had changed since the Truce. As Dr Russell McNabb told it they now had the “support of the whole people...of every Catholic in Belfast and were getting along famously when the Pact came”. Commenting on the incendiary campaign against unionists’ property he rhapsodised about beautiful fires in Belfast each night, asserting that the burning campaign, if coupled with some arms, would bring unionists to heel. “If they thought we were going to resume it again would be a deterrent to them” he concluded. Replying to this Collins acknowledged that Dublin had “for many good months” done as much as possible

to get property destroyed, adding that “unionists thought a great deal more of property than of human life”. But more sober counsels prevailed. Mulcahy, the Minister of Defence, gave his opinion that the cost of paying for such destruction would eventually fall on an Irish government rather than a British one. Other voices, principally that of Bishop McRory [sic], also deprecated the idea. He outlined the starkness of the situation as he saw it: his flock was more dispirited, discouraged and cowed than ever before, the whole Stanhope Street district was deserted, “our poor people are huddled in the Falls area and sleep on the floor”. Large parts of Belfast, he told them, could not be entered by the IRA for the purpose of incendiary attacks. And even that policy where possible would be counterproductive. “I can assure you that if you burn houses you will intensify the slaughter and the men who do the burning will have to run away and hide”, he told them, warning that it was impossible to do anything, even incendiarism, “which will not bring down on you a terrible punishment.” Woods’ testimony reinforced this. The Falls, he stated, was the only area in which a fight was possible, everywhere else in the city the nationalist people were “striving for existence”. Volunteers faced the prospect of “dying for nothing” or getting up to 15 years imprisonment with little prospect of release. “Sooner or later”, he predicted, “we will have to clear out of Belfast” (ibid pp64-65).

And now, Tim Pat Coogan:

“It was open knowledge at the Committee that Nixon and company had refused to turn up for the identification parade at Brown St Barracks after Aron St. Collins proposed holding their own inquiry but Bishop MacRory told him that he would need a “regiment of soldiers” to protect such an inquiry if it were held in Belfast. With characteristic truculence Collins replied, “We could hold it all right!” He then read out his correspondence with Craig and said that he believed there would be no inquiry and that Craig would attempt to gloss over the pogrom and attempt to represent the situation as being a direct consequence of a Catholic invasion along the border. Griffith explained the dilemma of the Provisional Government:

“We’re sitting here as political cockshots for our opponents and we are trying to defend the people of the North-East and our political opponents come along and call us traitors. We’re quite prepared for that...and I am quite prepared to advocate the breaking with Craig and take all the consequences. I want to know your views.”

“Views rather than policy were what he got. Bishop MacRory pointed out how helpless the Catholics were, hounded out of jobs and penned into their ghettos with the Specials rampant, and suggested that if the state and the new police force were recognised to the extent of Catholics taking up the places

allotted to them it would at least put arms in some 1,000 Catholic hands. Without the Treaty and the Agreement Catholics were totally defenceless and dependant on relief. At least under the Agreement the one-third of the £500,000 was available. Fears were expressed on all sides as to the debilitating effect of a split in the South over the Treaty in relation to the forces available for Northern Ireland. No one contradicted Mulcahy when he observed "I take it that under the terms of the Treaty we recognise that Parliament in order to destroy it...to carry out all its terms will ultimately unify the country and destroy the Northern Parliament."...

"Collins read out correspondence from Lord Londonderry which made it clear that he had lied point-blank on the payments to teachers. He told him that as far as he was aware the Provisional Government was not responsible for the payments. The clerical representatives were not particularly enthusiastic about the payments policy. They were more concerned to have it understood that the schools would remain under Catholic church control. Archdeacon Tierney said firmly: "We have come here merely to attend to the National aspect of things...what I would suggest is that schools under Catholic managers would get the right to adopt the programme and timetable of Southern Ireland. If we get that I would close with them at once."

"O'Higgins raised the uncomfortable point that the destruction of loyalist-owned property which was occurring in some areas in the South as an unsanctioned collateral of the Belfast boycott was giving the Orangemen a justification for their behaviour. Dr Russell McNabb said, however, that the destruction of property made the other side "uncomfortable" and remarked wistfully that there had been "some beautiful fires in Belfast each night". Collins said frankly, "I know for a good many months we did as much as we could to get property destroyed. I know that if a good deal more property was destroyed...I know they think a great deal more of property than of human life. The whole thing again is what is proposed?" He did not get any clear answer. Nor was he able to give one to MacRory's fundamental query, "Can you protect us?"..." (Coogan, op. cit., pp356-357).

Both accounts of the inaugural meeting of the North-East Advisory Committee are of great value in ruling out of court a raft of naive and disingenuous accounts of Collins' final year and his relations with his colleagues of the Provisional Government.

#### SPECIAL PLEADING

So wave goodbye to this from Calton Younger in his biography of Arthur Griffith:

"Both Griffith and Collins were deeply concerned about the North. There was trouble on the border and the Craig-

Collins Pact [the one agreed on January 24th., JK] had pattered out. IRA forces moved to the North to protect the minority of Catholic-nationalists and Collins saw to it that they were armed, taking steps to ensure that the weapons could not be identified as British. As sectarian violence flared, Collins doubted Craig's ability to control the situation...Whilst refusing to give an inch on the working of the treaty, he became deeply involved with its opponents in attempting to ameliorate the plight of his co-religionists. The part he played he kept from Griffith, but information reaching the British cabinet made them wary.

"Collins was not trying to coerce the North, only to save Catholic lives, and he continued to seek a solution politically as well as militarily. IRA dissidents saw an opportunity to reunite the divided IRA by switching the emphasis from the Crown to partition, but in London, on 30 March, a second agreement was concluded between Craig and Lord Londonderry on the one hand and Griffith, Collins and Duggan on the other. The IRA's activities in the six counties were to cease and, in return, the Belfast police force was to be reorganised to include a proportion of Catholics in certain areas. But the religious feud continued and the lamentable Belfast Boycott was reimposed, not by the Dáil government but by the IRA, who were able to enforce it" (*Arthur Griffith*, published by Gill & Macmillan, 1981, page 140).

A later throwaway remark (on page 146) that British suspicions of Collins' involvement in IRA activity in the North were "*not without reason*" hardly rescues his account from charges of, at best, special pleading.

Also published by Gill & Macmillan is León Ó Broin's biography of Michael Collins which states by the way, in a paragraph about Collins' alleged involvement in the assassination of Sir Henry Wilson:

"[Collins] was involved, in collusion with both pro- and anti-Treaty sections of the IRA, in the whole cross-border campaign behind the backs of the Irish and British governments" (page 133).

But Collins was the Irish Government and not existentially capable of acting behind his own back—though as many as could of his Cabinet were no doubt playing deaf, dumb and blind, it was to matters that were unfolding in front of them. Matters which Mulcahy was up to his neck in. Matters about which Griffith, O'Higgins, Fitzgerald and McGrath engaged in conversations with the Northern IRA (and when General Seamus Woods had to retire from the field he was translated into a Free State as a Cumann na nGaedheal TD). A tangled tale no doubt.

So now then, as for Bishop MacRory's question to Collins and his Provisional Government: "*Can you protect us?*". No, they couldn't. But they weren't about to admit that while Collins was in the room. When Collins left the meeting early Griffith took the chair and all of a sudden succumbed to a degree of realism or, more accurately perhaps, despair, saying:

"These people are being murdered. We can always make reprisals, you can burn their property. That does not save the lives of the people. If you embark on a war policy, you can make things bad for Belfast but you certainly cannot make them better for our people...You can't hit them in Belfast without further exposing our people there to assassination... We have to look at it from one point or another—to save our people's lives or burn the property of our opponents" (quoted in Ronan Fanning, *Independent Ireland*, p31).

What was said in Collins' absence is of no consequence. Nonetheless Fanning's account of the North-East Advisory Committee meeting, from which that last quotation is taken, tries to present it as the occasion on which a "*war policy*" was ruled out. He then goes on to completely ignore the *Military Council of the North*, and the role of the Free State GHQ to claim, contrary to all evidence, that the border campaign was the work of anti-Treatyites. This is the paragraph in which he accomplishes that remarkable sleight of hand:

"Although their anguish and fury at the plight of northern Catholics led Collins and Mulcahy to continue supplying them with arms (albeit secretly and indirectly through the IRA) the process already described whereby they became locked ever more tightly into the treaty in the early summer of 1922 rendered enterprises jeopardising the treaty settlement increasingly foolhardy. It has been well said that 'the Republicans had nothing to lose by attacking the North, the Free Staters everything' and we have seen how the IRA forces in the Four Courts decided to attack the north in a last gamble to overthrow the treaty in the days before civil war began. Until then active non-cooperation remained Collins's order of the day" (ibid. p. 33, the quotation there is referenced to J. M. Curran, *The Birth Of The Irish Free State 1921-23*, p179, but there is no telling who actually made the remark, or on the basis of what evidence.).

It is a pass remarkable thing that Fanning, who has the mental agility and robust eyesight to see what isn't there, appears not to have seen what, in the case of the notorious McDowell letter, actually was there. But then again it's a combination of skills which may yet win him an OBE, so let's not be too quick to knock it.

Collins and his Provisional Government, the Great and the Good (Griffith



and O'Higgins) included, couldn't think coherently about the Border in such a way as to develop plans for dealing with it. They could only fantasise about all the wonderful ways in which it would suddenly disappear, in not so much a whiff of grapeshot as a puff of smoke. Collins was not just living in an illusion of freedom; there was a delusion of power as well. (Collins' book, whoever wrote or cobbled it together, should have been subtitled, 'How To Win Friends And Get Them Killed'.)

#### IRA & NATIONAL ARMY

Until the end of July 1922 all the Northern divisions of the IRA regarded the GHQ of the emerging Free State, National, Army as the one legitimate military authority in Ireland. They looked to it for guidance and support. They reported to it. In previous articles in this magazine I've quoted bits and pieces of Seamus Woods' report to GHQ of 20th. July 1922, detailing the position of the Belfast Brigade of the 3rd Northern Division. This is a much fuller version of the report (as given in Tim Pat Coogan, op. cit., pp380-382):

"Strength of Brigade - 800 men

Armament: 181 rifles and 11,600 rounds of ammunition. 308 service revolvers and autos, 7,400 rounds of ammunition. 5 Thompson guns and 1,220 rounds of ammunition.

Engineering material: 156 detonators  
12 stone war flour.  
20 lbs cheddar. [Home made explosives]  
12 lbs gelignite,  
20 ft time fuse.

Enemy strength in area:  
British military: 5,500  
RUC: 2,650  
Specials: 26,680  
Total 34,830

"For a period of three months previous to our resuming the offensive the enemy was running loose murdering and harassing our people, and as the Army was not very active the people were gradually losing the respect they had for the IRA. This respect had been won, not so much out of sympathy with our National aspirations, and our fight for National freedom, but more on account of the part the Army had played in defending the minority against organised attacks by uniformed and non-uniformed Crown forces.

"When, however, we commenced a campaign of destruction of enemy property which hit the authors and promoters of the pogrom, and was having the effect of stopping the murder campaign, the sympathy and support of the people was slowly coming back to us.

"As I have already reported to GHQ there was a small Executive [the anti-treaty Four Courts Executive, JK] following in Belfast and on the 31st May they attempted to shoot two Specials. Most of our officers...were attending a Brigade Meeting when this happened, and before

they could get back to their areas the Specials ran amok, and shot up practically every Catholic area in the City; the death toll for that day was twelve and upwards of 50 were wounded. This was the hardest blow the civil population had got, and it almost broke their morale. Notwithstanding that we kept up our campaign of burning, and in a short time the enemy realised that they would require to change their tactics. They set about establishing a series of block-houses throughout our areas, and selected their men especially with a view to fraternising with the Catholic population.

"This policy has met with great success as the people war-worn and long tired were glad of an opportunity of peace. Unfortunately however, the anti-Irish element of the population are taking advantage of the situation and are giving all available scraps of information to the enemy. Several of our dumps have been captured within the last few weeks, and in practically every case the raiding party went direct to the house.

"...many officers and men are forced to go on the run, necessarily in their own restricted areas. They find it difficult to get accommodation with the people now and in a particular area, seventeen of our best officers and men had to sleep in a refugee home where they were all captured.

"The enemy are continually raiding and arresting; the heavy sentences and particularly the 'floggings' making the civilians very loath to keep 'wanted men' or arms. The officers are feeling their position keenly. Recently a number of men were rounded up and detained in custody. The mother of one of the boys when bringing him food shouted out, in the presence of Crown forces, the name of the local o/c and made a tirade against him for misleading her boy into this movement.

"As I have mentioned before the economic position is very acute. To give a rough idea there are 171 married men with 405 dependants and 346 single men with 936 dependants. These figures are taken from cards returned by each company and where there were two brothers the number of dependants was divided. To relieve the situation it would require a grant of say £500 per week.

"The men are in a state of practical starvation and continually making applications for transfer to Dublin to join the 'Regular Army'...under the present circumstances it would be impossible to keep our Military Organisation alive and intact, as the morale of the men is going down day by day and the spirit of the people is practically dead."

That report was sent in to GHQ just a week or so before the campaign was called off, but the material circumstances were not so different when the campaign began. The Belfast Brigade then had 400 more men and not very much more in the way of arms and equipment. And Collins knew the position at the beginning as at the end of the campaign.

In April, at the North-East Advisory Committee meeting, Bishop MacRory told him: "*I can assure you that if you burn houses you will intensify the slaughter and the men who do the burning will have to run away and hide*". And the Belfast commander, O/C of the 3rd Northern Division, Seamus Woods told him at the same time: "*Sooner or later we will have to clear out of Belfast*". But Collins simply would not be told and went ahead with it.

#### THE ASSAULT

What Collins had decided to go ahead with, come what may, went ahead in the first instance in the 3rd Northern Division area on May 17th (the date given by Staunton, Coogan says it was May 18th). Not the best laid of plans, it went awry from the word go. The Belfast Brigade attacked Musgrave Street Barracks as planned on May 17th but the Down Brigade which was to have mounted simultaneous attacks was held up for two days. (It was in turmoil because its commander, Patrick Fox, and a strong minority of the rank and file had switched allegiance to the Four Courts Executive.)

According to Enda Staunton:

"The delay in the case of the No. 3 Brigade in Down meant this area was soon flooded with Special Constabulary from Newry. As Newry lay within the 4th Northern Divisional area, Woods sent his second in command to see the Chief of Staff [of the Northern Military Council, JK], Frank Aiken, who promised to commence operations. As McCorley later recalled, the 4th Northern failed to go off while the 2nd Northern, comprising the Mid-Ulster area, went off too soon. Woods kept the men in Antrim and Down 'under arms' in the hope of reinforcements. When these failed to materialise he gave the order to disband. With the introduction of the most sweeping provision of the Special Powers Act on 20 May, internment, and over 400 IRA suspects lifted, the movement was firmly on the defensive. After that it was downhill all the way for his Division, the 3rd Northern. Brigades Nos 2 and 3 were virtually destroyed within five weeks by demoralisation. No 1, Belfast itself, remained active through May and June, the campaign of incendiaryism discussed by the Ulster Advisory Committee and by the cabinet continuing until the government called it off in July. In June alone 85 burnings were carried out. But defeat was on the way for the IRA in the city. Having braved the ferocity of the northern State, the attitude of its own people was to be the rock on which it finally perished" (*The Nationalists Of Northern Ireland, 1918-1973, pp66-67*).

So, assuming that the point of it all was not to fulfil some secret deal with the British by destroying the Northern IRA, what could have been the point of the campaign which destroyed the Northern IRA?



It couldn't have been military. More precisely it couldn't have been to provide a pretext for a full scale invasion of the six counties by a united (pro- and anti-Treaty) National army. Aside from the tragicomedies played out at Pettigo and Belleek in May and June 1922 the Free State Army stood aside from the actual fighting. I'm not aware of any plans for united action over and above the gun running. Collins was well aware that taking on the Crown forces in the North (as of May 10th., 9,000 British soldiers, 48,00 specials and a couple of thousand RUC, all of them extremely well armed) would have been suicidal. (But doesn't it do Hibernian hearts good to think of the Specials, all of the UVF that had survived the Somme, together with their relatives and neighbours, gathered to fight with their fellow Irishmen again, McAleese should come up and lay a wreath somewhere?) Somehow it didn't matter that it was even more suicidal for the rag, tag and bobtail Northern IRA.

So, was the Northern IRA expendable to some broader military purpose, in pursuit of some wider strategic aim? If anyone knows of any such will they please let me know. For myself I've seen nothing that suggests anything of the sort.

Or have it Calton Younger's way: *"Collins was not trying to coerce the North, only to save Catholic lives"*. Which is certainly what Woods and McCorley and their men thought they were doing. And who in their position could have thought differently? But Collins, who was neither enmeshed in the bitter logic and brutal logistics of an ongoing sectarian struggle nor a complete fool, must have been aware of the arithmetic of deterrence and provocation. Where the balance of forces are roughly equal, or not too acutely unequal, burnings and assassinations can have a deterrent effect. In the North in 1922, in Belfast particularly, where the balance of forces was absurdly askew, IRA actions were provocations pure and simple. If anything, *"Collins was not trying to coerce the North, only to get Catholics killed"*.

Before going into these matters in greater detail, I had thought that Collins' actions with regard to the North in 1922 stemmed from a considered National view of the looming prospect of entrenched partitionist politics. I thought he had armed the Northern IRA and included it under his GHQ in order to make it clear to Northern nationalists that the Treaty did not mean they had been abandoned by the emerging Free State. And I thought, on the basis of the correspondence between himself and de Valera regarding the 1921 elections to the Northern Parliament which I have quoted on a number of occasions in this magazine, that he intended a form of

party organisation that would include the North and bring Northern representatives into the third and future Dáils. And this is what brings us, as always by a commodius vicus of recirculation, back to the Collins - de Valera Pact.

#### COLLINS/DE VALERA PACT

This is the text of the Pact which was ratified by the 2nd Dáil on May 20th., 1922:

*"We are agreed:—*

*"(1) That a National Coalition Panel for this Third Dáil, representing both Parties in the Dáil, and in the Sinn Féin Organisation, be sent forward on the ground that the national position requires the entrusting of the Government of the country into the joint hands of those who have been the strength of the national situation during the last few years, without prejudice to their present respective positions.*

*"(2) That this Coalition Panel be sent forward as from the Sinn Féin Organisation, the number for each Party being their present strength in the Dáil.*

*"(3) That the Candidates be nominated through each of the existing Party Executives.*

*"(4) That every and any interest is free to go up and contest the election equally with the National Sinn Féin Panel.*

*"(5) That constituencies where an election is not held shall continue to be represented by their present Deputies.*

*"(6) That after the election the Executive shall consist of the President, elected as formerly, the Minister of Defence, representing the Army, and nine other Ministers, five from the majority Party and four from the minority, each Party to choose its own nominees. The allocation will be in the hands of the President.*

*"(7) That in the event of the Coalition Government finding it necessary to dissolve, a General Election will be held as soon as possible on Adult Suffrage.*

*"Signed, Eamon de Valera,  
Micheál O Coileáin."*

The most interesting clause, in the precise context of Collins' motivations in his dealings with the Northern IRA, is the fifth, which states *"That constituencies where an election is not held shall continue to be represented by their present Deputies"*. The constituencies referred to there are the Northern ones which were represented in the 2nd Dáil when it voted unanimously to ratify the Pact but which were not being contested in the elections to the 3rd Dáil. The vote on the Pact was taken as being included in a motion

proposed by Arthur Griffith declaring an election in each of the Southern constituencies, which simply underlines the significance of Clause 5.

#### EXCLUDING THE NORTH

I have to confess that the significance of Clause 5 escaped me until I read in Eamon Phoenix's *Northern Nationalism* that:

*"...Hugh Kennedy, the Provisional Government's Law Officer, had warned Collins that the proposals for a coalition ministry and the inclusion of Northern MPs in the future Free State assembly were incompatible with the Treaty"* (op.cit. p224; he references *'Kennedy to Collins. 20 May 1922, RMP P7A/145'*, which suggests that Collins had the memo in his pocket during the Dáil proceedings).

There is also this in Dorothy Macardle's *The Irish Republic* (Corgi Edition, 1968, p649):

*"Partition was resisted on Clause 5 of the Pact which provided for the representation of constituencies in the Six-County area 'by their present representatives'."*

But I'd missed that way back when.

(My most recent hop, skip and a jump through the *ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT AS SIGNED on December 6th, 1921*, aka The Treaty, leads me not unhappily to the conclusion that Kennedy's judgement on the inclusion of Northern MPs was at least open to debate. Only one clause of the Treaty seems to be relevant, Clause 11., which states, *"no election shall be held for the return of members to serve in the Parliament of the Irish Free State for constituencies in Northern Ireland"*, but the Pact was specifically ruling out an election for those constituencies. Clause 17. might seem relevant, but only refers to the period before the election in June 1922 and regarding which I regret that Collins did not take steps, when Seán MacEntee gave him the opportunity (see below) to take steps, to make it clear to the world that he was no longer representing Armagh in the 2nd Dáil—which he had anyway recognised in signing the Treaty was an illusory body. Either an illusion or illegal, pretty much like the Freedom he imagined he was on the path to and the power he thought he had to affect developments in the North.)

#### COMMITTEE OF TEN

On May 3rd 1922, the Dáil set up a *Committee of Ten* (five each from the pro- and anti-Treaty sides of the question) to, in Miss McSwiney's words, *"explore every possible avenue to a settlement, with a view to averting civil war"*. The five appointed on the pro-Treaty side were

Seán Hales, P.O Maille, Seumas O Duibhir, Joseph McGuinness, and Seán McKeon. The five appointed on the anti-Treaty side were Mrs. Clarke, P.J. Rutledge, Liam Mellows, Seán Moylan, and Harry Boland. Mrs Kathleen Clarke chaired the Committee.

After a lot of toing and froing and hardly unexpected delay the Committee produced two reports, one for each side, on May 11th. The two reports could not be reconciled and so Miss McSwiney had the Committee sent back to do better. The Secretary to the Committee, Seumas O Duibhir, reported back to the Dáil on May 17th that the Committee still hadn't agreed and given its 5 by 5 composition never would. Dorothy McArdle summarises the whole drawn out business admirably in *The Irish Republic*:

"The suggestion of an agreed election and a Coalition Ministry of the Dáil had seemed acceptable to both sides. The ground of disagreement was the insistence of the pro-Treaty group that acceptance of the Treaty should be presumed. The difficulty resolved itself into a question of the proportion of candidates to be allocated to the respective parties. The Treaty Party demanded an increased representation but the Republicans would not agree, seeing that to increase that majority would imply acceptance of the Treaty" (ibid. pp645-646).

The reports of May 17th resulted in a Dáil debate (continuing over May 18th. and 19th.), in the course of which the matter of Northern representation in the as yet unelected 3rd Dáil was raised by Seán MacEntee:

"...we have heard a great deal in the course of this debate about standing between the people and the expression of its will. The Minister for Local Government said that this right of the people to express its will transcends all others. If so, why is it that those who were about to decree that an election be held in June specifically take steps to prevent the people of the six counties in the north declaring their will upon this Treaty? If the Minister for Local Government were sincere, if the Deputy for Tyrone, Mr. Seán Milroy, and if the President of this Assembly and the head of the Provisional Government, the Deputy for Armagh in this Assembly, were sincere in declaring that they wanted the whole will of the Irish people to be expressed in this matter, they would take steps to see that at least their own constituents who returned them as Republicans would have an opportunity of giving their allegiance again to the Republic which they helped to establish and which they helped to maintain and for which beyond all other people in Ireland they suffered the most..."

"...Why do we hold so tenaciously to that clause of our memorandum that stipulates that the strength of the parties

on the National Panel, as I would like to term it, shall be in proportion to their strength in the Dáil? Because that fact, Sir, would have been the most significant indication that so far as could be, the national unity, the political unity and the geographical unity of Ireland had been re-established and was again asserted as it existed before the Treaty was signed. That was the reason why we stood so tenaciously for that one fact and that is the reason why we are willing to break upon it because if we were to accept that clause then we would be accepting partition; we would be accepting the Treaty and common citizenship in the British Empire. Those are the things, under no circumstances and no matter what may be the cost of refusal, we shall never accept" (17th. May 1922).

The Deputy for Armagh, Michael Collins, who had been called first to cast his vote on the Treaty in precisely his capacity of Deputy for Armagh did not rise to answer that point. Nor did anyone else on the pro-Treaty side of the question rise to answer. The matter of Northern representation, of the North's practically silent, almost unnoticed slide out of the last Dáil in which it was represented, lay dormant then until towards the end of the debate on May 19th., when Harry Boland returned to it, saying:

"This Dáil was the first Dáil so decreed by the Irish people. We took advantage of the British electoral machinery to constitute the Parliament of the Republic. I was at that time Honorary Secretary to Sinn Féin, when most of the leaders were in prison, and I remember well the question being debated as to whether we should contest the elections in every constituency in Ireland, or not. It was pointed out then that we recognised Ireland as a unit and every constituency in Ireland should be contested. Every constituency in Ireland was contested and in so far as we could make it then and in so far as the Dáil could hold it since, a united Ireland is represented here. So long as the Deputy for Fermanagh sits in this House, and the Deputies for Armagh, Down, and Tyrone sit in this House, [so] long do we preserve, in so far as we can, the unity of Ireland. I am not approaching this question as if there was not an Ulster difficulty. The reason I am against this Treaty is that if it be carried out in the letter and the spirit, this Treaty will place a third obstacle in the road [sic] of those who will continue to fight for the Republic. We have two obstacles at present to our complete independence, one in Ulster and one in Britain. You men who signed the Treaty, if you do not draft a Constitution that will give the Republican ideal in Parliament will be guilty of a crime against the Irish nation, and you will commit this country to endless wars and revolution. I know thoroughly well there is an Ulster difficulty. I do not expect the President or Cabinet can get over that difficulty. But I ask, in so far as this Assembly of the Republic is concerned, that any

decree emanating from it as such, should be a decree that an election be held throughout Ireland."

In those contributions to the debate Boland and MacEntee were making the vital and fundamental point that the way in which Collins and the Provisional Government were going about implementing the Treaty was such as to unnecessarily entrench the politics of partition. Though the Treaty had been forced upon them with the threat of "*immediate and terrible war*", they were acting as though they nonetheless felt obliged to draw out and concretise its every worst implication. A minimalist approach to the implementation of the Treaty (by Griffith and Collins) would have had them balk at shattering the integrity of the body politic which, in 1918 and 1921, legitimised them (to among other things negotiate the Treaty). That should have been a firm principle to be surrendered if and when necessary under irresistible British pressure. Because they weren't baulking, because they weren't waiting to be put under pressure. Griffith and Collins were incapable of answering Boland and MacEntee; except, when it came to the bit, with British artillery and Churchill's hearty congratulations.

At the end of the debate on the Committee of Ten's Reports on May 19th Collins and de Valera were charged to build on the substantial common ground of the Reports and the debate on them (a common panel of Sinn Féin candidates leading to a joint cabinet). They did so and came back to the Dáil on the following day with the Pact.

John Bowman, in his *De Valera and the Ulster Question 1917-1973* (page 73 and note 2), may have lost the narrative thread of the proceedings outlined above, or may just be compressing things a little clumsily. Either way he makes an interesting point:

"Attempts by the pro- and anti-Treaty factions to avoid an irrevocable split continued into May. A Committee of Ten drawn from each side held a series of meetings; among the points of disagreement—Collins believed it was a deliberate ploy to wreck the Treaty—was de Valera's insistence that members for northern constituencies should be free to take their seats in the Dáil" (note 2 at this point references "Committee of Ten, 19 May 1922, Mulcahy papers, P7/A/145").

The Committee of Ten held no meetings after their final reports were presented to the Dáil on May 17th., and Collins and de Valera were not members of the Committee of Ten, so I suppose the document Bowman refers to must relate in some way to the discussions over the 19th. and 20th. which led to the final form of the Collins/de Valera Pact. Until I can

get down to Dublin with time to spare to visit the Mulcahy Papers (at UCD?) I will have to take John Bowman's word for it that by 19th. or 20th. May 1922, the positions established at the 1921 elections had been reversed, with de Valera now concerned to maintain the integrity of the body politic which had legitimised the war Dáils and Collins concerned to . . .

Really, Collins was floundering about in a welter of motives and inclinations in which all the imperatives were British. With Collins in Dublin wrapping the Treaty and all its provisions with all their implications in cotton wool; while across the Border Collins was flinging dynamite and incendiaries and the Northern IRA at that same Treaty and all its provisions with all their implications; and in London Collins was representing the interests of Northern Nationalists to Craig; and in Dublin again Collins was setting himself to disenfranchise those same Northern Nationalists as he dismembered the body politic, outside whose embrace he was just another illegitimate thug.

When the real Michael Collins stood up at Beál na mBlath, which Collins is it was shot?

Damned if I know.

**Joe Keenan**

**The following letters appeared in  
*Village* (16 February 2006)**

## 1916 Controversy

Maurice O'Connell and Pierce Martin (*Village* 2-8 February) both seek to establish a singularly tenuous case: that events in Ireland between the years 1916 and 1921 were without cause, context or explanation, apart from standard Dublin Castle propaganda tropes. Those who know even a little about the history of the period have much to be grateful for that, as it demonstrates in the clearest and shrillest terms the intellectual bankruptcy and hollowness of revisionism: not to wish to echo Martin's fundamentalist rants, but such is the case.

Maurice O'Connell conveniently omits much of the actual fact surrounding the reason for the Volunteer split, indeed the reason that Irish participation in Britain's war had any support: namely, the promise of Home Rule, was definitively scuppered by British endorsement of the UVF rebellion. The decision by the British Government to give cabinet seats to an organisation formed for the purpose of violent resistance to British policy in Ireland was the main reason for the increasingly unpopularity of Redmond.

It is disingenuous to cite statistics, as does O'Connell, in absolute terms, without relating them to the actual sequence of

events that gives them meaning. Keith Jeffery in *Ireland and the Great War* (Cambridge, 2000) states that, as opposed to the period between August 1914 and February 1915, when 50,107 men enlisted in the British army, the figures dropped to 25,235 between February and August 1915, and fell again to 19,801 between August 1915 and February 1916.

The Home Rule Party may have won majority support on a "constitutional platform, but Redmond's sheer political incompetence in actually delivering on his commitments and his warmongering for Britain even after the cause of Home Rule had failed, is quite enough to account for the rapid disappearance of his party. The Home Rule party's mandate expired in 1915, and the election which should have been held that year was suspended, and instead a war cabinet installed with two UVF members aboard.

Martin says: "In 1916 the path to constitutional politics was wide open to any party, or individual legally entitled to engage in politics [sic.] and advance an independence agenda." Yes, except that the UVF and the Home Rule crisis had put paid to this fantasy. Even though he admits the fact that the 1918 elections were legitimate, for some reason he cannot allow this legitimacy to extend to Ireland. He repeats the canard that "despite gaining 73 seats, Sinn Féin secured less than [?] 48 per cent of the vote".

Peter Beresford Ellis, in the 1989 Desmond Greaves Memorial Lecture, entitled "Revisionism and Irish Historical Writing: The New Anti-Nationalist School of Historians", points out that one only arrives at this figure by conveniently omitting the percentages accruing from the 26 constituencies where Sinn Féin candidates stood unopposed. But even if this figure were accurate, to take seriously Martin's criterion for democratic legitimacy would lead to some very odd results: for example, Tony Blair's Labour government, by Martin's standards, is not legitimate, as it was elected by only 37 per cent of the British electorate.

What Martin really wants to say, though, is that no Irish vote for independence from Britain was, is, or ever could be legitimate, and this is a different claim. It means that British strategic interests decide what is to count as "democratic". On this criterion, of course, any Irish man or woman who does anything but profess undying loyalty to Empire deserves to be put between two Crossley tenders and torn to pieces (a favourite pastime of Martin's folk heroes, the Black and Tans).

Martin, by questioning the legitimacy of the Irish Republic, an accomplished fact and one that is not negotiable, is attacking a democratic state, and is thus espousing the very "terror" and "fascist" tendencies he attributes to others. I notice that in his litany of "slaughter", Verdun and the Somme stand as morally unproblematic, and this is quite consistent with his position as apologist.

**Andrew McGrath**

## Commemorating 1916

'*Reconstructing the Easter Rising*' by Colin Murphy, together with Vincent Browne's piece, '*The 1916 Easter Rising was a success*', in issue 73, places *Village* magazine firmly on the anti-1916 side in the current debate. Neither article is equal to its task.

In seeking to show how Fianna Fail has made use of 1916 in the past, Colin Murphy describes how the first formal commemoration of the Rising in 1929 by Cumann na nGaedheal was a low key affair. He then describes how De Valera acted to suppress the IRA in 1934. Given both of these factors it made political sense that Fianna Fail should firstly stage a commemoration befitting the State's formative event in contrast to the shamefaced effort of 1929, and secondly, use the event to challenge the IRA's claim to be the true inheritors of 1916. According to its own priorities Fianna Fail was functioning as a competent political party, but Murphy can see only ulterior manipulation.

Regarding the minor part assigned to the women of Cumann na mBan and the Citizens Army in the 1935 ceremony, it is true that De Valera held an old fashioned notion of the place of women in society. But by condemning him for failing to bring women to the forefront of the commemoration, Murphy is judging the actions of a public figure in the 1930s against the standards of the 1970s and later.

Colin Murphy is judging political matters from an apolitical viewpoint and assessing historical events ahistorically. Such methods can only induce cynicism and muddled thinking.

Vincent Browne doesn't use such methods but his article has a similar effect. Very grudgingly he accepts that independence might never have been achieved without the Rising. From this he moves to questioning the value of independence itself. And on that note of profound questioning his article is left hanging!

In moving away from the national tradition we are to enter a state of angst as to whether our successful nation state should exist or not. Bring on the new vision for Ireland—a nation state with an existential problem!

When are the anti-national intelligentsia going to stop snapping at the heels of independent Ireland and openly propose re-joining the UK?

**David Alvey**

### Note:

The above letter was published in *Village* Magazine in its issue no 74. The editor deleted exclamation marks from the following two sentences.

And on that note of profound questioning his article is left hanging!

Bring on the new vision for Ireland—a nation state with an existential problem!

It seems we are permitted to criticise the anti-national agenda but not to poke fun at it or express astonishment at its absurdity. **DA**

### Underpayment of foreign construction workers

The following letter appeared in the *Irish Times* on 17th February

Your reporter Ali Bracken has provided a very detailed account of construction companies underpaying foreign workers (February 6th) and Ronaldo Munck has written about SIPTU's "concerted campaign to recruit and organise migrant workers" (Opinion, February 10th). At the same time your Economics Editor, Marc Coleman (Opinion, February 7th) points out that none of this underpayment is showing up in CSO statistics. He writes that "in the construction sector—the alleged source of a migrant-related race to the bottom - wage rates are rising by around six per cent", in contrast with the industrial sector where "wages are growing by three percent". Your readers could be forgiven for feeling confused.

In fact, the statistical discrepancy is even wider than weekly earnings data suggests. Hourly earnings in industry only rose by 2.1 per cent, or half the minimum increase provided for under the national pay agreement.

The CSO survey entitled *Earnings and Hours Worked in Construction*, showing an hourly increase of 6.8 percent, might suggest the absence of similar wage degradation in that sector. But it only measures what it sets out to measure, the earnings of a declining proportion of the construction workforce. Firms surveyed only provide earnings data in respect of workers directly employed. These are clearly being paid the appropriate semi-skilled and skilled differentials due.

Unfortunately there is no CSO measurement of earnings by workers employed through the use of subcontractors. Also excluded are those de facto employees who are bogusly registered as "self-employed", in order to sidestep legal obligations to include direct employees in the sector's pension scheme, and concerning whose mushrooming numbers the Pensions Ombudsman has expressed such alarm.

In its *Monthly Index of Employment in Construction* the CSO does, however, try to measure total numbers in the sector. These are accompanied by a background note or "health warning" about "the accuracy of the index". Given the scale of

the problem, both in subcontracting and bogus "self employment", this should perhaps be an "epidemic warning".

The Index is becoming increasingly detached from the realities of the sector. According to this Index, construction employment growth slowed from 4.7 per cent in the year ending June-August 2004, to 2.9 per cent in 2005. But the CSO's *Quarterly National Household Survey*, based on responses from workers themselves, shows that for the same June-August quarter, total construction employment was rising annually by 10.8 per cent in 2004 and 13.7 percent in 2005. The increase in the total number of employees on this basis was an astounding 17.7 per cent.

A third of that increase consisted of immigrant construction workers. Their numbers doubled in twelve months. Most are not directly employed by Irish firms, but indirectly via subcontractors. Consequently their earnings remain outside the scope of the CSO's *Earnings Survey*. It is now a matter of urgency to include an earnings question in the Quarterly National Household Survey to complete an accurate profile.

It is in subcontracting that wage degradation is occurring through the underpayment of foreign construction workers, as the examples provided by SIPTU to Ali Bracken showed. In the mass demonstrations of December 9th SIPTU's Polish and Lithuanian members proudly carried national flags and bilingual banners proclaiming their refusal to become cheap cannon fodder for greedy employers. We in SIPTU are determined to vindicate their rights.

**Manus O'Riordan**  
*Head of Research, SIPTU*

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issues that arose from further expansion of the EU, he added.

"The Government is well aware of the issues at play here and has decided, for instance in relation to Bulgaria and Romania, it is not necessarily going to follow the same path that it has adopted in relation to the 10 member states that joined on May 1, 2004," he said.

### A HAWK IN THE HOLLY

Mr. Ned O'Keefe, F.F. (Cork East), said he was in favour of "some restrictions" for foreign workers employed in Ireland. He added: "This will be a difficult year for Irish employees." Mr. O'Keefe said:

"You have to look after the natives" when it comes to employment in Ireland." He added: "I am concerned about my Irish electorate and my people in East Cork so we have to protect their jobs and security of employment and that there'll be jobs in the future for them."

PD Senator Tom Morrissey said he was "alarmed" to hear Mr. O'Keefe's comments and said that "backing the Labour Party proposal on work permits would be a regressive step".

"Ireland is now an open, outward-looking and competitive country. Introducing restrictions on the employment rights of non-nationals from other EU countries would be an entirely retrograde development at this stage," he said.

### LABOUR PARTY CLARIFIES MIGRATION STANCE

"The Labour Party yesterday set in stone its controversial stance on migration with a policy document calling for restricted access to the Irish labour market for accession workers if necessary.

"Rather than an employment free-for-all, the Labour Party wants to defend standards and prevent employers bringing in workers at below the going rate.

"Labour leader Pat Rabbitte said the dispute involving Turkish Gama workers and the Irish Ferries strike were not unique in Ireland and there was anecdotal evidence of exploitation across the country.

"Launching the document in Dublin yesterday, Mr. Rabbitte was careful to welcome all the benefits that migrant workers bring.

"But if it is found that Irish jobs are being undermined to any great degree through the continued exploitation of migrant workers, Labour would consider restricting access even to accession workers from the enlarged EU through a green card system.

"The policy also called for measures to tackle bogus subcontracting and for more and better-resourced labour inspectors" (*Irish Examiner*, 20.1.2006)

## Pireland continued

Sweden, will request the imposition of new restrictions. If that does occur, the Commission will treat each request on a case-by-case basis, on the analysis of the justification provided for this request.

### CONTROLS

Any move by Ireland to impose controls would also be a major blow to the Commission's efforts to have other countries follow Ireland's example.

At the moment, just three of the 15 old member states, Ireland, Britain, and Sweden, impose no restrictions. Ireland must still decide whether to open up to both Romania and Bulgaria, who are set to join the EU in less than a year's time.

It is expected that just three countries, Finland, Spain and Portugal, might relax their current restrictions on May 1st next—the second anniversary of enlargement.

But the majority of other EU states, including Germany, Italy, France and Austria, will opt instead to extend current restrictions voluntarily for up to three years. Austria and Germany have strongly hinted that they will try and impose an extra two-year delay, preventing the free movement of workers from Eastern Europe until May, 2011.

Since around 180,000 PPS numbers have already been issued to workers from the new Member States, it could also prove difficult in practice to introduce controls.

### Unions demand

#### 'level playing field' on wages

Unions will demand a crack-down today on rogue developers who are flouting agreed industry pay rates by paying foreign workers as little as €8 an hour. The Cork Building Group of Unions, an umbrella group representing 20,000 electricians, plumbers, carpenters and plasters across Munster, said the pay abuse is keeping hundreds of Irish labourers out of work.

They have gathered evidence, including wage slips, which show the abuse is wide-spread, union secretary Billy Curtin said.

Mr. Curtin, who is also secretary of the Plasterers' Union, said he knows of 300 Irish plasterers who can't get work because foreign workers are willing to work for almost half the agreed €16.87 Construction Industry Federation rate.

The Unions will present Enterprise Minister Micheál Martin with their evidence in Cork today.

They will demand developers found flouting the agreed rates be hauled before the Labour Court and prosecuted if necessary.

"I know of one site where there are 300 Eastern European staff being paid €8 an hour", Mr. Curtin said.

### UNIONS' SEEK WORK PERMIT SYSTEM

Mr. Curtin claimed some developers are telling Irish labourers they are not hiring Irish staff because foreign workers will work for less.

"We will tell the Minister: "This is your own city and you're the Minister for Employment. Can you tell all the Irish lads that they can't get work"", Mr. Curtin said.

"We have no problem with foreign lads coming in to work here. But they are working at low prices.

"There has to be a level playing field" (Irish Examiner, 3.2.2006).

### Entry To Old Europe

The only three original EU states to completely remove barriers to labour movement are Sweden, Ireland, and Britain, although the last makes workers from eight of the new member states register with the Home Office within 30 days of starting work.

But, with unemployment averaging 8.5 per cent in the EU, and close to 10 per cent in both France and Germany, the prospects of many Governments removing restrictions are low.

Only Finland has so far said that it is considering relaxing its policy towards the new Member States this May, in line with the Commission's wishes.

"It is very likely that Finland will open its labour market and both the prime minister and the labour minister have indicated they are in favour," said a Finnish Government spokesman based in Brussels. But a final decision will only be made following consultations with parliament, unions and employment organisations, he said.

The Commission is deeply opposed to the current swathe of restrictions imposed on the citizens of new Member States who want to travel to the original EU15 to work.

"The EU is based on the idea of the free movement of labour, goods, services and capital within the common market," commission President José Manuel Barroso told an audience in the Czech capital Prague recently.

"From the very beginning the EU has been striving to have the transition period cancelled. . . I am personally convinced that transition periods are not beneficial for the EU."

Unsurprisingly, new Member States have reacted badly to the restrictions, which can continue for up to seven years under transition arrangements in the Accession Treaty. Poland, Slovenia, and Hungary have even imposed their own reciprocal restrictions on citizens of the EU15 living and working on their territory.

The exact restrictions imposed by EU Member States on the movement of labour vary. For example, Denmark issues Work Permits to nationals from eight of the

States that joined the EU on 1st May 2004, excluding Malta or Cyprus, on condition that their work is full-time and governed by a collective labour agreement.

There is no need to satisfy a labour market test, but applicants must also be granted a Residence Permit before taking up a job.

The Netherlands has adopted a two-fold procedure—a traditional full Work-Permit system, including a labour market test, applies for most sectors, but a number of sectors and occupations are exempt from this procedure.

France has decided to maintain a Work Permit system but not, for example, for work in the research sector. Belgium, Finland, Greece, Luxembourg and Spain have also decided to maintain a traditional Work-Permit system. Italy has kept its Work-Permit system, but issued an entry quota for workers from the eight Member States in question. Legislation in Portugal also provides for a quota system.

Germany and Austria, two countries with some of the biggest concerns about migration, have Work-Permit systems.

Both States are also making use of a provision set out in the Accession Treaties, which enables them to apply restrictions for cross-border services in sensitive sectors, involving the temporary movement of workers.

This mishmash of different rules and regulations may run contrary to the guiding principle of the EU single market. However, even in States with low unemployment, such as the Netherlands, there seems little appetite to remove barriers.

"We haven't taken any decision yet," said one Dutch diplomat, who stresses that investigations into the issue will begin in earnest later in the year. But he conceded that last year's vote against the EU Constitution, which was largely driven by fears of migration, and upcoming local elections mean it is likely the Netherlands will seek an extension to the labour market restrictions in April. One thing is clear: few EU States look set to follow Ireland, Britain and Sweden come April 30th.

### GOVERNMENT JITTERS

But it has emerged the Government is likely to change its policy on migrant workers from countries joining the EU in the future.

A strong hint of adopting new work rules for migrants from Bulgaria and Romania when they join up next January was given on 24th January 2006 by Justice Minister, Michael McDowell.

He said he did not think anybody was really suggesting that the people who were now working in our economy should be sent home or required to go through a lengthy administrative process.

But the Government had discussed the

continued on page 24

## Pireland continued

Nick Leeson as Governor of the Central Bank. Is it any wonder the UN is in such a mess?

"That's why it is depressing to see people regard this as a negative, even in economic terms," he told *The Irish Times*. "There is no doubt it is a positive in moral terms to adopt a generous approach to immigration, especially given that we have been the beneficiaries of the generosity of others over many decades."

Mr. Sutherland said the problems many European countries and Japan experienced in expanding their economies were due to a poor demography and suggested there should be a "conjuncture of interests" between developed countries and migrant workers from the developing world. He described international migration as "the biggest issue of our time".

### Migrant Workers from other Countries

Spain :	24,659
France:	20,322
China:	19,288
Nigeria:	16,888
Germany:	12,887
U.S.A.:	12,808

### IMMIGRATION: A BRIEF HISTORY

Certainly, Immigration was a major influence in the development and prosperity of the United States, Canada, and Australia but that was a process that was controlled throughout. There is a naivety in the Irish debate bordering on the infantile: that we open the gates and welcome all in without restriction. "Borders should be open", is the way the Archbishop of Dublin puts it.

Billy Curtin, the Secretary of the Cork Building Group of Unions, would put it a very different way. (See Below). But workers, unlike Archbishops have to survive in the real world, whether in Poland or in Ireland.

"There are 40 million or so Poles", says Rabbitte. In all, there are 70 million people in the 1st May 2004 Accession Countries who have an unrestricted right to travel to Ireland, U.K. and Sweden. Bulgaria and Romania are knocking on the door, with their population of 31 million.

At what stage do you draw the line? There are 10,000 Poles in Cork city and County; a 1,000 in Dungarvan; Letterkenny and its hinterland has 1,100. There's at least 40,000 Poles in Dublin. Around Rush in Co. Dublin, 2,000 Latvians have made their abode. The truth is that officially the State is not even keeping a count.

### A LEFT POSITION ON IMMIGRATION

"There is no 'White New Zealand' policy or 'White Canada' policy, and no one hears of those countries being overrun by Asiatics. Both New Zealand and Canada regulate immigration without using terms that are insulting to the enslaved peoples... We could no more permit (mass immigration from Asia) than from Europe, or from Britain for that matter, and for the same reason—it would endanger living standards and create unemployment, and would, therefore, favour the efforts of reactionary elements to promote political and racial division among the people.

"Mass immigration from low-wage countries in particular must be avoided. Hence the importance of the immigration quota system advocated by the Communist party, as a means to effectively control the flow of immigrants from all countries in accordance with the economic conditions prevailing here in Australia" (*Marxist Glossary* by L. Harry Gould, *Current Books, Communist Party of Australia, Sydney, 1947*).

Australia's "white Australia" policy, officially termed the "restrictive immigration policy", though somewhat liberalised after 1965 to permit the entry of some non-Europeans, remains perhaps the most noted current example of the exclusion of coloured peoples.

### UNITED STATES

With the oncoming Depression, the US introduced legislation restricting immigration, reversing traditional American policy and stemming the flow from Europe. In 1920, the year before enactment of emergency legislation, 800,000 immigrants had arrived. Added to the protests of organised labour, were the objections of business leaders, and patriotic organisations which feared that some of the immigrants might be radicals. (*sic*.)

"Legislation in 1924 set small quotas totalling 164,000 people yearly; it favoured immigrants from north-western Europe and outraged the Japanese by banning all immigration from East Asia. Immigration from within the Western Hemisphere continued—900,000 Canadians (mostly French-speaking) and 500,000 Mexicans entered the United States during the 1920s" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1978, Volume 18-p.988*).

The main host countries of immigration after World War II were Australia, New Zealand, the U.S., Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and Uruguay. Highest rates of net inflow existed in Australia and New Zealand; immigration was responsible for two-fifths of the increase of population in Australia.

Migrants in the Americas were absorbed most readily by Canada and Venezuela, though in absolute numbers the US still took by far the largest total. Jamaica lost nearly a quarter of its natural

increase through emigration, a situation not unlike the Ireland of the late Forties and Fifties, while Mexico had a net outflow of 250,000 (mainly to the U.S.), which however was only three per cent of the natural increase.

The number of Irish-born in Britain in 1961, even allowing for deaths and re-emigration was over one million. The population of the 26 Counties for 1961 was 2,818,341.

One of the striking developments after 1945 was the influx of European and Indian populations into certain parts of Africa. In the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (later Rhodesia, Zambia, and Malawi) the number of Europeans increased from 105,000 to 274,000 between 1946 and 1957, and more than two-thirds of this was due to immigration.

In a world in which the volume and direction of migration have been heavily influenced by restrictions unfavourable to coloured peoples, however, some channels remained open as shown by the immigration of Puerto Ricans to the US, and, until passage of the restrictive Commonwealth Immigration Bill in 1968, of West Indians to the UK. In these cases the fact of common citizenship made possible a relatively large increase in the movement of coloured migrants into these countries.

### MAKE UP YOUR MIND TIME!

Ireland has a three-month deadline to consider imposing a clampdown on workers arriving here from Eastern Europe.

Unless the Government applies to re-introduce some form of special controls by the end of April, it cannot impose Work Permits on anyone coming here from the 10 new Member-States, the European Commission has insisted.

"Any changes to arrangements proposed by a member state must be communicated to the Commission before April 30, 2006," the Commission's social affairs spokeswoman said.

"The Commission wasn't able to give a clear answer yesterday about whether Ireland could impose new restrictions, since the labour market has already been liberalised. It said that any plans to do so would have to be reviewed on a "case by case" basis" (*Irish Independent, 24.1.2006*).

Under the current rules, Ireland would have to prove that the labour market had been affected by the arrival of the new immigrants—although with unemployment stable and low, this might be hard to prove.

The Commission also admits that it doesn't anticipate any rolling back on the current system.

It is not anticipated that any of the three countries who did not impose transitional arrangements, Ireland, UK, and

continued on page 25



## Pireland continued

there would be no coalition with Fianna Fáil under his leadership.

"On immigration, Mr Rabbitte said that the recent dispute at Irish Ferries had raised serious questions, particularly as the Government had been blocking the directive on agency workers in Europe and had also been blocking the maritime directive.

"If the EU services directive goes ahead you can establish a company in Poland or Latvia and come over here on contract and do an Irish Ferries.

You get an agency to employ the workers here at domestic rates in Poland or Latvia. It is a big issue."

Mr. Rabbitte said it was nonsense to argue, as IBEC and the Taoiseach had done during the Irish Ferries dispute, that the practice was confined to maritime industries.

"That is manifestly not the case. Displacement is going on in the meat factories and it is going on in the hospitality industry and it is going on in the building industry.

"What Irish Ferries has done has lanced the boil and we need to know more about the numbers coming here, the kind of work they are engaged in, the displacement effect, if any, on other sectors.

"We need to look at that because there is anecdotal evidence about it happening in construction, and happening in meat factories and happening in the hospitality industry."

"Mr Rabbitte said that for the very same reasons Tánaiste Mary Harney invited Gama to come to Ireland, he did not expect there would be any outcry from IBEC about the situation because it was contributing to wage moderation.

"We can't compete now in the traditional type industries. The rate of attrition in terms of job losses has been far higher than we have acknowledged. It has been concealed by the scale of the boom. There are many positive spin-offs from the diversity of labour here now, but to say that that should for all time go unregulated I think has been thrown into question by the Irish Ferries dispute.

"There are 40 million or so Poles after all, so it is an issue we have to have a look at" (The Irish Times, 3.1.2006).

\*\*\*\*\*  
"While it was curious that Pat Rabbitte recently talked of immigration causing 'displacement' at a time of full employment, he was right to call for closer study of what is going on.

Currently, data on the impact of immigration on the labour market are not being gathered" (Dan

O'Brien, Senior Editor Economist Intelligence Unit in London, Irish Times, 10.1.2006).

### TRADE UNION SUPPORT

Jack O'Connor, the President of SIPTU, welcomed Mr. Rabbitte's comments, which he described as "*helpful*" and "*timely*".

It was his understanding that what Mr. Rabbitte was saying was that the labour market had to be properly regulated and standards had to be enforced, otherwise immigration would need to be dealt with differently.

It had always been the position of Trade Unions that, once the labour market was opened to workers from the new EU member states, radical changes were needed to the regulations currently in place.

"I think what Pat Rabbitte is saying is very similar to what we've been saying" (The Irish Times, 4.1.2006)

### CATHOLIC CHURCH POSITION

The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Diarmuid Martin, has opposed the introduction of a Work Permits system for EU citizens working in Ireland. "*Borders should be open. It's what the entire EU exercise is about*", he stated.

Speaking at the Pro-Cathedral Dublin following a "Festival of Peoples" Mass on 5th January 2006, he said:

"We need workers. We need managed migration, but people are not just economic units. They may realise their dignity through work, but that dignity doesn't evaporate when they have no work" (Irish Times, 6.1.2006).

He was responding to a query from The Irish Times as to his response to comments by Labour leader Pat Rabbitte earlier this week on immigration policy.

"*Managed migration*", Archbishop Martin! Surely this amounts to much the same as the Labour Party leader is suggesting? We wonder if such enthusiasm would be so evident if the 40 million Poles were Moslems?

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Minister for Employment Micheál Martin rejected the Labour leader's views, while a spokesman for the Progressive Democrats accused him of "*pandering to the scaremongers*".

Mr. Martin said the Government had no plans to look again at its decision to allow workers from the 10 new EU states to come to this country without having to go through a Work-Permit system.

He said Forfás and the Skills Expert Group had recommended that the country should have an inflow of 50,000 workers a year to keep the economy growing in a healthy fashion.

"Pat Rabbitte's views run counter to the position adopted by his party in the Dáil during a recent debate on work permits when the Government was accused of having too restrictive a policy on immigration."

### \*\*\*\*\* NEW Personal Public Service (PPS) NUMBERS

(Issued since EU enlargement, May 2004)

Poland:	89,988
Lithuania:	30,147
Latvia:	15,104
Slovakia:	13,781
Czech Rep:	7,569
Hungary:	4,839
Estonia:	3,650
Malta:	254
Slovenia:	139
Cyprus:	45
TOTAL:	165,516

### \*\*\*\*\* THE PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRATS

A spokesman for the PDs rejected the claim by Mr. Rabbitte that the proposed EU Services Directive would undermine the rights of Irish workers. He said the Directive would fully respect minimum wage rates and the health and safety standards of the host country.

"The real question is whether the Labour Party has finally been flushed out as posturing as internationalist apostles of migration while bitterly opposing any economic measure which would give migrant workers from other EU states the same rights and opportunities that Irish migrant workers have enjoyed across the EU for so long."

Michael McDowell, in Vienna for a meeting of EU Justice Ministers, criticised the Labour leader's views on immigration, claiming Mr. Rabbitte had also been opposed to workers from Poland escaping Communist rule when he was in the Workers' Party in the 1980s.

"He said Ireland needed to take a realistic approach to migration from the 10 new member states in the EU rather than throw obstacles in their way" (The Irish Times, 16.1.2006).

### PETER SUTHERLAND

However, by far the most pertinent response to the Immigration debate is the utterances of "*Mr. Globalisation*" himself, Peter Sutherland:

"If the big issue of the 1990s was globalisation of goods and services, the aspect of this which has not been taken on is the issue of migration", Mr. Sutherland said (The Irish Times 24.1.2006).

Having freed the Dollar, Yen and Euro: humankind must now be released from all bonds, borders and regulations to pursue their eternal wealth.

Sutherland, himself a former EU commissioner and newly-appointed UN Special Representative on Migration, has criticised the "*negativity*" surrounding the immigration debate in Ireland, claiming the growth of the Irish economy had been significantly driven by immigration.

His appointment to head a UN review of global migration is akin to appointing

continued on page 26



## Could Poland Take Over Ireland?

The leader of the Labour Party, Pat Rabbitte has called for consideration of a "Green Card" system for Immigrants. Fine. The big question is: If in government, would the Labour Party have the political will and mettle to apply its principle?

"The time may be coming when we will have to sit down and examine whether we would have to look at whether a work permits regime ought to be implemented in terms of some of this non-national labour, even for countries in the European Union," he said (3.1.2006).

The 'thinking-out loud' might have passed off, on the part of all the other main parties and the media, were it not for the poll in the *Irish Times* a couple of weeks later on 23rd January 2006.

Pat Rabbitte's personal rating jumped by four per cent. And Labour Party support by two per cent.

A large majority in the *Irish Times* poll wanted to reintroduce work permits for workers from the new EU member states, and a similar majority believed there are already enough or too many foreign workers here. However, most voters see the presence of foreign workers here as good for the Irish economy and society.

The *Irish Times* tns/MRBI research shows that just 17% of people believe that the *status quo* should remain, whereby workers from the 10 Accession States aren't subject to any restrictions and can freely apply for employment upon arrival in Ireland.

Seventy-eight per cent of respondents said they believed that immigrants from the newer EU States should be obliged to apply for work permits before they could seek employment here.

Five per cent said they had no opinion.

Reacting to *The Irish Times* poll results, Labour leader Pat Rabbitte said the results showed that there was "a sophisticated response" to the issue of migration, in that a majority of respondents believed it had been good for the Irish economy and

society but at the same time were concerned about job displacement.

A spokesman for Fine Gael leader Enda Kenny said that while the party was not in favour of a Work Permit system for new EU countries at present, it welcomed the debate on the issue that had been sparked by Mr. Rabbitte.

Mr. Rabbitte also accused Government TDs of doing a "U-turn" on the issue of migration, as they had strongly criticised his comments three weeks ago when he called for a debate on the issue.

### TRADE UNION SUPPORT

Following his "Green Card" statement, the only support the Labour leader received was from the President of SIPTU, Jack O'Connor. The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Diarmuid Martin, rallied in behind his Protestant counterpart, Archbishop John Neill, stating that Ireland needs an "open migration policy".

Mark Field, Chief Executive of ISME, the Small and Medium Enterprise body stated that Mr. Rabbitte was

"rattling a sabre that doesn't need to be rattled. He said there was no need for a reassessment of immigrant policy here. The market would regulate itself and, he

claimed Irish employers were "screaming out" for more workers to maintain economic growth" (*Irish Independent*, 4.1.2006).

"You are hopping Mad Rabbitte", quoted the *Irish Daily Star* in banner headlines. They had Dr. Sean Barrett, a Trinity Economics boffin describe the Labour leaders remarks as "crazy".

"We need to continue outsourcing lower-skilled jobs and moving up the value chain", the TCD economist said.

"We've outsourced things like shirts, socks and shoes already. The tourism, meat processing and building sectors would scarcely exist without input from workers from places like Brazil and Poland", Professor Barrett said (*The Star*, 4.1.2006).

In its leading article the *Star* says Rabbitte "is trying his best to be all things to all men on this issue" (4.1.2006).

The Labour Party leader has only himself to blame for this! That the political establishment has only belatedly woken up to the folly of its decision to allow full admission from the 10 Accession countries does not bring much credit to the body politic.

### WHAT DID THE MAN SAY?

"Labour leader Pat Rabbitte has called for a reassessment of immigration policy in the light of the Irish Ferries dispute and evidence of the displacement of Irish workers in a range of industries, writes Stephen Collins, Political Correspondent.

"The time may be coming when we will have to sit down and examine whether we would have to look at whether a work permits regime ought to be implemented in terms of some of this non-national labour, even for countries in the European Union," he said.

"In an interview with *The Irish Times*, Mr Rabbitte said that unless basic standards for workers were established across the EU, Irish jobs would be threatened.

"The Labour leader also said that

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