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# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

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## Protestant Alienation

Garret FitzGerald told the John Hewitt Summer School that "*the dichotomy between Gael and Planter reflects a cultural myth rather than a genetic reality*" (Irish News 25 Aug).

That's what we were told back in 1969 when we suggested that the Ulster Protestant community should be negotiated with as a distinct nationality. We recall that Official Sinn Fein leader, Tomás Mac Giolla, was particularly eloquent on the subject: there was no racial difference, therefore the differences which appeared to exist were unreal and might be conjured away.

Is there such a thing as "*a genetic reality*" in political affairs? We thought the idea that there was had died with Hitler—until we came across the fact that, ten years after the death of Hitler, Hubert Butler, a Protestant gentleman of Kilkenny, had contested a local election on a programme which asserted the social and political superiority of "*Protestant blood*". And now Dr. FitzGerald recycles the notion, though in a different way. He does not assert superiority on the basis of genes, but he denies that a political difference is actual because it is not based on genetic difference. Because the difference is not genetic, it can only be a myth, a delusion.

The reasoning is primeval.

He then went on to assert that the "*self-identification*" of Northern Protestants as British has been brought about by Provisional Republicanism. He says that the proportion of them describing themselves as British rose from a third to two-thirds as a consequence of the Republican campaign. So, what was all the fuss about in 1912-14?

"Dr FitzGerald argued that the two biggest threats 'ever posed' to the sovereignty of Westminster were by Ulster Unionism—'first in 1914—undertaken with the connivance of the British Conservative Party which sought to deny Parliament's right to give Home Rule to Ireland—and the second in 1974 with the Ulster Workers' Strike'."

But, if it was the Tories who stirred up a cultural myth which had no basis in genetic

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## Rogue Democracies

The implied position behind the Ameranglian invasion and destruction of the Iraqi State (and Irish support of it), and the Israeli invasion and attempted destruction of the Lebanese State, is that states which present themselves as democracies have the right to impose their will on states which they assert are not democratic. In other words, it is their position that states which are not democratic have no right to existence.

It goes even farther in the case of Israel: a democratic state has the right to annex the territory of a neighbouring state which is not democratic, if it can capture it. Israel has annexed part of the national territory of the Syrian State, and has annexed the whole United Nations territory of Jerusalem and made it its capital.

When Germany annexed the League of Nations territory of Danzig in September 1939, Britain responded by making it the occasion for a second World War in the 20th century. When Israel annexed the United Nations territory of Jerusalem, Britain (which had responsibility for

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## A Stormont that Works. Is it possible?

## *The Langhammer Proposal*

*The article and proposal below is written as a "kite flying" exercise aimed at provoking responses from readers of the Irish Political Review*

For some time, I have taken the view that Northern Ireland cannot work because it is disconnected from the governmental politics of the United Kingdom and of the Republic of Ireland. Only the constant focus and deliberation on '*who governs and in whose interest*' can draw people away from communal affiliations, whereas

Northern Ireland institutions have only provided a focal point for communal antagonism—unable to evolve into workable social and economic political forms. The 24th November attempt will be the tenth time since 1972 that the restoration of a Northern Ireland Assembly and Government has been tried. Let's count:—

Sunningdale was one, the Rees Convention is two, the Prior rolling devolution was three, the York Street Forum was four, the Good Friday Agreement Assembly was tried and failed four times—that five, six, seven and eight; the 'Hain Assembly' is nine, and the 24th November will be ten. Ten attempts, ten

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*Labour Comment*, edited by **Pat Maloney**:  
The Fate Of The Volunteer

reality, who did it in 1974? The Sunningdale legislation was Tory. And no party outside Protestant Ulster supported the "*Constitutional stoppage*" that broke the Sunningdale system, of which Dr. FitzGerald was one of the main architects. The Prods did it all on their own, as if they were a reality and not just a myth.

As to the "*self-identification*", it has always seemed to us that the Protestants don't bother their heads about it. They do not constitute a problem for themselves. They just carry on regardless, being what they are, without existential *angst*. They are satisfied with themselves, and they have little secular concern with anybody else, so what is there for them to think about at Summer Schools?

Brian Feeney at least observes this as a fact (IN 26 July): "*unionists don't organise any summer schools to examine unionism or anything else*". And he asks, "*Is the phrase 'unionist intellectual' an oxymoron?*"

There is, of course the *John Hewitt School*, formally Unionist, but finding it difficult "*to include unionists*". This year it had FitzGerald. And of course Professor Bew. But Bew, though advisor to Trimble, is "*shy of admitting to being a unionist. So far he hasn't 'come out' so to speak*".

Jim Gibney, who does his best to engage with Protestants on behalf of the Provos, complains that *Unionists Still Refuse To Have Open Minds* (IN 27 July).

And that "*unionists remain obsessed with an IRA in peaceful mode, ignoring on-going loyalist violence*".

How can you have an open mind about yourself if you're satisfied to be what you are?

FitzGerald's statistics about Protestant "*self-identification*" have to do with spur-of-the-moment answers given in public opinion surveys. (He says that in 1968 one-third described itself as 'British', while by 1978 two-thirds were doing so.) Professor Richard Rose made much of this sort of thing back around 1970. As far as we recall, the Welsh were all over the place. The answers seemed to depend on how the question was asked and on the mood of the moment. But the Welsh carried on being British in the only way that counts in politics—they carried on taking part in electing the Government of the State. It was never possible for Northern Ireland to be British in that way.

Dr. FitzGerald finds "*much confusion and some instability in the sense of identity of Northern Protestants*" and he blames what he sees as a shift towards Britishness on the Provo campaign. We would lay the blame somewhere else for this meaningless shift in superficial opinion on which nothing political can be based.

Carson opposed the establishment of Northern Ireland, as did Craigavon. This does not mean that they opposed Partition. They wanted the 6 Counties to be governed as part of Britain, through the operations of British politics. But Britain insisted

that it should be governed as a place apart. Craigavon, who had served in a British Government and had a sense of reality, secured the *de facto* welfare integration of the North into the system of the British state, and then set about minimising political activity in the North. That was how an essentially undemocratic and unstable set-up survived for forty years.

'Politics' consisted of the Unionist community voting itself into office at every election in order to remain attached to Britain. The Catholic community played no part. There was no part for it to play. Its role was to be kept down. But it was far too large a minority to be kept down without a sense of unease.

It was a practical assumption that rebellious tendencies would be generated in this large, frustrated minority whose energy had no outlet into the democratic life of the state. It was therefore subjected to close, intimate supervision by the RUC, made to feel the weight of the Protestant militia, the B Specials, and reminded that the UVF, which had brought about their predicament, had not gone away. When the Specials were disbanded in 1969, the UDR (with links to paramilitary forces) took their place. The respectable Unionist middle class has always understood—in the unacknowledged way that such things are understood—that its security depended on some things that were not quite respectable.

In our experience the attitude was that it was unfortunate that there should be such a large body of Fenians within the Northern idyll, but Fenians will be Fenians, and must be dealt with. Of course Croppies should lie down, but it was no matter for great surprise or resentment when they didn't.

It was a different thing, however, when the danger that had been warded off in 1912-14 was reasserted in active form by Dublin—as it was by Jack Lynch in August 1969, by Dr. FitzGerald and Dr. O'Brien in 1974, and by Dr. FitzGerald in 1985.

Dr. FitzGerald is the greatest alienating influence there has been on the Ulster Protestants since John Redmond. And he is in very heavy denial if he denies that his 1985 Agreement was a watershed in the process of alienation. Didn't he see the Protestants packed like sardines around the City Hall and up Royal Avenue in a protest comparable with the Covenant affair back in 1912?

Fenians rebelling—that's something that happens as a matter of course *within* Northern Ireland. Tampering with (what is seen as) 'the Constitution' by outside forces—that is something else.

That is how we have understood the

Protestant position for close on 40 years. Events have not yet proved us wrong.

The Unionists "*remain obsessed with the IRA in peaceful mode*" a year after it disarmed, and "*are still refusing to open their minds to the place the peace process can take us*". And Jim Gibney is surprised! The IRA has successfully transferred its dynamic from war to peace, in accordance with the project set out by Gerry Adams 20 years ago. Republicans have joined Dr. FitzGerald in the business of enacting constitutional change constitutionally, and have therefore become more dangerous than they ever were as rebels.

With the rebels having become a constitutional force, Protestant alienation is naturally greater than it has ever been—a fact documented by Susan McKay in the *Irish News* on July 27th (*Brutal Attackers Have Again Dyed Ulster's Bloody Hand*, an article documenting sectarian attacks).

We should say in connection with 1974, that the Unionist Party under Faulkner was committed to working a power sharing system in a way that it never was under Trimble, while the Unionist population at large was neither enthusiastic or hostile. It suspended judgment. What tipped it into outright hostility was the revelation made in the High Court in Dublin that Drs. FitzGerald and O'Brien had played a confidence trick in the Sunningdale negotiations. Unionist opinion was given to understand that the sovereignty claim in Articles 2 & 3 had been withdrawn. When challenged on the issue by Neil Blaney, the Coalition Government stated in the clearest possible terms that the 'claim' remained intact and was not prejudiced in any way by the Agreement. Its Court pleading was published in Loyalist adverts in the Unionist papers. A Loyalist demand was formulated, that the Council of Ireland aspect of the Agreement should be deferred until the sovereignty claim was withdrawn. But Drs. FitzGerald and O'Brien (Foreign Minister and Northern spokesman of the Coalition Government) insisted that the full implementation of the Council should go ahead regardless, and Dr. O'Brien in particular was insistent that a referendum to amend Articles 2 & 3 should not be held. Unionist opposition grew in the face of this intransigent refusal to negotiate a compromise, and the Sunningdale arrangement—the best chance there has ever been of making a functional internal settlement—fell after five months.

The Provos didn't do it. FitzGerald and his colleagues did. And they did it because they were in denial about basic political realities in the North—as Dr. FitzGerald with his "*genetic*" musings, still is.

## Patrick Pearse

The following letter by Dr. Brian Murphy osb was published in the *Limerick Leader*, Saturday 22nd July 2006:

I am writing in response to the three letters of 8 July which combined to attack the actions and the memory of Patrick Pearse. It would be helpful to place their allegations in context. The original criticism of Pearse, made by Kate Casey on 13 May, was that he had 'summarily executed all his prisoners.' I replied to that letter by recounting the evidence of Lt. S. King, who had been a prisoner of Pearse and who affirmed to the Court Martial that he had been 'very well treated.' The evidence confirms that no prisoners of Pearse were shot or ill-treated.

Subsequently, Kate Casey (1 July) suggested that I should have qualified this statement with the comments of William Wylie the prosecutor at the drumhead court martials. In fact, Wylie was prosecutor at the Field General Court Martials (not drumhead) and his criticism of the Attorney-General, for failing to appoint counsel for the defence of the prisoners, only serves to vindicate the good conduct of Pearse and of others. It reminds us that he was praised by a hostile witness and that no one acted on his behalf.

The three letters of 8 July ignore this evidence in Pearse's favour. One of them from Stephen Fallon, quoting from Pearse's graveside oration at the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa in July 1915, writes of Pearse that 'for the English he had a hatred that was tintured with contempt. He looked upon them as an inferior race.' No such phrases or sentiments are to be found in the *Collected Works* of Pearse! (If Stephen Fallon has another version of the oration, he should place it in the public domain) Pearse did write that 'we pledge to Ireland our love, and we pledge to English rule in Ireland our hate;' but the focus of his enmity was English rule rather than the English people. He added that he held it a Christian thing 'to hate evil, to hate untruth, to hate oppression, and, hating them, to strive to overthrow them.' Such sentiments, with their emphasis on freedom from oppression, are far removed from the image painted by Fallon of Pearse.

"The other two letters, from Pat Ryan and Noel Flannery, shift the line of attack against Pearse to the charge that he 'was responsible or residually responsible for the death of prisoners.' They then recount the names of three unarmed police constables, Michael Lahiff, James O'Brien and Charles McGee who were killed. It is significant that in selecting the names of Lahiff and O'Brien, who were shot in Dublin on 24 April 1916, the first day of the Easter Rising, they are following the example of General Maxwell. Their names, and the circumstances of their deaths, were selected by General Maxwell in a despatch of 25 May 1916 to show that 'the responsibility for the loss of life, however it occurred, the destruction of property, and other losses, rests entirely with those who engineered this revolt.' In the recent past Kevin Myers, late of the *Irish Times*, has regularly used the same facts with the same purpose as Maxwell: that is to justify the conduct of the British army and to condemn that of Pearse and his colleagues.

Maxwell and Myers (and, indeed, Ryan and Flannery) fail to clarify that these unarmed constables were not acting in a merely civilian capacity: that, after the introduction of the Defence of the Realm Act in August 1914, the Irish police forces co-operated with the Army in court-martial procedures that could lead directly to imprisonment and deportation. They are also remarkably silent about the conduct of Captain Bowen Colthurst who removed three prisoners from a cell in Portobello barracks, one of them being the pacifist, Francis Sheehy Skeffington, and shot them dead on 26 April 1916. Following this action Colthurst was promoted immediately afterwards. Contrast that deed with the surrender order of Pearse, which was made on 30 April 1916, 'in order to prevent the slaughter of unarmed people and in the hope of saving the lives of our followers.'

Lives were sadly lost in the course of the Easter Rising but even those who were opposed to the Rising praised the behaviour of the rebels. John Dillon, speaking in the House of Commons on 11 May 1916, declared that 'as regard the main body of the insurgents, their conduct was beyond reproach as fighting men... they fought a clean fight.' Dillon could speak with some authority as he had lived in central Dublin throughout the course of the Rising.

Even more compelling, in regard to the character of Pearse, is the opinion of Brigadier-General C.G. Blackadder, the President of his court-martial trial. Blackadder related to friends on the following evening that 'I have just done one of the hardest tasks I have ever had to do. I have had to condemn to death one of the finest characters I have ever come across. There must be something very wrong in the state of things that makes a man like that a rebel.'

One cannot but feel that to-day there must also be 'something very wrong in the state of things,' if, despite judgements like those of Blackadder, Dillon, and many others, the reputations of Pearse and his colleagues are attacked so viciously.

## A Stormont that Works.

continued

failures. Time to wake up and smell the coffee! Without some form of external compulsion, Stormont won't ever work.

However, a Northern governing institution remains a central 'must do' for both British and Irish Governments, both wedded to an *arm's length* view of Northern Ireland. The British *arm's length* instinct dates from 1912-14, the Irish perhaps more recent, dating from the 1970 Arms Trial or the 1974 Dublin Monaghan bombings.

I still take the view that a northern Stormont institution, involving the state funding of predominantly communal politics, will tend to stoke up and give focus to sectarian antagonisms in the society. Nonetheless, there is a strong strain within both Protestant and Catholic society that would prefer democratically elected Northern Ireland politicians to take local decisions, resenting Direct Rule by arrogant, part-time, English-based "blow-ins".

We are now approaching a juncture—with a 24th November deadline for restoring an Assembly based on the Good Friday Agreement (or Comprehensive Agreement) model—where *Northern Ireland-ism* has reached the end of its rope. The DUP is ascendant within Protestant politics. If it doesn't work this time, will we give it another ten attempts—or just move on?

Although Dr. Paisley appeared to come close (within the December 2004 Comprehensive Agreement) to agreeing to Home Rule with Sinn Fein, he has since backed off, seeking repentance and posing an ever growing number of hoops for Sinn Fein to jump through. For its part Sinn Fein, distrustful of the commitment of the British or Irish Governments, appears wedded to a Northern institution. Sinn Fein sees Stormont as a core means of driving change—notably in cross border activity—in the absence of British / Irish Governments persuasion. Current prospects for the restoration of Stormont on the current basis appears slim.

So, is there a way of ever making a Northern institution work?

**The core problems:** The core problems with Stormont appear twofold.

First, there is no element of compulsion, allowing local *Northern Ireland-ist* parties to mess around and play games at will. Second, the nature of sectarian politics is unsuited for rational governing politics and tends to stoke up nuisance in the society (as well as in political institutions). The state funding of communal parties to represent "their side" destabilises the society.

Can these aspects be addressed? Perhaps. Here is a proposal for consideration.

### CORE PROPOSALS FOR A STABLE NORTHERN INSTITUTION

\* That the British Government's governing party nominates the Northern Ireland First Minister, with the Republic of Ireland governing party nominating the Deputy First Minister. At present, this would see Peter Hain as First Minister and Dermot Ahern as Deputy First Minister.

\* The First and Deputy First Minister are charged with three main duties. Firstly, agreeing a Programme for Government. Second, agreeing a Budget. Third, ensuring that the Assembly nominates, by a proportionate mechanism such as d'Hondt, Ministers to the Executive from amongst their number.

\* Just as there is no justification for 108 MLAs, there seems less justification for 11 Ministries. Six or seven Ministries would be ample in any new arrangement—the Office of First and Deputy First Minister plus 5 or 6 others would suffice.

\* The Assembly should be reduced in number from 108 to either 36 MLAs (2 per Parliamentary Constituency) or preferably 35 MLAs (5 from each of 7 local Government Districts) in elections to run with the same term as local council elections. MLAs would be barred from double jobbing (as MEPs, MPs or councillors). The Assembly's main two roles would be to nominate the Ministers for the Executive and to scrutinize the Government's work.

\* The Executive would be nominated from the Assembly to the Executive and would take up Ministries as they did when devolution worked under the GFA.

\* The overtly sectarian aspects of the Assembly, such as the 'designations' system would be removed, and the "parallel consent" voting mechanisms replaced with a form of weighted majority to protect against communal majoritarianism. Deadlocks would be resolved by the First and Deputy First Ministers' determinations.

\* Finally, this proposal assumes that

all other institutions of the Agreement continue to function.

### THE ADVANTAGES

**Building in Compulsion:** This proposal has the advantages of 'building in' 'compulsion'. In local Government, if any party "walks away" the local authority still has to lift the bins and clean the streets. When Unionists walked out of local Councils after the 1985 Anglo Irish Agreement, the Councils continued to function—or else commissioners would be nominated to take decisions (as in the recent case within the South Eastern Education and Library Board). In this proposal, if any party 'walked away' the First and Deputy First Minister would undertake their role.

The First and Deputy First Minister, although responsible for the Budget and Programme for Government, would be bound to involve and seek collective agreement from Ministers—or make *best efforts* to do so.

**Developing Governmental Politics:** Having the two sovereign Governments at the helm is the stabilising element in this proposal. The buck stops with the two Governing parties. This, in turn, will stimulate interest in developing the governmental parties in Northern Ireland, whether Fianna Fail, Labour, Sinn Fein, Green Party or British Conservative. This would be unambiguously positive for Northern Ireland.

**Reducing sectarianism, promoting 'workaday politics':** Electing fewer MLAs would reduce the charge that state funding of communal politics was stoking up sectarian activity and division in the society. Electing MLAs from the from the 7 Council areas would enhance the emphasis on workaday local administration. Local Councils would have greater leverage on the regional tier. And getting rid of the designations system and 'parallel consent' would revoke the formal sectarian discrimination from within the current system.

Legislation could be proposed by either Executive Ministers or by the First and Deputy First Ministers and dealt with by weighted majority, as will be required in Local Government. Again, the First and Deputy First Ministers would be the default legislators in the absence of agreement.

### DISADVANTAGES

**Unionist reaction:** This proposal has, perhaps, the disadvantage that Unionists would reject it. Yes, they would. But just

as they rejected Sunningdale in the 70s, the Anglo Irish Agreement in the 80s and the Frameworks proposals in the 90s, they got used to the concepts in time. Unionist would grow to accept, in time, established facts. Look at the Anglo Irish Agreement. Within 3 years of the monster rallies at the Belfast City Hall, Peter Robinson and Jack Allen were in Duisberg, Germany to discuss devolution and John Taylor (now Lord Kilclooney) was an early adopter of the International Fund for Ireland—once regarded as Anglo Irish Agreement "*blood money*". Unionists have no serious proposals of their own. The evidence is that, in time, Unionists will get used to, and grudgingly accept, changed realities.

**Your reactions:** As stated earlier, my personal preference, post November 24th, is for a generation of joint stewardship, combined with bedding-in a strengthened system of local government with more powers based on bigger council areas and statutory political fairness. But, for those committed to restoring Stormont, have you a better—or equally stable—way of making use of the big house on the hill.

Your comments are sought!

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## Rogue Democracies

continued

governing Palestine until it relinquished it in the face of Jewish terrorism in 1947-8) did nothing, and the United Nations did nothing too.

There is nothing new in all of this. It is a return to the generally understood position as it existed before the pretence was made of establishing a system of international law by the League of Nations in 1919, and the even greater pretensions of the United Nations in 1945.

The Jewish annexation of Jerusalem led to a Security Council motion of disapproval. Israel ignored that Resolution as a mere gesture. It was not a Chapter 7 resolution, which is the only kind of resolution that obliges compliance. None of the many Security Council Resolutions which Israel is in breach of is a Chapter 7 Resolution, requiring the application of force to make the subject comply. The US uses its Veto to protect Israel from such Resolutions.

A generation ago, Western propaganda gave the world to understand that the Soviet Union was the Power that always said No. The record shows that the USSR used the Veto only a few times, and that the USA used it more than the other four combined.

But the US is not abusing the UN—is not contravening its spirit—by doing this. The UN was deliberately set up in this way by the USA, the USSR and the UK.

They set up in such a way that they themselves would not be subject to its authority. The USA added China, which was then its client state, to the Permanent Powers, and Britain added France as a European counterweight.

When the US client state in China fell to the Communist revolution in 1948, the USA vetoed recognition of the new regime in Peking as the Chinese state. The defeated Kuomintang Army and Government retreated to the island of Taiwan, and for the next thirty years was recognised by the US and the UN as the legitimate Government of China. If that situation had continued, the UN would probably have ceased to exist as a world organisation—and the world would have lost nothing by it. But Nixon ended the Veto on Peking.

All the time that Peking was excluded, the US insisted that Taiwan was an integral part of China. But, after Peking was admitted, it began to feel its way towards recognising Taiwan as a separate state, with Peking continuing to insist that it was an integral part of China. The most likely occasion of the next World War is a Taiwanese declaration of independence, supported by the USA, with Peking asserting Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan.

This matter is beyond the scope of the UN, which has no function in the relations between these states, which are recognised as being capable of waging world war, and being entitled to do so.

The Veto system was realistic, and might have done no great damage if the US had not constituted a sixth *de facto* Vetoist state using its Veto in unconditional support of Israel.

When Britain abdicated responsibility for Palestine in the face of Jewish terrorism, it transferred responsibility to the UN General Assembly, preventing the Security Council from taking it in hand. The General Assembly (consisting mainly of client states of the USA and USSR, who were in agreement on the measure) voted in support of the establishment of Jewish State in Palestine, and set out its borders, and that was the end of its role in the matter. The Zionist movement took the authorisation to establish a state but ignored the territorial allocations. The Jewish State did not live for an hour within its allocated borders. It set about conquering further territory beyond those borders and launched a great terrorist ethnic cleansing campaign against the very large Arab minority within those borders—about 48%. (And it started driving out Arabs from the moment the UN resolution was passed, while Britain was still in

## BOOK LAUNCH

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nominal control.)

The territory to the South of Lebanon, bombarded in the recent conflict, is territory conquered and annexed by Israel in 1948. The 1967 borders are no more legitimate in terms of the 1947 UN resolution than the post-1967 borders.

But Israel is a democracy of the Western kind, and it may therefore conquer and annex. And not one of its major political parties is committed to anything less than the restoration of the land awarded to Moses by God, which as far as we recall was not bounded by the Jordan river.

The Ameranglian war on Iraq was conducted in the spirit of Israel's wars. The pupil has become the exemplar.

A flimsy pretence was made to begin with that it was a preemptive war of defence against an Iraqi nuclear threat. Then that pretence was given up, and it was defended as a war of policy. There was not a vestige of an Iraqi nuclear threat, but it was a 'good war' anyway because it got rid of a tyrant—was that not what Martin Mansergh said on behalf of the Government?

And what if the destruction of the tyranny—under which the great majority of the people lived secured lives in a liberal social and comfortable social-democratic economic framework—gave rise to a chaos of fundamentalism in which nothing and nobody is secure? Never mind. People can vote freely for any one of a selected group of a hundred parties standing for God knows what, and fielding who knows who. They may have lost the condition of civilised life, but they've been given Democracy!

## Quarter Loaf Of Palestine

Frank Adam (Letters, August 14) advises "the Palestine Arabs to stop being fractious and take up what is now the quarter loaf".

It is by no means certain that Israel is prepared to grant Palestine Arabs even a quarter of the land of Palestine. What is certain is that, if the quarter is granted, Israel will retain the right to police the quarter from F16s and Apache helicopters (as happened in Gaza after the withdrawal of Israeli ground forces a year ago) and to eliminate without charge or trial any individual within the quarter it considers to be a terrorist. In other words, the "quarter loaf" will not amount to an independent Palestinian state.

Frank Adam's reference to the "quarter loaf" points to the root of the problem.

The project initiated by Britain in 1917 with the aim of establishing a loyal Jewish colony in Palestine meant the displacement

## Editorial Commentary

### May 1976: British Government Threatens Republic With Loyalist Violence.

Recently-released official papers show that within a short time of unexplained murders, and two years after the Dublin and Monaghan Bombings of 1974, eight heavily-armed SAS men were arrested on the Irish side of the Border. They were in civilian clothes and heavily armed. They were travelling in three cars and there was a 2-hour gap between the first and second capture. The two groups had different cover stories. They had machine-guns, a sawn-off, pump-action shotgun, and a dagger. Police questioned them about the murder of Seamus Ludlow, an elderly bachelor with no political affiliations whose body was found near Dundalk just 4 days earlier. They were also quizzed about the Dublin and Monaghan Bombings. They were charged with possessing firearms with intent to endanger life and brought before the Special Criminal Court, where they bailed. The *Irish News*, relying on archive research, revealed the lengths to which the British Government was willing to go to obtain the exoneration of these men. A number of different forms of pressure, which could be brought to bear on the Irish, were suggested by civil servants. Of particular interest, in view of persistent allegations of security force/loyalist paramilitary collusion, is the threat that, if the SAS men were imprisoned, "There could be a strong and violent reaction by

*loyalist paramilitaries"* (IN 13.7.06). Another threat was that British forces would be withdrawn 10 miles inside the NI Border, creating "a non-man's land in which the terrorists could do what they would". Other possible sanctions considered by the Cabinet Office were:

"an embargo on trade, a ban on remittances, withdrawal of social security benefits from Irish citizens, prohibition or limitation of Irish immigration and the ending of the voting rights of Irish citizens in this country" (Letter of G.W. Harding of FCO to T.F. Benchley in Cabinet Office, 18.5.1976). Milder measures could be a sustained propaganda campaign, "a suspension of... contacts with the Irish on Northern Ireland matters and a refusal of training and other facilities to the Irish security services". Behind the scenes contacts on Northern Ireland was the only form of involvement granted to the Irish Government in those days.

An official predicted that, if imprisoned, the SAS men could receive the same sort of violence as "prison officers" had meted out to those accused of the Birmingham pub bombings the previous year.

Merlyn Rees was the NI Secretary of State at the time, Garret FitzGerald was the Irish External Affairs Minister, while Paddy Cooney was Minister for Justice. In the event, the Coalition Government bowed to British pressure. The men were cleared of the more serious charge and fined £100 each on a lesser charge. Whether this *denouement* resulted from fear of British official displeasure or of unofficial retaliation via a Loyalist onslaught it is not possible to say. (Needless to say the *Irish Times* ignored these revelations.)

of the native Arab population to make way for the colonists, as had been done in North America in the previous century.

A "quarter loaf" (if that) is all that's available to Arabs today. An historical wrong has been done to the Arab people of Palestine.

David Morrison

Irish Independent of 22nd August 2006

## Iran And Genocide

Melanie Phillips (The Spectator, August 5) writes that Iran is pledged to "the genocide of the Jews, as a prelude to destroying the West and infidels everywhere". I have difficulty reconciling this with the fact that a seat is reserved in the Iranian Parliament for Iranian Jews. Does the genocide pledge not apply to Iranian Jews?

David Morrison  
*Spectator*, 12.8.06

Bruce Arnold warned the Irish Government against sending troops to the Lebanon, when it appeared that the French would be leading the UN deployment. He wrote: "can we trust the French? As former colonists in Lebanon—fortunately for us, not tarred by the British-in-Cork brush—their position has been a difficult one to accept by any potential UN participant" (Irish Independent 19.8.06). What does that convoluted wording mean? *That the French did not behave as badly in Lebanon as the British did in Cork. Nevertheless, as the former colonial power, they cannot be trusted.* Bruce Arnold is hardly a convert to anti-colonialism! His objections to France are not spelled out clearly, but he obviously feels that Hezbollah should be disarmed and fears the French would not do his. (And, by the way, who is the "we" this Englishman speaks of?)

More on page 8

## Remembering The Arms Trial

### A Matter Of Honour

I was very surprised but greatly honoured when Sheila asked me if I would give a short talk at this the 3rd Commemoration of Jim Kelly's death and, knowing how Sheila and family and friends have been so loyal and committed to clearing Jim's name for the honourable and loyal person he so definitely was, I said I would do my bit. When I asked what I should say, Sheila said "what is in your heart" so that is what I'll endeavour to do.

I had no knowledge of Jim's existence until he was catapulted into the National Limelight with the scandalous and most unfair "Arms Trial". I knew some of the others accused—C. J. Haughey was in class with me in Joeys and in UCD and we studied for accountancy and set up business together. I first met Neil Blaney at the famous By-Election when he was first elected to replace his late father in Dáil Éireann and I accompanied my father to Dún na nGall and said a few words at an "after Mass Meeting". Albert Luykx was a respected neighbour of mine in Sutton. John Kelly I got to know after the Trial, when my friend Gerry Jones was trying to get him started again, and when I was handling a small Fund which Gerry Jones and Des McGreevy had set up to assist deserving Republican relatives. Distribution was made through John and the late Independent Republican MP, Paddy Kennedy.

That left Jim Kelly whose whole performance in the Court I followed—what was reported in the newspaper. After one particular disgraceful episode by the then Minister for Defence, my brother, Kevin, who had been Minister for Defence when first elected to Dáil Éireann, was leaving the Court, which he had attended each day, the former Commander in Chief, General McEoin, turned to him and said "wasn't that nauseating". When I read the detailed account Jim recorded, the whole dreadful plot which was clearly designed to shaft Haughey and Blaney—for different reasons, I believe, became clear to me and the career and good name of a mere lowly Captain was completely disregarded—with tampered evidence in Colonel Hefferon's case, and, as papers since made public prove, not only politicians but also Civil Servants contributed to the disgraceful performance

Speech of Harry Boland on 16th July 2006  
at Glasnevin Cemetery, during a  
commemoration of Captain James Kelly on  
the Third Anniversary of his death

into which Jim Kelly was wrongly and carelessly drawn.

I was reared in the environment of that wonderful, if comparatively small group of patriotic people who tackled the "Greatest Empire" the world had ever known, who thought and think of themselves as the Master Race, and they almost succeeded in driving them from our small country. They were truly "Politicians by Accident" and even in the sad state of affairs that they inherited, I was always satisfied that their objectives and love for Ireland was sacrosanct.

Then, to have to realise that some of those who succeeded this group could be so self-centred as to concoct a false charge—I found very hard to believe. Even when our Courts of Justice found those wrongly accused people "Not Guilty" we had the unedifying and disgraceful accusation by a Senior Politician that the Jury had been "got at". Forcing one unidentified member of that Jury to break silence to deny categorically that any pressure had been put on the Jury—apart of course from the clear evidence produced to it in Court.

Having got to know Jim I never had any doubt regarding the complete honesty of what he said and did. Indeed I had the great pleasure last September to attend the commissioning of my grandson, Aonghus, in the Irish Navy in Haulbowline when I heard for the first time in detail the Oath sworn on these occasions and this confirmed my strongly held opinion that Jim's behaviour through all that awful episode was positively faithful to that same oath that he had sworn when he was commissioned.

I am pleased that, even though it came after Jim's death, our present Taoiseach publicly stated he was satisfied that Jim had always acted under orders, I feel that the full Government apology was not given for political reasons but I sincerely hope that the official Government acknowledgement of this will be issued without further delay, particularly now that even further proof that Sheila, her family and supporters have since unearthed.

*Guím suaimhneas sioraí agus rath Dé ar anam dilis Jim.*

## Thoughts Occasioned by Harry Boland's Oration

Pat Murphy has said that, as any society needs a political/social framework within which it can cohere, he came to the conclusion a good while back that the only possible such framework in the South of Ireland was Republicanism (in the Irish sense). In practice I, and I think most of my colleagues, have been operating politically for some time past within such a framework. But this was the first time it had been spelled out for me.

As communists we had to accept that communism is not a foreseeable framework for Irish social development. In any case, the 1916 Proclamation and the Programme of the First Dail, should be enough to keep any left-wing politics going for generations. Indeed, I was looking back on the 60s with my former IRA OC and I thought that, had we not been hamstrung by socialist theology, we might have noticed that the state we lived in at the time was already rather socialist—though overlain with a Catholic ideology through which the nation developed and cohered.

Well, the Catholic framework is gone and is unlikely to return. But the Republican world view has shown a surprising resilience in the face of academic, media and political assaults—all orchestrated from Britain.

These assaults were intended to root out a distinctive Irish view of the world and of itself. But once exposed in public, and then by a very few people, these revisionist assaults have led to large meetings around the country, to riots in Dublin, to an avalanche of letters and articles to newspapers and magazines, and a demand for pamphlets and books countering the revisionist view of our history—or more precisely the attempts to make us ashamed of our history and reintegrate us into British non-culture. The project has been to atomise us, as has largely been done in Britain outside of some of its ethnic minorities—now under direct assault.

This may seem a strange comment on the oration by Harry Boland at the graveside of Capt. James Kelly in Glasnevin on July 16th. But that occasion



was symptomatic of a resurgence of Republicanism, given the content of the oration, the brief speeches of Mrs. Kelly and others and, above all, the coming together at the graveside of people who, in another era, would have crossed the road to avoid each other, or worse. Harry's father would have cheerfully shot mine, and *vice versa*. And I don't think that Harry Blaney's family would have gone on picnics with mine. But here we had nothing to differ about.

The Chairman spoke on behalf of the organisers, the 1916-21 Committee, heirs of the "Old IRA", and talked about relying on the men of no property. All this was given a great reception by a gathering composed of Fianna Failers, Fine Gaelers, socialists, communists, modern day republicans, people with roots in Clan na Poblachta, and soldiers past and present (official and unofficial!).

This was only one of many events of a similar nature that I have attended around the country recently. Also in my travels I have discovered a renewed interest in the Irish language, especially among the young. The GAA is, of course, the most important national institution. And this is particularly important in cosmopolitan Dublin.

The decline of the Church and the effects of British non-culture have brought that city, though not the other cities, to the brink of complete social breakdown. The GAA has been the crucial institution preventing that. (Though the European orientation of the Trade Union movement has also to be mentioned in maintaining social coherence.) More than a week before Dublin was due to play in the All-Ireland semi-final, there were more flags, banners and bunting in working class estates than I've ever seen in Sandy Row on the 12th of July. (And never mind that they must have known that Cork would win anyway in the final!)

It is my view that a cultural regeneration is occurring in Ireland—and is being helped to occur by the united efforts of people from every shade of Republican opinion—most of whom received a rude awakening by the war in the North.

**Conor Lynch**

## Editorial Commentary

continued

**Iran** "must prove that it has no military applications in mind for its enrichment" of nuclear fuel, says the *Irish Times*. How do you prove what you have not got in your mind? But the Irish public can rest secure: "the regime in Tehran knows well that most western nations are determined to do whatever is necessary to prevent it building a nuclear arsenal... Israel cannot be expected to entertain the fact of a nuclear-armed Iran..." (*Iran's Diplomatic Two-Step*. 23.8.06).

**Northern Bank Raid.** Despite the best efforts of the security forces of two States, no link has been proved between the IRA and this robbery. The only money recovered so far, which can be definitively linked to the raid, has been found in an RUC social club. Yet journalist Conor Lally listed authoritatively the particular investments that the money was robbed for in *IRA Bank Money Was For Investment In Bulgaria* (IT 26.6.06). His evidence amounts to the statement that "*The Irish Times* has learned" this. It seems that the Irish Criminal Assets Bureau is investigating 5 individuals, that the PSNI Chief Constable "has said he believes that the IRA carried out the robbery", and that "His views have been echoed by Minister for Justice, Michael McDowell". Such is journalism in the alleged paper of record. Faith in God has transmuted itself into unquestioning belief in Gospel of Power!

**Loyalists** did their best to provoke the Catholic community with their 11th Night Bonfire Decorations. The Ahoghill Bonfire was decorated with a Tricolour bearing the words, *Fuck Mickey Bo'*—alluding to Michael McIlveen, the schoolboy beaten to death by a gang in Ballymena. An elaborate bonfire in Belfast, bore the names of 10 IRA men who died on Hunger-Strike 25 years ago.

**The SDLP** is said to have hired consultants to advise on reversing its electoral decline, and to have been told to stress crime issues. Its spokesmen also seem to believe they can gain by making an equivalence between the DUP and Sinn Féin. Thus Deputy Leader Dr. Alasdair McDonnell demands: "*The DUP has got to stop messing around on power-sharing and Sinn Féin has got to stop messing around on its commitment to a lawful society...*" (22.7.06 IT).

**"Official IRA Said To Be Behind Beating"**. The *Irish News* states that the "Official IRA was last night blamed for a so-called 'punishment beating in west Belfast which left a teenager with serious head injuries... in Albert Street in the lower Falls area..." (14.8.06).

**Fool's Gold.** Dr. Constantin Gurdgiev has dismissed Irish prosperity, as merely based on a property boom and Multi National activity (*Ireland Is Rich All Right—Rich In Fool's Gold*, Daily Mail 11.7.06). He says quoted shares, and assets of financial institutions, depend on real estate for up to 70% of their value, while 82% of household savings are linked to property. In 2005 around two-thirds of new jobs were linked to housing. 75% of export earnings are Multi-National-generated, while c17% of Irish GDP was derived from the activities of such companies outside the country. Less than 30% of GDP was produced by the indigenous, non-construction-based private sector. He suggests real wealth is manifested by public structures of various kinds. Dr. Gurdgiev edits *Business & Finance* magazine and lectures in Economics at UCD.

**Haughey.** In *Carve-Ups Since Foundation Of The State*, *Irish Times* star reporter, Stephen Collins, recently described how constituencies have been manipulated for party-political advantage down the years. A large inset in the article read, "*In 1988 the Haughey government attempted to manipulate the [electoral] commission by changing the terms of reference*". Governments have every right to set the terms of reference of Commissions they establish. But, more to the point, as Collins himself admits, it was Jim Tully of Fine Gael who had earlier produced "*a cynical constituency revision, dubbed the 'Tullymander', clearly designed to produce a seat bonus for Labour and Fine Gael*" (9.8.06 IT). Jack Lynch then established an Electoral Commission in 1979 to cut out such malpractice. Haughey's 'offence' was to try to specify that the Commission could only set up 5-seat constituencies in order to avoid breaching County boundaries, but he failed to win sufficient support for his move. Now, which of those two events deserved the sensationalist inset caption? (Incidentally, Frank Dunlop's memoir is well worth reading on such matters.) The drive to denigrate Haughey is unremitting, even after death.

**Break Up Of Yugoslavia.** A Dublin subscriber writes (11 May 2006): "I'm reading with interest the May issue. A small correction—it's not true to say (page 4) that Serbs were the only people in



Yugoslavia who had conducted a state—Montenegro had (unless you count them as Serbs). More substantially, I think you don't give enough emphasis to the contribution of the Serbs to the break up of Yugoslavia, eg. the collapse of the collective Presidency."

**No Irish Died!** Close readers of the *Irish Times* will wonder how it is that some weeks no Irish people died—or so it could be thought, if one relied on its Obituary pages for information. It merits a study of its own. Suffice it for present to say that no Irish people died in the week ending 12th August. The *Irish Times* obituaries that week were of James Van Allen, US space project pioneer; Vincent J. Fuller, US trial lawyer; Lt. Col. George Styles, a British bomb disposal expert; and Anthony Cave Brown, a British spy-journalist. There was another such week on 1st August. Featured were: Aaron Spelling, US producer; Lyle Stuart, US far-out publisher; and Sir Peter Smithers, a British spy. It is also noticeable that native Irish deceased consistently are rated lower and get smaller write-ups than others.

**Smoking.** That Irish anti-smoking regulations were introduced as a piece of social engineering, rather than as a Health & Safety measure for employees, as claimed by Minister Micheál Martin at the time, is shown by a curious court event, which was not strictly a legal case, as no prosecution or civil tort was involved. Malone Engineering Products Ltd. of Dublin sought a High Court declaration that its 'Freshwall' structure, designed to be erected beside pubs, was compliant with the *Public Health Tobacco Act 2002*. The Health and Safety Executive opposed endorsement. Justice Roderick Keane rejected 'Freshwall', not because it breaches the fresh air provisions of the legislation, but because it is too comfortable! The structure has a timber floor, radiators, a mirror at one end, and two TV sets, along with: "*comfortable seating for 27 people*" (IT 22.7.06). In a similar vein, the European Commission recently refused to outlaw as discrimination a denial of employment to someone who smokes outside working hours.

## Processing Peace In Portcullis House

On Tuesday 13th June 2006, Sinn Féin (or its GB organisation the Wolfe Tone Society) held a meeting on the Northern Ireland Peace Process. The venue was Portcullis House, an over-grand building where MPs do their business. Sinn Féin, I feel, was making a point having the event there. They were told they ought to seek a 'franchise' (as if they didn't have one). Having half a dozen people with MP after their names must be soul satisfying. The meeting was addressed by Pat Doherty who took an avuncular attitude to his audience, did little speechifying, but took a lot of questions.

What he did say was that Sinn Féin wants this structure to work, they are not interested in a 'talking-shop' and Gerry Adams's proposal of Ian Paisley for First Minister was a serious attempt to get the DUP to take the Assembly and Peace Process seriously. He was diverted by a question into discussing the DUP and mentioned what he called "*secular*" elements, as opposed to Paisley's Free Presbyterian element (though he hastened to say the Paisley is the dominant figure in the Party). For what it's worth, this seems to me to be a misconception. The DUP is a purely secular organisation. (A member of the Connolly Republican Club in the late 1960s was a Free Presbyterian.) Sinn Féin's conception of what they have taken to calling 'the Unionist community' is somewhat skewed. The DUP may well fall apart when Paisley Senior goes.

Other questions were about the 'marching season'—a Lord Hilton suggested that 'all parties' could ensure that it goes off peacefully, and Pat Doherty agreed.

Hilton also mentioned loyalist decommissioning, and Pat Doherty said that there was a "*straw in the wind*" that the UVF may decommission. A lady, with an old-fashioned 'upper class accent' addressed as "*Moya*" by Dodie

McGuinness who chaired, asked about guns. She said she had attempted to access information about legally-held weapons in Northern Ireland and she agreed with Doherty's assessment that the total was about 120,000, 80% of them in Unionist hands. (That is, one *legal* weapon for every ten persons—an astonishing figure—practically American saturation levels.) I think 'Moya' was trying to get on to the Loyalist paramilitaries' weaponry and Doherty was avoiding the issue—presumably because of the above 'straw in the wind'.

He also mentioned the assertion of Reg Empey (the 'Official' or Ulster Unionist Party leader) that all the Unionist parties have used and abused the Loyalist communities. This might have been 'dig' at the DUP who waxed wroth about Empey allowing the one PUP Assembly member to take the UUP whip and thereby give them an extra Ministerial seat (and of course deprive the DUP of it). The Progressive Unionist Party is the political arm of the UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force), and at its AGM reasserted its connection to the UVF. This means that the UVF is back where it belongs with the Ulster Unionists who set it up in 1912 (and elements of which set it up—again—in 1966).

### THE ('OFFICIAL') I. R. A. HASN'T GONE AWAY, YOU KNOW.

More to the point, the Ministerial position garnered by giving David Ervine the UUP whip can only really go to David Ervine. This will consolidate the 'Sticky' hold on the UUP. That may read very oddly, but the PUP is in intellectual thrall to the remnants of the Workers' Party. (Seán Garland would probably be welcome to sleeping space in many PUP homes should he need such, now he is 'on the run' from Imperial Amerikkka.) There is also the fact that Professors Bew and Patterson entered the UUP on the outbreak of peace in 1994. The Stickies control the Irish Labour Party, a lot of the media, and tracts of Irish academia. Diarmuid Feiritéir—a 'revisionist' historian—was 'outed' as a member of the WPI by John Waters on Radio Éireann recently. 'Stickies' (and we mean the full gamut: WPI, DL, Althusserian professors, post office robbing gunmen, newspaper columnists, lapsed Trotskyists, cryptos and the rest) have been displaced in RTÉ. At least they no longer have a stranglehold over news reporting, but they are still about in large numbers. As noted above, the have two major parties under their sway, if not their

#### Reader's Letter

### Bush's 'in' Joke?

Comrades, Romans, Orangemen, lend me your ears, for this is truly delicious...

"White House spokesman Tony Snow said on Friday that President George W. Bush, had made quick work of Albert Camus' "The Stranger" while on his Texas ranch enjoying a 10-day vacation from Washington".

Now what what is the point of Camus's *Stranger*? What did the stranger do?

He shot an Arab and could offer no explanation—even to himself—as to why he did it . . .

One wonders if a faint light flickered on in Bush's head, as he sat amongst the Moo cows.

Sartre's Ghost

continued on page 11

# Shorts

## from the *Long Fellow*

### THE DECLINE AND FALL

After the last American Presidential election this column suggested:

"There must be many in the American establishment who are wondering if George W's conservative east coast opponent might have been a safer bet to preserve the long term material interests of the Empire."

Nearly two years on Bush is looking like a complete disaster from the USA's point of view. American soldiers are bogged down in Iraq. The Taliban is resurgent in Afghanistan. The divided country of Lebanon is uniting behind the Hezbollah and meanwhile a number of countries in South America are forging alliances with Cuba.

It is unlikely that John Kerry would have been a great President; on the other hand, he might have caused less harm.

### THE NEO CON VISION

But that's not how the neo conservative supporters of George W see things. Following the fall of communism they thought that there was an opportunity for America to dominate the world and domination comes through control of resources. Part of the strategy involved de-stabilising the Lebanon with a view to bringing it within the American-Israel sphere of influence. The ultimate aim is to isolate Iran by weakening its allies in the region: the Hezbollah and Syria.

In the current phase of the strategy it was probably not envisaged that Israel would occupy south Lebanon. It appears that the destruction of the infrastructure was designed to teach the non-Muslim population of Lebanon what happens when US-Israel hegemony is challenged. Another idea was that a weakened Hezbollah might have emboldened pro Israeli elements within the political elite of the Christian community to finish the job that the Israelis had started. It was noticeable that many Christian villages in South Lebanon were untouched during the recent hostilities. However, not only has a civil war failed to materialise, but Lebanese society seems to have united behind the Hezbollah. The US and Israel must therefore revert to "Plan B and C".

### PLAN B

Last year following, the assassination of Rafic Hariri this column said it would keep an eye on Beirut. Now that recent events have taken their course the focus has changed to Paris and Damascus. Plan B is that the UN will 'clean up the mess'.

This seems to be the role of the UN in the world. Following the chaos caused by the various US invasions, the UN's role is to consolidate the facts on the ground. It is a neat division of labour. I once met a Frenchman who served with the UN in the Lebanon for many years. He said that in all the years he spent there he never met a UN soldier who was an American.

Normally, the UN's role would be to neutralise local insurgents, but the Hezbollah is not a defeated army. *Au contraire!* Jacques Chirac has been scrambling to ingratiate himself to the Americans after the Iraq invasion of 2003, but it is extremely unlikely that domestic political considerations will allow France do America and Israel's dirty work in the Lebanon. After promising 200 troops, Chirac has given a commitment to send 2,000 as part of a 15,000 UN force. What its exact role will be is unclear at the time of writing, but it almost certainly will not be involved in disarming the Hezbollah.

### PLAN C

Plan C for the Americans involves talking to the Syrians. Syria has in the past been willing to do political business with the Americans in order to increase its room for manoeuvre. For instance, it is unclear what its role in the current war in Iraq is. In the First Gulf War it backed the Americans. But what can America give it this time to detach it from its Hezbollah and Iranian allies? The Golan Heights: Israel finishing a war with less territory than it started? I doubt it. Damascus might very well decide that George Junior is a much less reliable bet than his East Coast Patrician father.

### THE MONARCHIST PROJECT

In all of this Britain is irrelevant. And that will be the legacy of the American pet poodle Tony Blair in the International sphere: irrelevance.

Of course, Ireland has its own pet poodles, but Sean O Leary is definitely not one of them. He kicked off the annual Michael Collins/Arthur Griffith commemoration at Glasnevin cemetery with a denunciation of Kevin Myers's recent "scurrilous" articles:

"the most shocking thing about the articles was that Myers compared Collins to that scoundrel Winston Churchill who had the temerity to question our neutrality during the Second World War. I have always been very critical of DeValera but he showed his statesmanship in standing up to Churchill during that time."

Unfortunately, the commemoration went downhill from there. At the graveside of Arthur Griffith, Fine Gael MEP and TD Gay Mitchell trotted out the usual revisionist rubbish. He repeated the tired old line that a majority of the people did not vote for a republic in the 1918 election.

No mention was made of the constituencies in Cork that were not contested. Indeed the way Mitchell constructed his speech the impression was given that the 1918 election was a vote for Griffith's ideas of a single monarch for Ireland and Britain along the lines of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was as if 1916 and the First World War had never happened. The title of the speech was: *What Role For A Monarch In A 32 County Ireland?* (It can be read in full on the Fine Gael website, where it is prominently featured.) He indicated that there was no constitutional impediment to a monarch for the 32 counties and that the Unionist attachment to the crown could be accommodated without undermining the dignity of our President. He also quoted Griffith to the effect that Irish independence could have been achieved by peaceful means.

Sensing the lukewarm reaction to Mitchell's speech, William Scally (a former Labour Party Economics advisor) rather apologetically defended Mitchell by saying that it was good to hear provocative and challenging views. This is an entirely bogus defence. The Collins/Griffith commemoration is not a debating society. It is an opportunity to pay homage to two great patriots. If a speech is made at variance with the legacy of Collins and Griffith, the listener cannot heckle or interrupt without undermining the ceremonial dignity of the occasion. The best that the dissenting listener can do is keep his hands clenched firmly in his pockets.

In the light of the fiasco of the Mitchell speech the Collins/Griffith Commemoration Committee needs to decide on criteria for the type of speech to be made. I would suggest that at a minimum the speaker must recognise the legitimacy of the 1916 Rebellion and the War of Independence. The famous economist John Maynard Keynes once said that he changed when circumstances changed. What Griffith said before the First World War is of only academic interest: the essential fact remains that on his deathbed he wished his name would always be associated with that of Michael Collins.

If William Scally wants a debating society he might just as well invite someone like . . . Kevin Myers.

### KEVIN MYERS

In truth the articles by Myers in the *Irish Independent* were not quite as bad as I feared. He says some interesting things about the imperialist warmonger Winston Churchill and his military disasters such as Gallipoli. Regarding the Second World War he refers to "*the destruction of German cities long after all military and moral justification for this murderous strategy had been superseded*"; although he places the prime responsibility for this on Bomber Harris rather than Churchill. Could it be

that Myers is writing better articles now that he has escaped the clutches of *The Irish Times* Politburo (a.k.a. "*the Trust*")?

Regarding Myers's views on Collins, I don't expect much from a writer who writes in the British interest; although why such a columnist is writing in a national paper, even one owned by "Sir" Anthony O'Reilly is another question. At least, Myers is much more straightforward than Gay Mitchell. It is hardly a surprise that he regards the liquidation of the "*Cairo gang*" by Collins's twelve apostles as a criminal act rather than an act of war. His defence of the subsequent British military terror of "*Bloody Sunday*" as being provoked by Collins is right up there along with the Israeli excuses for the invasion of Lebanon.

#### KEVIN MYERS AGAIN

The ubiquitous Myers made an appearance on *Newstalk 106* recently on the subject of immigration. The other guests were Eamonn McCann and a "Keith Best" from some English pressure group. Best made some comment about racism in the *Daily Mail*, *Express* and the *Sun* concerning the immigration issue. Myers then accused him of implying that anyone who questions immigration is a xenophobe and racist.

Best said that Myers was misrepresenting what he actually said. He was talking about how it was handled by the tabloid newspapers in Britain. Then Myers went into a sulk and said that he never really wanted to appear in the discussion because he knew "*Kevin Myers*" (he used the third person) would be accused of xenophobia and racism, which prompted McCann to burst out laughing.

Not for the first time I notice that Myers can dish it out but is not very good at taking it.

## Processing Peace

continued

collective thumb, and they may be in government in both ends of Ireland shortly.

The Assembly will be something of a 'let's pretend' situation even if it is got up and running. The perception that its Ministers are doing something worthwhile will be created. The media are not going to investigate. Sir Anthony O'Reilly got the *Belfast Telegraph* group of papers because his *Independent* group in Great Britain and Ireland supported the Good Friday Agreement. UTV retained its licence to print money because it is a mouthpiece of the NIO. The Beeb in NI has always done what it was told. Pat Rabbitte has shackled the Irish Labour Party to Fine Gael, a combination which is

as likely to repel the electorate as inspire it to vote them into office.

Which emphasises a point in Sinn Féin's favour, the Stickies could not even keep their own show on the road. Rabbitte will be given the shove if he does not get Labour into government, and it is possible that his fellow-Sticks will go with him. They will have proved to have been a liability. Quite where all their fellow travellers will go to, it is difficult to know. They will almost certainly retain their mindless hatred of Republicanism, but that too may be useful to Sinn Féin—lots of people would vote for anybody other than Kevin Myer's recommendation.

#### BACK TO PORTCULLIS

Pat Doherty said in regard to the Assembly, that power over policing should be transferred to it, and that it should be allowed to review public administration. Presumably the last point refers to the expenditure of money in the Six Counties. This is more or less the policy of the UUP from the Molyneux days. It is strongly opposed to quangocracy. Pat Doherty claimed that a United Ireland is "*unfolding before our eyes*", and he pointed out that Sinn Féin is "*leaning on*" Fianna Fáil in the Republic. That is difficult to understand, as SF / FF, at least in terms of their rank and file, appear to be a natural alliance.

In Northern Ireland Sinn Féin is in 'dialogue' with Unionists, or 'the Unionist community'—which is all very well, but the Unionists are not in 'dialogue' with them.

He mentioned that Sinn Féin (and the SDLP) in local government use the d'Hondt system and 'share power'. He noted that the previous week a DUP councillor became the Mayor of Strabane, something entirely unlikely in the normal course of events. Strabane is a Nationalist town. More to the point, this sort of thing does not happen in places where Unionists (of any variety) are on top. Even the Alliance Party can engage in gamesmanship, the Alliance councillors withheld the mayorship from Sinn Féin for some years in Belfast.

#### COMMUNITIES

Sinn Féin's attitude to the Unionists is defective in the sense that, while they are prepared to treat them as a 'community', they clearly put a very narrow interpretation in the term 'community'. The Unionists are a national community, the other Irish nation. Treating them as slow-learners, or being smarmy with them will be counterproductive. The Unionists,

or at least the politically active among them, made it abundantly clear with the destruction of the CEC (Campaign for Equal Citizenship for NI) and of the CLR (Campaign for Labour Representation in NI) that they reject Britishness (except for flags and emblems).

The same people, who put a substantial amount of energy into the destruction of the road into proper Britishness—membership of the political parties of State—did nothing to cultivate an Ulster nationalism. That was the only real alternative to becoming a part of the Irish State system (suitably re-arranged to accommodate them).

It should be put to them that the alternative to becoming citizens of an Irish State (in which they can join or vote for or create whatever political formation they choose), is festering in a political slum. The political parties in contention for the rulership of the UK State can ignore them—and will ignore them—to the detriment of everyone in their 'wee Ulster'.

#### *Wind That Shakes The Barley*

### Loach understands our history

Pierce Martin (Village 27 July) writes that Ken Loach has no knowledge of our history "as his film demonstrates". Pierce, like many of Loach's critics, is wrong. The events portrayed in the film are mainly based on actual incidents that anyone who has studied the period will be familiar with.

Loach has obviously done his research well. He has changed a few details here and there. He is allowed to for two reasons: one, he is making a film, not a documentary and two, he is trying to give an overall flavour of the times. He does this well. He conveys the atmosphere, main events and arguments of a complex period in history in a film of little over two hours. He portrays the British Empire as a failed social and moral entity. The best it could offer its war-heroes (the Tans and Auxies) after their gallant sacrifice was a living, shooting and harassing the citizens of west Cork.

He is also acquainted with the writings of James Connolly. If this concurs with Loach's socialist perspective, so what? It is because Loach is a socialist that he notices such things in the first place and it is equally natural that Irish history should be of interest to him. Pierce backs up his grandiloquent assertion that "Loach

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## Some Issues of Class and Office

In 1967 I attended a funeral in Dean's Grange cemetery, County Dublin, of the repatriated remains of Reggie Dunne and Joe O'Sullivan, who had been executed in August 1922 for the assassination of Sir Henry Wilson that June. The funeral was a flamboyantly militaristic affair, conducted by the pre-split IRA. The future Provo Chief-of-Staff Seán MacStiofáin gave a blood-curdling graveside oration—roaring out his defiance of the 'Free State'—while an IRA gun party fired a volley of shots in salute, before being unsuccessfully pursued by the Garda Special Branch present in the cemetery.

The Dunne/O'Sullivan funeral came as somewhat of a shock to my understanding of Republicanism—but not because of any IRA behaviour. What knocked me back in great surprise was to see an elderly neighbour of mine standing on her own and quietly crying to herself during the course of the ceremony. What on earth was she doing there? No Sinn Féin/IRA

die-hard she, in thrall to the demagogic rhetoric of MacStiofáin. Quite the contrary. I knew Mrs. Brophy as a respectable Fine Gael supporter, while her husband Mr. Brophy had been a Free State army veteran of the Civil War who proudly sported the military medals of the state that MacStiofáin refused to recognise.

They were good neighbours, for such neighbourliness on our street during the 1950s and 1960s was not dependent on any studied informality of adults addressing each other on a first name basis, or even necessarily knowing what those Catholic, Protestant or Jewish first names actually were. Still less was it dependent on any coincidence of political views (otherwise the O'Riordans would not have stood a chance with anybody!). One of the Brophy daughters baby-sat me, but it was with my own contemporaries, the son and daughter of Mrs. Brophy's nephew Mr. Golden, who was living next door to her, that I had the more immediate friendship of childhood playmates.

It would, however, be misleading to suggest that the Fine Gael identity made absolutely no difference to me as to how I interacted with such neighbours. My mother used to bring me to the annual commemorative Mass for "*Rory, Dick, Joe and Liam*", the Four Courts IRA leaders—O'Connor, Barrett, McKelvey and Mellows—who had been executed as reprisals by the Free State Government on 8th December 1922. (One such Mass was the only occasion that Dev ever said "hello" to me, as he was on a mid-1950s 'break' in Opposition.)

(My mother was not being entirely consistent in her commitment to such anti-Treatyite commemorations: She continued to cherish the memory of Michael Collins, with whom as a 12 year old girl she had exchanged neighbourly greetings in their native Clonakilty on 22nd August 1922, only hours before he was to be killed in action while fighting against the Republic. It came as a great shock to her to learn 40 years later that a relative of hers had been one of the Republican ambush party that killed him.)

While respecting Mr. Brophy as a kindly neighbour, I was also aware that he had fought on the opposite side of the Civil War as Rory, Dick, Joe and Liam, and that it was his army that had killed them. Mr. Brophy was not a man I would

ever dream of asking about his 1920s experiences. Unfortunately, that 'Don't mention the war' syndrome extended back before the Civil War years to also preclude discussing his War of Independence experiences—a great pity because, as I have recently learned, he had in fact played a significant role as the IRA Quartermaster in Fingal, North County Dublin.

I had no such reticence in the family circle of other childhood playmates whose adult members were Fianna Fáil supporters. I questioned one of them about the real terror he had experienced in Croke Park in November 1920 when the Black-and-Tans perpetrated their Blood Sunday massacre. But not only that. From him I learned that the Irish Civil War had in many ways been what its Irish language name designates, a War of the Brothers. He told me of the Free Stater Seán Hales fighting against his Republican brother, Tom Hales. It was from him that I also learned for the first time of the horrific torture previously endured by that same Tom Hales at the hands of the Essex Regiment during the War of Independence, an incident on which is based one of the most gruesome scenes in Ken Loach's prize-winning film *The Wind That Shakes The Barley*.

None of my ease in holding such childhood discussions with Fianna Fáil neighbours, while avoiding them with Fine Gaelers, had anything whatsoever to do with class. If anything, some of the former were more inclined to have social 'notions', while the broader Brophy-Golden family embodied one of the most democratic class compositions on the street—with an academic, a civil servant, a clerical worker, a factory worker and a horticultural worker all combining to defy neat 'Marxist' sociological classification. For me the dividing line was the Civil War pure-and-simple.

Sometimes, however, it is left to the next generation to ask the hard, previously unasked, question that elicits a more honest response, going beyond any stock partisan position. At the age of 6 my youngest child once asked my father, "*What side would James Connolly have fought on in the Civil War?*". Knowing my father's own IRA background down to the 1940s, I expected a quick-fire obvious response—that Connolly would, of course, have fought shoulder to shoulder alongside Social Republicans like Liam Mellows and Peadar O'Donnell in the Republic's Four Courts garrison. But this was not the answer that came. As there had been no political agenda behind a child's question, my father said nothing for a moment, while the answer that then followed was one that was in fact reflective rather than reflexive: "*I think that Connolly would have fought to prevent the Civil War*".

### Loach film

continued

doesn't give a fig" about Irish history by implying he doesn't like Loach's "warped" politics—hardly an argument by any standards.

Pierce further asserts that Ireland did not need to fight for its freedom and its Declaration of Independence was "illegitimate". Even by Pierce's standards, the 1918 election had been fought on an independence platform by Sinn Féin and, far from being illegitimate, Dáil Éireann was the embodiment of the will of the people. This partly explains why it was so successful and why Britain tried to suppress it.

The Irish delegation were blocked from getting a hearing at the 1919 Peace Conference by the British. The Irish were thus trying all the "approved" channels at the same time and Britain was giving a firm "no". Had the Irish Volunteers/IRA been standing idly around, the British would have also used the RIC to roll that organisation up in short shrift and stymied our bid for freedom even further. To suggest Ireland would have gained independence from Home Rule is pure speculation, but there is reason to suggest that such independence would have come very late in the day or not at all.

**Nick Folley**  
Village, 4.8.06

It had, of course, been British imperialism and not any internal class dynamics of Irish society itself that insisted on such a war being fought out, and it is this factor that makes the IRB's subversion of the 1919-22 Republic all the more tragic, since the leaders genuinely believed that they were ultimately acting as far more clever Republicans. And that is why, despite what I consider to be a powerful portrayal of the War of Independence in *The Wind That Shakes The Barley*, it rings so hollow in its supposedly acute 'class analysis' of the Civil War, as summed up by the film critic of *Le Monde Diplomatique* on July 1st:

"In its tragic second part, the Irish freedom fighters are torn apart in disagreement over acceptance of the Treaty ... In the film, pragmatists are pitted against idealists who dream of a socialist order".

History should not be written backwards. The fascist Blueshirt ideologist James Hogan, author of *Could Ireland Become Communist?* (1935), had not always been so unequivocally anti-Soviet. As both an ideological and military leader in the Free State's Civil War against the IRA, Hogan had been particularly inspired by Bolshevik Russia as ruled by Trotsky. In the Spring of 1924 Hogan appeared before the Committee of Inquiry into the Free State 'Army Mutiny':

"Hogan's testimony to the inquiry also reflected his fascination with Russia. He had met with Soviet officers in Paris and seems to have exchanged views on the conditions of the Free State and Red armies. A particular admiration for Trotsky and the way he dealt with factionalism in the Red Army is also evident. When asked at the inquiry whether Trotsky's methods would be tolerated in Irish society, Hogan replied that the methods employed were not, in fact, that harsh. It would be interesting to know whether he had read Trotsky's defence of 'the Red Terror' and his argument that the only way a revolutionary government can defend itself from counter-revolution is through harsh measures proportional to the threat posed. Did Hogan apply this to conditions in the Free State during the Civil War? It is possible, as he was an admirer of Kevin O'Higgins whose courage and resolve in the face of anarchy, he believed, saved the state". (E.M. Hogan, 'Biographical Sketch', in Donnchadh Ó Corráin, editor, *James Hogan; Revolutionary, Historian And Political Scientist*, p11).

One of the most belligerent polemics in support of Free State action against what he considered to be the 'counter-revolution' of the 'Irregulars' came from the IRA War of Independence and Free State Civil War veteran John A. Pinkman. In Pinkman's memoirs, entitled *In The Legion Of The Vanguard*, he wrote as follows of the invasion of Munster by the

Free State Army's Dublin Guard:

"Apart from sporadic attacks either by lone snipers or by marauding bands of Irregulars, large-scale resistance to the National Army had, however, ceased by mid-August (1922). While General Murphy's troops were advancing on Kilmallock, a contingent of the Dublin Guard under General Paddy Daly had landed at Fenit (on the Kerry coast) on 2 August and swept through Tralee and Co. Kerry, and on the night of 8 August General Emmet Dalton's force had landed at Passage West and then pressed through Cork. As the so-called 'Munster Republic' collapsed, our duties were to garrison the principal towns and mop up the scattered Irregulars and their leaders..."

"Of all the counties in Ireland Kerry was probably the most determined in its opposition to the Treaty and the authority of the National Army, and it was from Kerry as well as from parts of West Cork that the Irregulars drew their greatest support. Most of the prisoners we held were anti-Treatyites who'd either been captured in the field or arrested in their homes, but the great majority of them could better be described as political prisoners than as prisoners of war" (pp167-8,192).

The culture clash during this phase of the Civil War went deeper than divisions over the Treaty. Rural Kerry experienced its occupation by the Dublin Guard as something akin to a proletarian dictatorship. Indeed, there was no fighting unit of significance on either side of the Civil War that was more self-consciously working class than the Dublin Guard. As Pinkman recalled its formation:

"The first British army barracks in Dublin to be handed over to the Provisional Government was Beggar's Bush barracks, headquarters of the hated Auxiliaries. Michael Collins decided to establish the headquarters of the National Army of the Irish Free State in that barracks, and by 31 January 1922, the nucleus of the army was formed there when it was occupied by a small force of the Dublin Guard led by Captain Paddy Daly. Enlistment for the National Army began in February and on 1 March 1922 I entered Beggar's Bush barracks and joined up" (p85).

"Morale in our two companies was very high, largely because all of us had seen active service in the IRA prior to the Truce. We were also very proud to be designated the Dublin Guards Brigade ... Most of us were still without uniforms, however, when one day both companies were ordered to 'Fall in!' with our rifles outside the barracks. A military band appeared and our two companies marched behind it through O'Connell Street ... But when we reached the General Post Office the band struck up 'The Red Flag!' Some of us gave a cheer, and after some laughter in the ranks, we all joined in singing the chorus:

*Through cowards flinch and traitors sneer,*

*We'll keep the Red Flag flying here.*

Jasus! How I wished James Connolly might have been there!" (p88).

"On Thursday morning, 6 July—after a good night's rest—our small party of troops, who'd been in the Findlater buildings since Sunday 2 July {and from where they had fatally wounded Cathal Brugha on 5 July—MO'R}, was sent to occupy Independent House in Middle Abbey Street and protect it from being seized by anti-Treatyites. The staff of the *Irish Independent* clearly resented our presence and did everything they could to make our stay as uncomfortable as possible. They resented us not because we were soldiers or because they were sympathetic to the anti-Treatyites; they resented us simply because we were *Irish* troops. Today {in the 1960s}, most readers of the *Irish Independent* ('Ireland's most popular newspaper') probably don't release how reactionary and pro-British that newspaper once was. Under the proprietorship of William Murphy it not only tried to break Larkin's and Connolly's Transport and General Workers' Union in 1913, but in 1916 its editorial called for the execution of the leaders of Rising!" (p144).

The *Le Monde Diplomatique* illusion that "*the Free State versus the Workers' Republic*" had been the issue of the Irish Civil War is for the birds. And no issue of class politics had ever been behind the absence until 1967 of any O'Riordan-Brophy conversation concerning the 1920s. As mentioned before, Mrs. Brophy was the mother of both industrial and horticultural workers. The ice was, however, broken by my mother when I related my encounter at the Dunne/O'Sullivan funeral. She later asked Mrs. Brophy (néé Golden) why she had been there. Mrs. Brophy explained that in the early 1920s the Golden family had been living in London; Reggie Dunne had actually been staying with her family on the eve of the Wilson assassination; and that the killing had in fact been ordered by none other than Michael Collins himself.

It was only in recent years, when I read of the IRA/IRB/Free State army Intelligence role of Seán Golden in the London of the 1920s, that I came to a full realisation of the significance of the Dunne/O'Sullivan funeral. For 99 percent of those present on that day in 1967 they were attending an IRA funeral; but—as far as Free State supporter Mrs. Brophy was concerned—it was also the final IRB funeral.

There can be little doubt that without that same IRB there would have been no Easter Rising lasting all week, well beyond what would otherwise have been a very quickly extinguished bloody protest from Connolly's small Irish Citizen Army. It made all the difference. Notwithstanding Seán O'Casey's oft-noted quirky critique in both *The Plough and the Stars* and his

*Story Of The Irish Citizen Army*, he also privately admitted the significance of that Rising (if only to damn the Hungarian Uprising by comparison!) in a letter to my mother on November 27, 1956:

"In Easter Week, with a hostile people, and the might of Britain against them, a few hundred badly-armed lads held back the British power for a week. How much longer would they have held out if they had a well-armed force say of 10,000, backed by a united people?"

In terms of attributing personal credit where credit is due, it is also necessary to recognise that the Rising would not have happened without the return to Ireland from the USA in 1907 of Tom Clarke "*with the declared aim of putting the IRB back on its revolutionary Fenian lines*" (Brian Murphy, *Patrick Pearse And The Lost Republican Ideal*, p38). It was therefore, perfectly understandable that—when privately writing her memoirs during the years 1939 to 1943—Kathleen Clarke was at particular pains to write of her husband Tom in such a way that his pivotal role was underscored. But did she exaggerate, at least when it came to Easter Week itself, concerning her claims for Tom Clarke as President? She wrote as follows:

"On the Tuesday of Holy Week, 1916, Tom told me the great news, that the Rising had been arranged for the following Sunday, that a Proclamation had been drawn up to which he was first signatory. I said, 'That means you will be first President'. 'Yes', he said, 'that is what it means'... When he was proposed as the first signatory he had demurred, saying he did not think that such an honour should be conferred upon him... He was very surprised, when Tomás MacDonagh rose and said that to his mind no other man was entitled to the honour. 'You, sir, by your example, your courage, your enthusiasm, have led us younger men to where we are today... No man will precede you with my consent'. Being very much touched by what McDonagh had said, Tom agreed to sign." (*Revolutionary Woman—My fight For Ireland's Freedom*, p19).

"At that meeting Tom, as first signatory, was President, Pearse was made Commander-in-Chief of Ireland and Connolly Commander of Dublin. {This had been the argument made by Muriel MacSwiney in her letter to me of April 7, 1966—MO'R.} No other positions were created; the other signatories were all members of the Provisional Government... Seán MacDermott was sent from the meeting to see John MacNeill and explain the position to him, i.e. the expected landing of arms and the general plan, and also to ask him to stand in with them and put his name to the Proclamation, and to surrender his position as head of the Irish Volunteers to PH Pearse. He reported back that MacNeill had agreed to go in with them, and that he either signed or agreed to sign the Proclamation, I can't remember which..." (p70).

"Easter Monday... Miss MacMahon

came from the GPO with messages, and gave me a graphic description of what was happening there. She said, 'Mr. Pearse would make you laugh; he was going around the GPO like one in a dream, getting in the way of those trying to get things in order, and Mr. Clarke said, "For God's sake will someone get that man an office and a desk, with paper and pens, and set him down to write"'. There he sat writing most of the week, and brought out the paper called *The War News...*" (p79).

"When the release of the sentenced men was announced {June 1917}... Seán McGarry was the first I recognised... When his welcome to his family was over he turned to me and said 'Who the hell made Pearse President?'. I said, 'I was waiting for you and the others to come home and explain that to me. I presumed you would know if anything had happened during the week in the GPO to change the order of things they had started with, though Tom had no knowledge of a change when I was speaking to him in Kilmainham Jail'. Seán said, 'Nothing happened to change things. Tom was President'. He said no more, as friends were crowding round him, but he gave me to understand he would not leave the matter there" (p144).

Well he did leave the matter there. And, as far as the general public was concerned, so also did Kathleen Clarke herself in 1966 during the Easter Rising 50th anniversary commemorations, when she accepted an honorary PhD from President de Valera and made no Presidential claims for her husband. Nor did she at any stage do so before her death in 1972, for her memoirs were never published until her grandniece published them in 1991.

But, even if it is accepted that when the text of the Proclamation had been finalised on the Tuesday before the Rising there then existed some common understanding that being the first signatory also implied becoming President (notwithstanding the fact that the actual text of the Proclamation stayed completely silent in respect of such an office), Kathleen Clarke was totally misleading in proclaiming that nothing had changed in the interim. What had changed was that the Irish Volunteers Chief of Staff, who had also agreed to that Proclamation on that very same Tuesday, had now gone on to countermand the Rising the following Sunday. Issues of Irish Volunteer legitimacy, an organisation in which Clarke himself had previously declined to accept any office, along with arguments for a unified chain of command, combined to make it logical for Pearse to also assume the Presidency. And if it was a *coup* on his part, it was hardly a solo-run usurpation. Connolly and at least the majority of the Provisional Government would have had to agree to it, and maybe even Clarke himself, even if only passively so. The fact that the documents emanating

from the GPO during Easter Week itself were signed by Pearse as President, hardly resulted from Pearse becoming an impostor.

Charles Townshend has commented:

"Seven men signed the proclamation as the Provisional Government. Two of them were not in the GPO during Easter week; it is not clear whether the other five took any action in their governmental role, or whether any of them were given particular administrative roles. The general view (following the announcement in the single issue of *Irish War News* published on Tuesday) is that Pearse became 'Commanding (sic) in Chief of the Army of the Republic and President of the Provisional Government'. Tom Clarke's widow, however, always maintained that Clarke had become President, and this certainly would have followed standard IRB thinking. Some others agree with her contention, but the issue is a murky one, and the general lack of concern with it tells its own story. It is certainly significant that both civil and military supremacy was vested in Pearse—who became a kind of generalissimo—and that the military function was given primacy. Connolly and the other government members seem to have seen their function as exclusively military... The contrast with the later Sinn Féin action when the republic was re-established in January 1919 is very striking, and it is this perhaps more than anything else that marks the 1916 rebellion out as a Fenian rather than a Sinn Féin manifestation" (*Easter 1916: The Irish Rebellion*, pp161-2).

The missing ingredient in that paragraph is, of course, that the "*Sinn Féin action*" of January 1919—in formally declaring established the very Republic that had been initially proclaimed in Easter 1916—was the action of a Parliament democratically elected in December 1918. It had been the total suppression of any possibilities of a recourse to democracy in Easter 1916 that necessarily meant that the Rising itself could have been nothing else but a "*Fenian manifestation*". Yet Kathleen Clarke played fast and loose with just how Fenian it had or had not to be, depending on one's views as to where the centre of authority was properly located. She related that on Good Friday "*Dinny McCullough called for instructions... Before leaving he said, very solemnly, 'Tom, you carried this thing at a meeting at which I was not present. Well, let it pass now, but when this is all over, I'll have it out with you'*" (p73).

She neglected to indicate any reason why McCullough might have felt aggrieved. So intent was she on establishing Presidential status for Tom Clarke in respect of the 1916 Republic, that she 'overlooked' the argument that, if strict IRB legitimacy had been adhered to, that office might have been expected to reside with quite a different person—the President of the Supreme Council of the IRB itself. So it was that her narrative 'forgot' to mention the Presidential office



already held by McCullough.

In her biography of Pearse, Ruth Dudley Edwards drew attention to the fact that, notwithstanding Pearse's mobilisation orders of April 3rd in respect of Easter Sunday April 23, McCullough had still been kept in the dark by Clarke:

"Even McCullough, President of the IRB and theoretical leader of any provisional government set up in an IRB revolution, did not know what was going on. Worried by rumours, he came down from Belfast to see Tom Clarke: 'I said to Tom, "What in the name of God is going to happen?"' He said, "I declare to God I know nothing more than you do. All I know is I have orders to report to Ned Daly {Clarke's brother-in-law—MO'R} on Sunday and have my arms and equipment and I have them ready".' "*(Patrick Pearse —The Triumph Of Failure, p265).*

Brian Murphy has described the situation succinctly:

"The IRB men ... committed to revolution ... assumed control of the military operations of the organisation in 1915. Their power was based on a Military Council and not on the officially recognised apex of authority, the Supreme Council. In September 1915 Denis McCullough from Belfast was elected President of the eleven man Supreme Council. Neither McCullough, nor the Supreme Council, however, directed the plans for the Rising. These were drawn up by the Military Council which was composed of Clarke, MacDermott, Pearse, Plunkett and Kent. It was these men, together with James Connolly who joined them in January 1916, who led their small band of followers—numbering at the most 1,000 men—into action on Easter Monday. The measured assessment of FX Martin concerning the origins of the Rising cannot be improved on: It was, he stated, 'the revolt of a minority, of a minority, of a minority'. The Irish Volunteers were a small minority of the National Volunteers, the IRB formed a small fragment of the Irish Volunteers, and the Military Council of the IRB formed only a small unit of the organisation" (p49).

If such conspiratorial organisation had been necessary to bring about an attempted *coup d'état* in the democratic void of 1916, what of its post-Rising revival when the struggle for self-determination both sought and successfully obtained democratic legitimacy? Again, Brian Murphy has related:

"In August 1916 a meeting was arranged with the widow of Tom Clarke and she conveyed to the Supreme Council of the IRB the names of those men most trusted by her husband. While these developments were taking place within the IRB a move was also made to revive the Irish Volunteers. In September 1916 Cathal Brugha was released from hospital. Although still suffering from the wounds he had received in action at

the South Dublin Union, he was prepared to continue the fight. By December 1916, therefore, a start had been made to revitalise the two organisations most involved in the Rising—the IRB and the Irish Volunteers, and a connection had been re-established with the Clan in America. The unity of purpose was not, however, complete. Brugha, in the words of {IRB Secretary Seán} Ó Muirthile, 'seemed to have lost some of his old faith in the Brotherhood'. He was not alone in his doubts. Denis McCullough, the President of the IRB, and de Valera felt the organisation should be disbanded after the Rising. All three felt that the secret policy of the Military Committee had not produced the best military effect... This difference of opinion in regard to the IRB had momentous consequences at the signing of the Treaty. Already by December 1916 some indication was given of the trouble that lay ahead. Collins, still 'but little known' according to Ó Muirthile, returned from imprisonment and dedicated himself to the restoration of the IRB. In origin, therefore, the renewal of the IRB and the Irish Volunteers contained within itself the seeds of discord, and the grounds for the personal animosity that developed between Brugha and Collins" (pp70-1).

This issue would come to a head concerning the role of the IRB in enforcing the Treaty. So it was that the machine that Kathleen Clarke had done so much to recreate turned against the Republican principles that she herself sought to uphold. Again, as Brian Murphy has recounted:

"Throughout the Treaty talks Collins kept not only the Cabinet of Dáil Eireann informed, but also the Supreme Council of the IRB. On 12 December 1921, Seán Ó Muirthile, secretary of the Council, issued the following directive to the IRB organisation:

'The Supreme Council, having due regard to the Constitution of the Organisation, has decided that the present Peace Treaty between Ireland and Great Britain should be ratified. Members of the Organisation, however, who have to take public action as representatives are given freedom of action in the matter'.

"Ordinary members of the IRB, many of them holding important positions in the IRA, were expected to obey the directive of the Supreme Council without question. 'The constitutions of the IRB', as O'Beirne-Ranelagh noted in his study of the organisation, 'were careful to deny democratic procedures within the organisation'. Brugha was particularly incensed by the directive issued by the Supreme Council of the IRB. Contrasting the honourable mention made to the IRB in the proclamation of Easter Week with the 'dastards' who made up the present Supreme Council, he declared, on 19 May 1922, that,

'This body, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, was used to get a majority in this Dáil, and the majority of seven by which this Treaty was approved of in this Dáil could never have been got

only that the Irish Republican Brotherhood was used in this way ...

In other words, the body that was used to bring the Republic into existence has been prostituted in order to disestablish the Republic.'

"Barely seven weeks later Brugha was shot dead fighting for the Republic" (pp136-7).

Over the course of several decades Kathleen Clarke's IRB mind-set had irresponsibly fuelled considerable mischief in the ranks. Although her memoirs were not published until 1991, it is clear that her denigration of Pearse, coupled with the Presidential claims for her own husband, had been verbally communicated quite extensively and that it was this version, received indirectly through correspondence with Joe Clarke (no relation), that had informed the stand take by Muriel MacSwiney in 1966, both in public and in her letter to me dated April 7th. Alarmed at a possible wrong done to Kathleen's husband and determined to right it, Muriel had rushed to the defence of Tom Clarke while, however, Kathleen herself stayed publicly silent. Unknown to Muriel, the thanks she was to receive from Kathleen in the latter's secret memoirs was the further denigration of her own husband, Terry. Kathleen related how on Easter Tuesday 1916 two of her sisters, Laura and Nora, arrived from Limerick and managed to visit Tom Clarke in the GPO:

"When they arrived at the GPO they ... had a long talk with Sean MacDermott and Tom ... One of them was asked to try to get to Cork and get in touch with Terence MacSwiney. Seán said: 'If you get to Terry, he will act'. The message to him was, 'For God's sake go out and do something to cause a diversion in the South, to prevent the British troops massing around Dublin'... According to Nora later, when she arrived in Cork... a Fianna boy went with her to the Volunteer headquarters. There she met Terence MacSwiney and Tomás MacCurtain. When she had delivered the message from Tom and Seán MacDermott, both men told her it was absolutely impossible to do anything. They were surrounded by British military, and were expecting an attack any moment ... Nora was very disappointed, she had arrived so full of hope. From what Seán had said about Terence MacSwiney, she had thought that if she got to him everything would be alright." (pp80-1).

Such bad-mouthing was the stick used thereafter within IRB circles in order to beat MacCurtain and MacSwiney, notwithstanding their full exoneration by a formal IRB inquiry. In the next article I will examine how Peter Hart got it right about the IRB in 1920, but then proceeded to get it so wrong in respect of 1922.

**Manus O'Riordan**

*To be continued*



## The Casement 'Black Diaries' An Overlong Controversy in Outline Part 2

### WORLD WAR 2

During the European cataclysm of the 1940s controversy about the 'Black Diaries' was frozen in a state of suspended animation with one exception, an exception which in its way proved the rule. In Germany, in 1940 there appeared *Der Fall Casement: Das Leben Sir Roger Casements und der Verleumdungsfeldzug des Secret Service (The Casement Case: The Life Of Sir Roger Casement And The Libel Campaign of the Secret Service)* by maverick writer Francis Stuart. It was a brief German language book, translated from Stuart's original English, which in turn was largely based on Maloney's 1936 work. In 1942-1944 Stuart made propaganda broadcasts from Berlin to Ireland and was the only English language writer to witness the fall of the city in 1945.

### RENEWED INTEREST

The 1950s saw a new interest in Casement. The Gaelic Athletic Association completed a new stadium in Belfast in 1953 and called it after him. A campaign arose to have his remains transferred from the grounds of Pentonville Prison to be re-interred in Ireland. All this tended to focus attention on the question of the disputed writings. About this time the Diaries were beginning to emerge from their long sojourn in limbo. Peter Singleton-Gates began showing his transcript to various people including René MacColl, Harford Montgomery-Hyde, and Brian Inglis, all of whom would subsequently write books claiming the Diaries were authentic.

In 1956 René MacColl, an English journalist, completed a book; *Roger Casement: A New Judgement*. Claiming the Diaries were written in full by Casement himself, he produced new material which, on the face of it, looked to be of real significance. Apparently, so McColl contended, Casement had confessed to one of his defence team during the trial that he was homosexual and was not prepared to contest the authenticity of the Diaries. However, his source, A.M. Sullivan, the Defence Counsel at the Trial, was now of advanced years and in letters to *The Irish Times* subsequent to the books appearance he made contradictory and confusing statements.

The following year, seemingly in reply to McColl, Alfred Noyes as mentioned earlier; a prominent British propagandist of World War One once publicly upbraided by Casement's sister, wrote a book called *The Accusing Ghost, or Justice For Casement*. He explained why he had changed his mind and come to the

conclusion that forgery had been involved. This same man forty years before had toured American cities where he spoke on a number of themes and had used the Diaries as a weapon against Casement and the Irish rebels.

In 1959 a book written by Peter Singleton-Gates and Maurice Girodias titled *The Black Diaries* was published in a limited edition. It contained a biography of Casement along with unreliable transcripts of some of the Diaries. The exception was the one which in sexual terms was by far the most graphic; the Diary for 1911. In July that same year, 1959, the Diaries were transferred to the Public Record Office (PRO), the British public archive. For the first time they would now be available for inspection by researchers, though on a restricted basis.

An examination which, we are told, confirmed the writings as genuinely the work of Casement and no other was carried out by a Mr. Harrison, Director of the Forensic Science Laboratory at Bristol. The result was announced by Mr. Butler the then Home Secretary in the House of Commons. However, whether this went any further than a cursory inspection is not clear. No report was ever made public, nor was its methodology explained. A headline, *Casement's Black Diaries Are Genuine*, appeared in the *Belfast Telegraph* of 10th August 1959.

That same year Roger McHugh, a Professor of Literature at University College, Dublin, viewed the Diaries at the PRO and read transcripts. He published his findings in a detailed and closely argued article, *Casement: The Public Record Office Manuscripts*, in the Belfast published periodical *Threshold*, in 1960. To him the 1903 and 1910 Diaries and the 1911 cash ledger were about 97 percent Casement's own work into which sexual references appeared to have been interpolated. The 1911 Diary appeared to have been mainly forged. Parts of this Diary suggested the Diarist was deranged. He believed the Diaries ought to be subjected to a full technical forensic examination.

In 1960 *The Trial Of Sir Roger Casement* appeared. It was by H. Montgomery Hyde, who was connected by British Intelligence. There was a description and small excerpts from the as yet unpublished 1911 Diary. The writer treated the Diaries as genuine.

About this time the short story writer Frank O'Connor took an interest in the question and made a study of the language

of the Diaries as taken from the then publicly available incomplete and unreliable transcripts. He formed an opinion that forgery was very likely. His investigations never resulted in a published study.

### HERBERT MACKEY

Herbert O. Mackey was a Dublin dermatologist who as part of his professional work authored a textbook which went into many editions; *A Handbook Of Diseases Of The Skin*. He had also written a biography of the poet Thomas Moore, published in 1951. During the 1950s the growing interest in Casement drew him in. He had Casement articles and poetry reprinted. He wrote a Casement biography and a number of works on the Diaries question. The most important of these *Roger Casement: The Truth About The Forged Diaries* appeared in 1966. His most important research was conducted in 1959 when he spent 6 days at the PRO where he was able to examine the Diaries with a magnifying glass. He perused the Diaries again in April 1965. His professional experience as a skin specialist enhanced his ability to perceive minute differences of colour and texture. He believed he had discovered multiple examples of where erasure and interpolation had occurred. He also described inconsistencies in the narrative which pointed to forgery.

For example a reference to a walk in London which originally and logically should have referred to 'Albert Gate' apparently was altered to read 'Albert (10/-)', indicating a payment of 10 shillings for sex. However, the '(10/-)' is noticeably in different ink. A pencilled note states 'Albert aged 15 [?]', so the reader does not miss the implication. The Cash Ledger for March 1911 lists what appear to be payments for sex to a certain Ramon in Buenos Aires. However in March 1911 Casement was dividing his time between Dublin and London. He had been in Buenos Aires in March 1910.

Towards the end of *The Truth About The Forged Diaries* (page 85) Mackey stated;

"These crude and inept forgeries are incapable of deceiving anybody."

In 1965 the remains of Casement were disinterred from Pentonville Prison grounds and reached Ireland on February 23rd. Great crowds attended the state funeral on March 1st. Attempts by Dr. Mackey, at the time, to bring up the Diaries as a matter of interest for the Irish public and State were pointedly rebuffed by officials, for reasons that still remain unexplained. When he attempted to broach the matter on a television discussion programme, in the very week of the state obsequies, the broadcast sound suddenly

went dead. It is hard to imagine this was a matter of mere coincidence.

He set about doing further research and the next year finished and published his most complete book on the matter, the title just already mentioned. He died a few months later.

#### NEW ATMOSPHERE

In 1968 what became known as 'the Troubles' broke out in Northern Ireland. By 1971 a low level guerrilla war was happening there which was provoked in the rest of Ireland an anxious questioning of the values and assumptions of the nationalism which had been part and parcel of the ideology of the Irish State. With this came a readiness to re-evaluate figures from the nationalist past, such as Patrick Pearse and Roger Casement.

With the 1960s came new attitudes to sexuality and a new readiness for it to become a matter for open public discussion. Society became decidedly less prim. Questions relating to homosexuality were being aired more and more in the media. Traditional attitudes that homosexuals were either morally or mentally sick were giving way to tolerance.

Up to then, Casement had been viewed in terms of his efforts as a humanitarian and as one who had struggled for Irish independence. In Britain the Diaries were, generally speaking, thought of as genuine but were not seen as something defining for Casement as a historical figure. In nationalist Ireland the Diaries were dismissed as the product of forgery. But the cultural changes just outlined, in Ireland particularly, were beginning to predisposing people to look again at the possibility the Diaries might be genuine.

#### INGLIS

In 1973 a new biography appeared by Brian Inglis, who was, as we saw earlier, formerly associated with Peter Singleton-Gates. It was titled simply *Roger Casement*. Inglis was Dublin-born and of Anglo-Irish Protestant descent. He was well known in Britain as a journalist, author and presenter for Granada Television.

This mainly sympathetic un-footnoted biography took the contested matter to be authentic. It was the first mainstream biography to do so and as such represented something of a landmark in the controversy. Inglis saw the position of the homosexual outsider moving furtively in a disapproving world as a key to understanding the character of his subject.

Since almost all of what passes for evidence that Casement was homosexual comes from the Diaries it is important to see what arguments Inglis employs to argue in favour of authenticity. One chapter of the book is devoted to the question of the disputed Diaries.

His key argument to the effect there was no forgery relates to the existence of four Diaries containing homosexual material. If British intelligence wanted to frame someone with a forged Diary then one Diary would suffice, he argued. The more Diaries, the greater was the danger of a mistake being made which would expose the whole operation.

However, this can be looked at another way. The more extensive and thus audacious the forgery the more the human mind is susceptible to giving it credence. Also the existence of a Diary, with sexual material 'for one year only', would beg the question why were there not similar Diaries for other years. One single 'Black Diary' would be considerably less credible than a number of them.

More bizarre than his questionable argument based upon the number of disputed Diaries is his treatment of Mackey's *The Truth About The Forged Diaries*. Oddly the book appears in the bibliography, yet Inglis fails to even refer to it in his discussion of the forgery thesis let alone deal with its arguments. The only writer who had produced books devoted solely to probing the authenticity question surrounding the Diaries which had been published in the previous quarter century, was utterly and absolutely ignored in the text.

The dubious claim is made that Michael Collins, when he had looked through what was presented to him in 1921, had become convinced what he had seen was fully genuine. Collins' alleged belief is then suggested as a reason for why successive Irish Governments had not pressed to be allowed to inspect the documents i.e. they believed they were genuine.

Inglis stated naively that the interpolation of material was not possible because sexual references occurred embedded within blocks of writing. The Diaries could either have been forged in their entirety or not at all, he claimed.

Ironically, Inglis' *Roger Casement* has become so widely esteemed that Penguin have recently reissued it under their *classic* imprint.

#### PROF. REID

In 1976 American literary academic Professor B.L. Reid entered the fray with a biography called *The Lives Of Roger Casement*. It was a work which ploughed the same furrow of psychological analysis opened up by Inglis. In this book the 'Black Diaries' are more closely integrated into the biographical narrative. At the end of the book two chapters of wordy, rambling and unfocused prose adding up to thirty five pages are devoted to the question of possible forgery.

To be fair to Reid his treatment of Mackey's research and writing is more adventurous than his predecessor Inglis in

that at least he refers to it and goes about an attempt at refutation. He referred to the 1910 Diary for June 20th and showed how Mackey had made a mistake regarding the spelling of the name of a man called *Millar* and Mackey's claim this name must have referred to a fictitious character created by a forger. In this Reid is correct. Effectively Reid used this mistake as a means to discredit the research and analysis of Mackey. However, what the unassuming reader of *The Lives Of Roger Casement* would not know is that Mackey cited more than twenty other examples of what he claimed were alterations to the original Diary texts which Reid failed to challenge.

Based on a letter from Casement's sister Nina to her cousin Gertrude Bannister, held in the National Library in Dublin, Reid claimed that the Irish American leader John Devoy believed the Diaries genuine and told this to Nina. The letter is misquoted and misrepresented in the book. In reality the letter refers to hearsay concerning a conversation between two other women and Devoy. As such it can lay no claim to be taken as firm evidence for how Devoy viewed Casement. [1]

Interestingly he refers to "a very careful analysis" of the Diaries having been allowed by officials, the results of which had not been made public nor had they been revealed to him. This was an expert examination quietly carried out in the early 1970s. It has been claimed since Reid's book was published that this examination found the material authentic. However, no forensic report which might give substance to the claim has ever emerged into the public realm.

Prof Reid's style of argumentation in favour of the Diaries being genuine is highly generalised. Adjectives are thrown around liberally. Mackey's arguments are "incoherent" and "full of errors". However, he does not exactly overpower us with examples and reasoning for why this should be so. The conclusive argument, he claimed, was the way the text "stands up to every test from within or without". He did not give a detailed explanation of what exactly these tests were and why he found them of such significance. It appears he was impressed with the way events and persons detailed in the Diaries corresponded with those in Casement's letters and papers. But if, as 'forgery theorists' have claimed the overwhelming amount of the content consists of the original Diary notes of Casement into which matter has been interpolated, this is easily explained.

#### ROGER SAWYER

In 1984 appeared *Casement The Flawed Hero* by Roger Sawyer, an English writer on matters connected to slavery. It took a similar line on the psychology of

Casement to the works of Inglis and Reid. His 'treachery' was seen as related to his presumed homosexuality. Similarly there was a chapter which discussed the authenticity question. Sawyer dealt with Mackey's claim that there was much evidence for erasure and interpolation in the text of the Diaries in a similar way to Reid. He ignored it except for two examples. One was the mistake regarding the name of a man named *Millar* in the Diary entry for 20th June 1910 as related by Reid and discussed above. In addition he mentions an error on Mackey's part, whereby Mackey claimed the Diary text placed the Grand Central Hotel in Warrenpoint, Co. Down as opposed to Belfast.

Sawyer explained Basil Thomson's many mutually contradictory versions of the story of his discovery of the Diaries by reference to Thomson being a prolific author and thus his writings abounding in errors of detail. This can only mean that as he was so busy with his writing he did not have time to think out what he had to state or to edit his copy for inaccuracies after an initial draft. But is it really plausible that such a sensational event as the discovery of what were then criminally incriminating objects among the possessions of a famous public figure would not leave a clear, precise and indelible impression upon the memory of an intelligent individual such as Thomson?

Sawyer supports his case for authenticity with what appears to be an extraordinary revelation. From an interview with Peter Singleton-Gates, he learned that "*not very long ago*" (this was written in 1984) "*the ultra-violet ray machine was used*". A test for forged erasure and interpolation had been surreptitiously carried out by Singleton-Gates in the presence of a "*well-known witness*". It was a secret and highly unofficial exercise as such examinations had no official sanction. It showed that the writing was entirely in Casement's hand. This revelation is the *piece de resistance* of Sawyer's case that there was no forgery.

Interestingly, here again, the name of Singleton-Gates, so long associated with the case, crops up. What are we to make of this claim a scientific test had been secretly carried out proving the 'Black Diaries' genuine?

Ultra-violet light can be used to test for hidden evidence of erasure in documents. This gives the claim an initial appearance of credibility. However, the story has a very shadowy quality. We have no way of verifying it. It is based on what Sawyer tells the reader about what Singleton-Gates told him and, along with that, an unpublished manuscript Singleton-Gates had written and shown him. There is no trail of evidence written or otherwise that substantiates it except for the unpublished

manuscript. There is the additional question, assuming for arguments sake the basic story true, as to whether Singleton-Gates and the other unnamed individual knew how to operate ultra-violet equipment to a standard so as to be able to produce scientifically meaningful results. It is a good story but it is not evidence.

#### THE THREE WISE MEN

The three biographies just mentioned, by the three 'wise men'—Inglis, Reid and Sawyer—had a profound influence on how Casement was viewed by the academic world, and also by the public at large. This change was particularly acute in Ireland where attitudes to history and nationalism were changing during the 1970s and 1980s. The notion the 'Black Diaries' had been forged became associated in the public mind with backward and prejudiced attitudes towards homosexuality and a negative peevish anti-Britishness. The refrain was: *Why can they not accept a famous Irish patriot could have been homosexual?*

Of course, there still was a minority opinion which, for various reasons, questioned or dismissed the notion the disputed Diaries might be genuine.

Now, more and more with the passage of time, Casement was becoming associated with the 'Black Diaries' and with homosexuality and less and less he was being remembered as a fighter for humanitarian and political causes. His writings were ignored and forgotten. Casement 'the gay icon' had come into view. A new orthodoxy had taken hold.

Tim O'Sullivan  
August 2006

Note:

[1] Page 31, Ch 11, *Roger Casement: A Reassessment Of The Diaries Controversies* by Mairead Wilson. Roger Casement Foundation/Athol Books 2005

## Reader's Letter

### Casement: Another View

There are two inaccuracies and one omission in what is otherwise a fair summation of Roger Casement's career and politics by Tim O'Sullivan in his article entitled 'The Casement 'Black Diaries'' (August 2006).

The omission which is key to contextualising Casement is that his two reports on the exploitation, and in the case of the Amazon, the near extermination of the native rubber gatherers, were both commissioned by the British government. Casement was certainly a vigorous defender of the rights of these people but he only wrote his reports because London

instructed him to do so.

The first inaccuracy relates to the founding of the Congo Reform Association with E.D. Morel. This only occurred after Casement's investigation but he certainly helped to bring it into being and he encouraged it extensively despite his continuing diplomatic employment by London.

The second inaccuracy or confusion is in describing Casement's mother as a Catholic. She certainly was one but only after adult conversion, as in her son's case.

On the matter of Casement potentially jeopardising his humanitarian work by having sex of a homosexual nature where and when he did, one must say that most men have risked their life, or career and families for sex. And always will do so. Casement was no saint or celibate, rather a normal homosexual man, few if any of whom have not crossed a line taking them beyond respectability. Expecting him to be celibate reveals a romantic and unworldly mindset. However the diaries indicate his sexual activity in those years occurred in urban settings and not amongst the native rubber gatherers.

As I revealed in my book on Casement, a third individual who interrogated him in London on Easter Sunday was Major Frank Hall of MI5 who was formerly Military Secretary of the UVF and himself a gun runner. Casement was however not asked about the diaries as considerable documentation exists to indicate that his former landlord only handed them over to Scotland Yard on Easter Tuesday.

Jeff Dudgeon

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## Report

### Casement Foundation Calls For 'fake' Casement Diaries To Be Destroyed

"The 'Black Diaries' of Roger Casement should be destroyed when they are eventually exposed as fakes, it was claimed yesterday.

"On the 90th anniversary of the revolutionary's execution for treason in 1916, supporters called for Casement's legacy to focus on his humanitarian work in Africa and South America rather than other controversies about his life.

"The Black Diaries, which claim to detail Casement's explicit homosexual urges, are currently kept in the Public Record Office outside London.

"Jack Moylett, chairman of the Roger Casement Foundation, said: "I think they are horrible things and should be eventually destroyed when it is proven they are counterfeit.

"If they are to be exhibited, they should only be criminal exhibits."

"...the foundation... is currently raising funds to carry out its own linguistic study of the documents using a Canadian computer software programme.

"We will be examining the words, phrases and style of expression, which we believe Casement would never have used..."

"Mr. Moylett said he would block any attempts to have the documents housed in an Irish museum..."

"The Roger Casement Foundation will lay a wreath at his grave at Glasnevin Cemetery on Sunday to mark the anniversary of his death."

*Irish Independent* 4.8.06

The Casement  
Foundation  
will be hosting a  
One-Day  
Symposium  
at  
Buswell's Hotel  
on  
21st October 2006

of Britain have turned their invective away from the detested countryfolk of Armagh and Tyrone and devoted their column inches to the "mad Muslims". And "rivers of blood" are being predicted by Edwards and Harris, even in Ireland, if the Moslems fail to accommodate themselves to liberal orthodoxy.

"England owes her worldwide power to her supreme talent of attracting and assimilating even the most hostile elements" remarked Canon Sheehan in the *Cork Free Press*. That was in 1910. But Britain has a serious problem now with doing what it did best at the height of Empire.

What must be of great concern to John Bull, if he bothers to think at all these days, is that not only is he incapable of turning hostile enemies into friends these days but that even his own children are turning against him, turning to the only thing that provides them with any self respect as a people—radical Islam. And when we say his own children we do not mean alone those reared in the Islamic tradition.

A noticeable feature of these new Islamists is the high proportion of West Indian converts there are to the faith. Now, I remember West Indians as an easygoing people who seemed to be either totally devoted to religion or totally disinterested in it. On Sundays in South London you could marvel at these finely-dressed men and women who would come out of their churches, churches that were almost entirely made up of black people. It was noticeable that, whereas West Indian Catholics went to Mass with Irish, Italian, Maltese, Polish and English Catholics, West Indian Protestants seemed to be excluded from the mainstream white Protestant churches.

The original West Indian migrants were, of course, invited in by Britain as the original modern economic migrants (The Irish had been migrants before but the process was more informal). They came to fill the jobs the British no longer wanted to do - in nursing and in bus conducting. A chief recruiter of them was Enoch Powell, later of the "rivers of blood".

These people were very enamoured of Britain and had a rather idealised picture of it and the welcome that they would receive from the homeland of Empire. But they were treated as foreigners and worse. Nevertheless, they got on with their lives and endured the hostility and discrimination that they suffered from their hosts with endurance and stoicism. They were being called by the mother country to do a job for it and was not the mother country was the source of all that was great and

## Send Them Home

"A worse menace than communism, Islamism is a totalitarian ideology that believes the world should live according to Islamic law and is prepared to wipe out anyone, anywhere, who stands in the way."

"Race relations are being poisoned by the fifth column among Muslims who will not rest until they have destroyed the democracy and culture of the country that harbours them."

"As an immigrant, I have a simple view. I came to England for the freedom and opportunities I lacked in Ireland... I always thought that the discontented Irish should shove off home, as I thought communists should emigrate to the Soviet Union."

"If Muslims don't like it here, let them take off for one of those innumerable failed states rendered poor and fractious and oppressive by unreformed Islam... The same goes for Muslims in Ireland."

"I believe that ideological Islamism has no boundaries. As I have said before it is only a matter of time before Islamic terrorists use a tactical nuclear device in London or New York. Millions will die. And the mushroom clouds won't spare this sacred island."

"As soon as the bombs get bigger, and the atrocities more appalling, all this political correctness will be pushed aside. Irish Muslims should not be misled about our anger against Islamism."

"The majority of Islamic militants, although born in Britain or France, seem to give their loyalty to an international idea, as if it were their native state."

The above are just a selection of comments from the *Sunday Independent* of 13th August—the issue following Blair's a security operation against Muslims, which demonstrated the

seriousness of it all by disrupting that pleasure most dear to the hearts of Britons, escaping Britain, the centre of their own dear democracy, on cheap flights to their new colonies abroad. By launching his pre-emptive strike he pushed his ex-Communist Foreign Secretary's tirades against foreign nationals off the news. And, ironically, his security operation probably disrupted the stream of Poles—those gallant fellows who Britain started a world war over and delivered into the hands of Communism for half a century, as a result—coming over to do the jobs John Bull just can't do anymore for himself.

The first four comments above are by Ruth Dudley Edwards and the last three by Eoghan Harris.

It is clear, if the *Independent* is to be believed, that we are in a position similar to that of 1914 when Democracy and Civilisation were under the dire threat from the Kaiser, the barbarians were at the gate, and the Irish scribes sprang into action to issue fierce propaganda against the evil.

But the Ameranglian notion of Democracy is the sort of democracy that exists between the gaoler and the prisoner. The gaoler believes that there is not enough democracy within the prison walls—within which the inmates do not conflict with each other enough. But it is another thing entirely when the prisoner questions the democratic relationship between the gaoler and the prisoner and tries to establish democracy in that. At a time when the class division is international rather than national, that is the main democratic issue of substance in the world and the one that the West will never address.

Over the last while, now that Britain has switched enemies, the paid Irish scribes

good in the world? Unfortunately for Britain they stayed and had children.

My father got a job in Clapham in South London in the mid-sixties with the building workers' Union, UCATT—which was a British/Irish Trade Union. Our street, Trent Road in Brixton Hill, was dominated by a large Catholic Church at the bottom, and a Catholic community of Irish, Italians, Maltese and West Indians grew up around it. Our neighbours were West Indians and my mother and father stood as god parents for their son when he was baptised at the Church. There was a party afterwards, in the West Indian tradition, and I remember sitting on the stairs listening to the familiar sounds of the Rock Steady/Reggae music that was so a part of the familiar landscape of Brixton at the time. But the party was abruptly ended by a police raid, for what reason was never explained.

This was around 1968 or 1969. By 1976 the policing of the West Indians, as their children reached adulthood, became a frenzy and it was responded to, as it became intolerable for any community with self-respect to take, by the Notting Hill riots of that year and then a few years later by the Brixton riots.

Is it any wonder that these children of the economic migrants became Rastafarians rather than following in the footsteps of their parents in the religion and state that used them and rejected them? Rastafarianism produced no militants beyond the 'frontline' in Railton Road. Its lifestyle was not conducive to serious political activity. But that was in the days when John Bull seemed to be moving away from his imperial past.

Now disaffected West Indians, and even some white English, are taking to radical Islam as Britain continues on another crusade.

A representative of the Moslem Council tried on TV to inform the news programme he was being interviewed by that the antagonism of Moslems to Britain was similar to that of the Irish thirty years earlier. When Britain occupied and killed in Ireland, the Irish sought to bomb Britain in retaliation. Now Moslems were feeling and acting the same. He was thanked and cut off by the presenters. Britain does not 'do' memory, or thinking about the past, even its recent past.

What is noticeable about the Moslem recourse to plotting is that all through the conflict in Northern Ireland the Irish community in England did not produce any substantial militant threat any way comparable to what is happening now in Moslem communities. That is a thought that might prompt thought.

Britain's Empire started to unravel when its statesmen stopped thinking about the past. This was around the time Britain became democratic. When the aristocracy ran the country they had the self-confidence and time to think about the world, because they had the independent means to support themselves and the knowledge that they would have continuity of service. When, around 1905, democracy raised its head these assumptions began to be called into question and panic the aristocrats. The conflict over Irish Home Rule—whose irresolution resulted in the fatal intervention in 1914 and put the skids on the Empire—had, as a strong undercurrent, the conflict between fading aristocrats and pushy democrats. When the War, and particularly the intervention of the US, resulted in a victory for the democrats the decline set in. The effective governing of an Empire and the winning of elections in a democracy have proved to be irreconcilable phenomena.

*"I always thought that the discontented Irish should shove off home"* Ruth Dudley Edwards says. Well most of them have now that Ireland has managed to disentangle itself from the British economic connection and link itself to Europe. No such chance for the Arabs though. They are being kept down while their oil is bled dry so that when their only resource is gone they will be wandering their deserts again.

Edwards's view that dissatisfied Moslems should go back to *"those innumerable failed states rendered poor and fractious and oppressive by unreformed Islam"* is a remarkably ignorant one. Was it not the country that gave her *"freedom and opportunities"* that set up these states through its military power, against the wishes of their inhabitants? Were not these states—Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait etc. established to suit the British and other imperialist interests at the time? They were certainly not the result of indigenous nationalisms that defined their own governmental relations and borders.

*"The majority of Islamic militants, although born in Britain or France, seem to give their loyalty to an international idea, as if it were their native state."* Does Harris' statement not remind one of another group of people that John Bull promised a state to, facilitated the growth of, at the expense of the indigenous inhabitants?—a state, so very dear to the heart of Harris, that produces mayhem in the Middle East today?

Furthermore has Harris forgotten that he himself, in his 1970s Marxist metamorphosis, was an adulator of Soviet power and a chief exponent of *"loyalty to*

*an international idea, as if it were their native state"*.

It strikes me that there is only one thing consistent in the metamorphic political positions of Eoghan Harris—a desire to be the scribe of the big battalions in his world. In the 1960s his world was the Republican circles of Cork city. In that world he worshipped at the altar of Tom Barry and harassed the Poppy-selling menace that threatened it. In the 1970s he moved on to worshipping the big battalions of Soviet power that he probably expected to prevail in the world. Now that the Marxist future has collapsed, the Anglo-American liberal revolutionaries are the subjects of his adulations. And the Zionists are a powerful people, to be sure.

Harris is keen to tar critics of Zionist *lebensraum* with the anti-Semitism tag. He is not alone. The Pope has been targeted, to silence the Vatican's influence, and Mel Gibson to warn anti-Zionists in Hollywood. Of course, Gibson's remark that the Jews were responsible for most of the world's wars was no more than the slobberings of a drunk. If he had been sober and historically accurate he would have presented that honour to Britain.

If Eoghan Harris had been a German in the 1930s there is little doubt where he would have been worshipping. And judging by his polemics against Moslems in the *Sindo* there is little doubt he would have found gainful employment with Dr. Goebbels.

The familial social structure of Arab society was suited to the loose Ottoman governmental structures that they lived under for centuries. In 1914 the British Empire, to encourage *jihād* against the Ottomans, made an agreement with the Arabs that they would get an Arab State stretching up from the Arabian peninsula to roughly where Lebanon and Syria are today—once the defeated Ottoman Empire was broken up. Having got Arab help, Ministers promptly made a secret agreement (Sykes/Picot) with France and Russia to divide the Ottoman Empire amongst themselves. The French would get Syria and the Lebanon, the Russians Constantinople, and the British most of Iraq Southwards. But Britain then set about undermining this agreement in order to dispossess the French of the oil-rich North of Iraq and the South of Syria. Britain wanted the Southern part of Syria (Palestine) because it desired to occupy ports on the Mediterranean. The area immediately North of Egypt was required for strategic reasons to establish a continuous land empire from India to Egypt. Then in 1917 Britain made a promise to the Zionists for a national home in Palestine for the Jews. This

promise enabled Ministers to detach Palestine from the rest of Syria (and from the French) by making it a special case—one needing the mothering hand of England.

All this was a betrayal of the original agreement to provide all the Arabs with a single State. And, in the aftermath of the Great War, Britain, infused with a great desire to create nations and nationalities and justify the division of the Middle East spoils of victory between itself and France, divided the morsels of the Ottoman Empire into states run by puppet governments, without consideration of the inhabitants or their long term good.

So one wonders why Harris finds it strange that: "*The majority of Islamic militants, although born in Britain or France, seem to give their loyalty to an international idea, as if it were their native state.*"

It does not occur to Harris and Edwards that this history has a bearing on the present. Whilst the social structures of Moslem society have been based around blood ties, and have not been predisposed toward obedience of the state the British, on the other hand, are a very state-orientated people. About the time of the Reformation England developed into a strong State and British history ever since has been all about the strengthening and expansion of that state. The British way of life was very much conducted historically in service of the British State and subordinated to its interests. Without the British State the British would amount to nothing. But Arabs and the Moslem world can go on, and has gone on, without the Arab State that Britain promised them for making war on the Ottomans in 1914.

John Bull is no longer capable of carving out countries and redrawing the map of the world. But old habits die hard for British leaders and Britain's constant need is to do something in the world to advance the state for which the nation lives. So Blair has jumped on the coat tails of Uncle Sam, hoping to give him the benefit of some of the Empire's old experience at remoulding peoples. But that experience, or the knowledge of it, is long gone and Ameranglia is floundering, just as Britain floundered.

In recent years Bull has boasted of his big economic growth and railed against the economic conservatism of the Europeans—the ridiculous ways of life they seemed to be content with, which made them want to work shorter hours and have more holidays whilst the British were working longer and longer to make more money and grow their economy. But the growing economy needed workers for

the menial jobs that the Britons would no longer do; and Britons have got too lazy or stingy to procreate in sufficient numbers—so migrants were needed. As the migrants came in, the British left, exhausted after their long working hours in service to the expanding economy. What they want is their 'place in the sun'. And, from their places in the sun, in their new colonies in Spain, France etc. they complain about the migrants who take British jobs, can't speak English, live in ghettos, and change the character of their old country—and with no sense of irony.

But that is Progress and Britain is always on its side.

A few months ago Britain was rather self-congratulatory at the race riots in France. The British media, which is now little more than a government propaganda ministry, suggested that the French, instead of actively encouraging its Moslems to embrace the benefits of French citizenship, should adopt the superior liberal multiculturalism that had been so successful in Britain. But the French system has produced no suicide bombers, as has the multiculturalist system of Britain. And now the media is starting to blame the multiculturalism for the latest plot.

## International Affairs— The View From India

The rise of China, Russia and India as important elements in the international balance of power is a development that the Irish State needs to take account of. The days of the US being the one great super power are now numbered and the only question is for how long can it retain hegemony. And what is true for the super power is true also for the sidekick, Britain.

In this new situation it is reasonable to question, with renewed urgency, the State's policy of moving away from its traditional anti-colonial orientation as evidenced most recently by its commemorating of 1916 in conjunction with the Battle of the Somme. To rephrase the question: why are we repudiating our national tradition and continuing to ingratiate ourselves with the Americans and British when the international standing of America and Britain is at an all time low and when the centre of gravity in international affairs is rapidly shifting eastwards?

But first I should substantiate my assertions. A good place to start is the G8 summit that took place in St Petersburg in

From the days of Palmerston Bull has sheltered all sorts of political subversives and terrorists—people who might be useful in subverting and terrorising other Powers. Liberal England gave shelter and provided a base for propaganda work to Mazzini, a physical force nationalist who wrote a terrorist handbook called *Rules For The Conduct Of Guerrilla Bands*, and who was useful in the destabilisation of the Hapsburg State. Until quite recently there have been complaints from the French that Britain harboured all sorts of dangerous Islamists which the French suspected, if previous British behaviour was anything to go by, had a political purpose, as in the past.

But Bull has no memory. 'Memory' is an ongoing and changing thing in Britain. It is produced by the scribes for the purpose of bolstering the present policy—amongst whom are the new servants of Bull, Harris and Dudley Edwards.

I see there is a campaign in the *Sunday Independent* to resurrect Tom Kettle, the Home Ruler, as national poet of the lost Irish Imperial past. Kettle was, of course, driven mad, and to drink, by what he was doing in 1915-16. He was put out of his misery by a German bullet on the Western front.

Pat Walsh

July. My view of this is based not on the *Irish Times* or indeed on any Western newspaper but on a publication called *Frontline*, India's national magazine, which can be accessed on the Internet. The following extract is long but unusually free of Western presumptions and every line of it contains valuable information. Of particular interest is the reference to the Middle East as West Asia. This designation is an established Indian convention; until recently it might be considered an idiosyncrasy; now, as power shifts to Asia, it is a more likely harbinger of the future than Condilizza Rice's hyped references to a 'new Middle East'.

The article is entitled, *Resurgent Russia*, by Vladimir Radyuhin and is dated August 11th, its Internet address is: <http://www.frontlineonnet.com/> and click the link to *Signals from G8*.

"No other Group of Eight summit grabbed so much public attention in Europe and North America as the St. Petersburg summit held from July 15 to July 17. It was not the agenda that created the stir but the fact that it was the first G8

meeting hosted by Russia.

"For months leading up to the summit, the media and politicians in the West debated the question of whether Russia deserved to host the event, or, be a member of the group at all. The answer was an emphatic no. Russia, critics said, was first invited to sit at the G7 table in 1992 as a reward for President Boris Yeltsin's market-oriented and pro-democracy reforms. (Cynics said it was a condolence prize to Yeltsin for the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.) In 2002, President Vladimir Putin was awarded the rotating presidency of the G8 for 2006 in the hope that he would carry on with the pro-Western policies of his predecessor. But he has belied those expectations.

"On a visit to the former Soviet state of Lithuania earlier this year, United States Vice-President Dick Cheney accused Russia of "unfairly and improperly restricting the rights of her people" and using its oil and gas as "tools of intimidation or blackmail". It was the harshest attack on Russia by a Western leader since the Cold War. Less than a month before the G8 summit, four leading U.S. lawmakers, including 2008 Republican presidential hopeful Senator John McCain, in an open letter to world leaders, called on them to rebuke Russia's leadership in St. Petersburg for actions "inconsistent with G8 democratic norms" and for steering Russia "away from democracy and toward authoritarianism".

"Influential voices in Washington said that gathering for an energy security summit in St. Petersburg was tantamount to holding a nuclear disarmament conference in Teheran. They demanded that President George W. Bush stay away from St. Petersburg in protest against Moscow "rolling back democracy".

"When it became clear that none of the G8 leaders would boycott the Russian summit, the Western press, quoting unnamed government sources, predicted confidently that a dressing down of Russia over its human rights record would dominate the summit, sidelining the official agenda. It did not.

"Putin, who held four press conferences during the three-day summit, stole the show from the other G8 members. He put down firmly any attempts to lecture him on democracy. When Bush spoke of U.S. efforts to promote institutional changes in various countries, including Iraq, "where there is a free press and free religion, and I told him [Putin] that a lot of people in our country would hope Russia would do the same thing," the Russian leader retorted: "We certainly would not like to have the same kind of democracy as they have in Iraq", eliciting laughter from those present. Asked on another occasion whether he would discuss democracy with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Putin answered that the two leaders also had other issues to discuss, such as corruption.

"It will be interesting for us to hear about your experience with Lord Levy", he said, referring to the British Labour

Party fund-raiser accused of handing out seats in the House of Lords for cash.

"As it turned out, the question of democracy in Russia was tucked away quietly, and did not come up until Putin himself broached the subject at a dinner with the G8 leaders.

"Why such an undramatic denouement to so high-pitched a campaign? The answer is that the West today needs Russia more than Russia needs the West. Europe's dependence on Russian natural gas supplies is expected to rise from the current 26 per cent to 50 per cent of its total needs by 2020. The U.S. is keen to go for Russian Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in a big way to lessen its dependence on the increasingly volatile West Asian region.

"For its part, Russia, awash with oil money, needs little from the West, apart from advanced technologies. Spurred by rising energy prices, the Russian economy has been growing at around 7 per cent in recent years. Russia has paid off the debt owed by the Soviet Union to the West ahead of time, built up the fourth largest foreign currency reserve in the world, and made its ruble fully convertible from July 1.

"Relying on Russia's new economic strength as an energy superpower, Putin set his own terms for relations with the West. He placed energy security at the forefront of the G8 summit to redefine this concept to reflect Russia's interests. He demanded that Europe and the U.S. drop their opposition to Russian energy companies buying into their energy distribution systems. Otherwise, he said, "we start to look for other markets". Moscow has already reached an agreement with Beijing to build two gas pipelines to China, which will supply the country with up to 80 billion cubic metres of gas a year, raising fears in Europe that the supplies to China may come at their expense.

"A statement on "Global Energy Security" adopted by the G8 gave Putin what he wanted. It states explicitly that "companies from energy producing and consuming countries can invest in and acquire upstream and downstream assets internationally in a mutually beneficial way and respecting competition rules to improve the global efficiency of energy production and consumption."

"While previously energy security was confined to the security of supplies for the buyer, now it has been expanded to include the security of demand for the seller. This means that Russia's Gazprom natural gas monopoly will now be able to buy European companies that sell and distribute energy to the retail market, as well as pipelines, underground gas storage facilities and power-generating companies. This is something that even oil-producing Arab countries have found hard to do owing to administrative and political hurdles. Russia may earn an additional \$30 billion to \$60 billion a year from retail energy business in Europe, which is far more profitable than Gazprom's wholesale gas deliveries to Europe. The geopolitical effect of

tying Europe to Russian energy supplies will be even more valuable.

"In return Russia has agreed to give Western energy companies access to its oil and gas fields, but not to its pipelines. A day after the G8 summit Putin signed into law a Bill consolidating Gazprom's control over gas export pipelines. Russia is also planning to limit foreign investment in "strategic" oil and gas fields, a list of which is still being compiled. Russia's success is all the more significant since it came in the face of strong pressure the U.S. had put on Europe to prevent what U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called "a monopoly of supply from one source only, from Russia". However, U.S. efforts to dictate energy strategy to Europe in dealing with Russia does not seem to have worked because Europe and the U.S. are locked in fierce competition for Russian energy resources. European and U.S. companies are vying for a stake in Russia's biggest gas field, Shtokman, in the Barents Sea, which holds enough gas to meet Europe's entire needs for seven years.

"Moscow exploited skilfully the clashing interests of Europe and the U.S. to get the most from both. Apart from winning wider access for its companies to the retail energy markets of Europe and North America, Putin on the sidelines of the summit reached a breakthrough agreement with Bush to develop civilian nuclear cooperation between the two countries for the first time in the history of their relations. The two sides are to draw up an accord similar to the one India has signed with the U.S. It will give Russia access to U.S. reactor and fuel-processing technologies. Until now the U.S. had rejected nuclear cooperation with Russia because of its construction of two nuclear reactors in Iran.

"Whether the agreements reached in St. Petersburg will be honoured is an open question. A new campaign is picking up in the West to dismiss the summit as useless and its agreements as hollow. Contrary to high expectations, a Russia-U.S. deal on terms of Russia's entry in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) was not reached during the summit. Russia accused the U.S., the only WTO member still to clear Russia's bid, of deliberately stalling on the agreement. Speaking at a press conference in St. Petersburg, Putin complained that although the Cold War COCOM (Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls) lists of Western technologies banned for export to the Soviet Union had long been abolished, "we are still meeting rigid curbs on transfers of high technologies to Russia".

"The West's treatment of Russia smacks heavily of double-speak. On the one hand, the West claims its goal is to help Russia integrate into the Western world; on the other it hinders Putin's efforts to promote such integration through Russia's accession to the WTO, broader energy cooperation, and freer access to Western technologies.



"Russians think the West has a problem coming to terms with a resurgent Russia. "Americans have a severe disease—worse than AIDS. It's called the winner's complex", former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said. Moscow made it clear that a rising Russia would not tolerate to be treated as the Cold War loser. "The practice of interstate relations where Russia incurred substantial economic losses as quid pro quo for gaining the friendliness of the leaders of certain foreign countries is a thing of the past", Russia's Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov declared in a keynote article published a day before the summit.

"Russia has fully recovered the status of a superpower that has global responsibility for the situation in the world and for the future of the civilisation", Ivanov said. The G8 summit in St. Petersburg under Russia's presidency went a long way towards establishing Russia as a full-fledged and equal member of the Western club of industrially developed countries. Russia's membership in G8 has changed the group's agenda. It is no longer a Western rich man's club concerned with defending its selfish interests from the rest of the world.

"Putin pressed the point that Russia is a link between the East and the West, the North and the South, by holding a trilateral meeting with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Chinese President Hu Jintao during the G8 summit. It was the first Russia-India-China meeting at the summit level.

"Our approaches to key international problems are very close or, as the diplomats say, they practically coincide", Putin said, opening the meeting. Putin threw his support behind proposals (Blair has already aired one) to expand the G8 by including India, China and other outreach countries whom Russia had invited to attend the summit. "Without such countries as India and China it is impossible to solve global economic and financial problems", he said.

Putin outlined a new political agenda for the G8—to help mould a new multipolar world. "Our world has not become safer after the collapse of the bipolar world," he said. "On the contrary, it has become less predictable.... We do not have the tools and instruments to address the challenges of today."

"An expanded G8 may become such a tool. "What mankind is concerned with today, what we are doing in G8 is to try and work out a new architecture of international relations", he said."

So, the US can no longer determine how post Soviet Russia can function in international affairs, and Manmohan Singh, Hu Jintao and Putin are calling for a new architecture of international relations. It is also worth noting that the US was forced to cultivate relations with India last year having forged close links with Pakistan following 9/11. This was a clear recognition of India's growing

importance as a world power and as a potential market for Western goods.

In the same issue of *Frontline* from which the above article is taken, the lead article is devoted to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The link to this article has the title, *Israeli Terror*, and the article is titled, *Empire comes to Lebanon* by Aijaz Ahmad. For the depth of its analysis and the degree of its independence from the general Western view this article must rank as one of the best accounts of the invasion. Its full internet reference is <http://www.frontlineonnet.com/stories/20060811005800600.htm>. The article is a thoroughly objective investigation of what has gone on in Lebanon, how the conflict began, what Hizbollah is about, and what are the strategic aims of the US and Israel. On each point Ahmad differs with the general Western view and he is deeply critical of the Western media. If he must be faulted I would say he attributes too much controlling influence to the US, much as an ultra left analysis might do.

But the important point from an Irish perspective is that China, Russia and India are ascendant powers who have no

intention of towing the US line. This has positive implications for the future of international relations. For the first time in recent history there is a possibility that the main international institutions,—the G8, the UN—may be susceptible to pressure for real reform. Should such reforms become enacted the possibility arises that the creation of genuine institutions of international law may become a realisable goal.

Of course this is conjecture. Nonetheless the international anti-war movement might do well to put such ideas on their agenda or accept them for debate. As an Irish input to debate I would suggest that attention should be directed at analysing what has gone wrong in international relations, and it should start with the 1914-18 World War. Which brings us back to the Battle of the Somme. No matter how innocent the official Irish commemoration of the Somme may seem, and no matter how distant the Great War may seem from current problems in international relations, everything still hinges on how that infamous slaughter is interpreted.

David Alvey

#### Reader's Letter

## The Difficulties Of The Left Movement In A Sectarian Society

### A Personal Account

#### Part Two

The Party [Communist Party/Northern Ireland] had its niche in Northern Ireland. The Party Trade Union leaders certainly had their niche. They had the power to get the odd Catholic an apprenticeship in the the Protestant-dominated Short and Harland Aircraft Factory. The odd Catholic could even be got a job in the Belfast Fire Brigade thanks to the communist secretary of the Fire Brigade Union. Life seemed pleasant enough. Stormont was possibly satisfied with the situation. Special Branch (except for a few *rogue elements*) were bemused by us. After all the Protestants were in charge of possibly the most volatile movement in the world. The Branch men knew our names and we knew their names because they told us. They were confident that the statelet would last forever. And if it didn't and went communist then as Special Branch District Inspector Sproule said to us one day:

*"You'll need us even more then."*

All of this changed when the YWL [Young Workers' League] lurched towards trying to politicalise the Catholic into our way of thinking. It wasn't the Catholics of the YWL who wanted this but the Protestants. Soon we were going into the Catholic Markets area around Cromac Square and into the East Belfast Catholic

enclave of Short Strand.

Our mission was to get people to sign the Stalin Five-Point-Peace-Plan. Most of the doors we knocked on brought out people who signed the petition. A lot of the people also asked us if we were here to protect them. I had been used to going around Protestant areas with petitions but in the Catholic areas I expected to be set upon. But we got a warm welcome and cups of tea.

Later the YWL became the Socialist Youth League and the lettering was Celtic on the notepaper with a slogan in Irish. There were visits to Milltown for the 1916 Uprising commemorations. Again this was the work of the Protestant members.

Special Branch now took a closer interest in us. We were continually stopped in the street, pushed roughly against walls and threatened with one day having to crawl up the road on our hands and knees. We sort of dismissed these ones as the rogue elements. One of the more naïve of our members even reported them to District Inspector Sproule. He tutted and called them pigs and then suggested that the best thing we could do now was to emigrate to Australia.

During one visit to Milltown we were stopped as usual at a street corner up the

Falls Road. A Branch man I had never seen before asked my girlfriend in a crude manner: "Is your man there a Roman Catholic or a Protestant?" She, in a panic, lied and said I was a Protestant like herself. We were then allowed to go on our way. This gave me the idea that it wasn't so bad for a Protestant visiting Milltown—they could grow out of it—but a Catholic going there was another matter.

At Party conferences the Socialist Youth League were still raising questions about the history of the Party before 1933 and were still being told to shut up. As a counter to what we saw as pig-headedness, we began to ask questions about the lack of action over the situation of the Catholic population. The Protestants of the SYL were mainly raising these questions and as Catholics we would fill them in on things they didn't know about us. If we had spoken up as Catholics we would have been looked on as sectarian and anti-Protestant. The Party Trade Union officials especially hated us. They didn't want the boat rocked because of the huge Protestant Trade Union membership.

They thought we should be expelled. Sean Murray was strangely quiet so we took his silence for support. Loathing and hatred was our lot. The Catholic members of the SYL felt it all the more. It was Protestant anger breaking through the skin.

There was certain amount of Catholic protest within the CP on occasions but it was made as jovial as possible. But was it jovial? The Party had permanent election rooms in Protestant East Belfast in which socials were sometimes held at the weekend. These socials were attended by the CP Trade Union leaders, the CP membership and the youth league. Crates of beer were dragged in. Sometimes a film from Eastern Europe was shown by the Party's Lagan Film Society. After this the fun would begin with a sing-song at the piano. One youth's favourite song was *Johnson's Motor Car*. He came from the Falls Road. One evening he sat down at the piano and began to play and sing the entire song to the last verse:

"Well we put the car in motion and filled it to the brim

With guns and bayonets shining which made old Johnson grim

And Barney hoisted a Sinn Fein flag, and it fluttered like a star

And we gave three cheers for the IRA and Johnson's motor car."

The first time he sang this there was complete silence. Declan Mulholland then intervened quickly to sing the Orange song *The Sash My Father Wore* in Irish. That brought some humour to the proceedings. This became his routine at every social and in the end it became acceptable though there was a still bit of lip-biting among some of the elderly Protestant ladies. He of Johnson's Motor Car later married a Protestant girl in the YWL and moved to East Belfast where

## Mansergh Outlook Was Thoroughly British

I suppose I am the unnamed "two-nations ideologue" referred to by Senator Mansergh with regard to his father's book on the First World War.

The views that what occurred in August 1914 was a "British instigated war of aggression" against Germany is not a novel idea that I dreamed up. It was the view of the two most influential writers on international affairs in the Irish Republican movement in 1914-16, James Connolly and Roger Casement.

Connolly asserted it in "The War Upon The German Nation" in September 1914 and gave it continuous expression in his comment on the War in "The Workers' Republic" in 1915-16. It was also Casement's view in "The Crime Against Europe", part of which had actually been written before the British declaration of war. Casement, who moved in diplomatic circles, saw that war on Germany was the object of British diplomacy in the pre-war years.

Nicholas Mansergh was an Anglo-Irish country gentleman, and a professional servant of the British state. His book, "The Coming Of The First World War", published in London in 1949, was based on lectures delivered at a private institution in Dublin in 1944 – so he says in a Foreword. But it is a pretty standard British view of the origins of the war.

Senator Mansergh refers to his father's book as "academic", as if that contradicted the description of it as propagandist. But pretty well every academic in Oxford and Cambridge contributed to the British propaganda of the Great War. And that is what Professor Mansergh did at private lectures in Dublin during the 2nd World War. There is no sign that he ever considered the matter from an Irish viewpoint. He simply ignores the arguments of Connolly and Casement. And he does not mention the detailed secret arrangements made by Sir Henry Wilson during the years before 1914 to place a British Army in the line in France when the moment came.

And, in his big book on "The Government Of Northern Ireland" (London 1936), Nicholas Mansergh manages to miss the obvious fact that it was an essentially undemocratic set-up made by Britain for its own convenience and/or advantage, and that the inevitable result of its functioning was the communal conflict of Protestants and Catholics.

Professor Mansergh served the British state in the sensitive overlap between the academic and administrative spheres, and he helped to massage the transition from Empire to Commonwealth (when the Empire was no longer sustainable) in such a way as to maintain the greatest possible degree of British hegemony over its former Empire. His history of Ireland, which he revised every few years, was part of that work.

His world-outlook was thoroughly British. He would not have been appointed to a position at the heart of the British Establishment otherwise.

**Brendan Clifford**  
*Irish News, 16.8.06*

she lived. Sometime in the early 1970s someone tried to gun him down in the street. He recognised a former comrade from the old days of the CP/NI social days but decided not to report the matter. Eventually he and his wife and children were threatened with being burnt out. They retreated to London as refugees and were re-housed on that basis by a Catholic housing charity.

Declan Mulholland and myself had left Belfast for London in 1954. We were followed soon after by Bobbie Heatley, the young Protestant joiner, who had changed the YWL into the SYL and led us into the Catholic areas on petitions. In London he learnt Irish and joined the Connolly Association, studied for a degree in economics, returned to Belfast, became a university lecturer in economics, joined the Civil Rights Movement and gave evidence at the Bloody Sunday enquiry in Derry.

Things then further deteriorated among the comrades. A former CPNI member joined the UDA while a former YWL member, a Catholic, joined a nationalist

splinter group. They burnt the UDA member's fishing boat in Ardglass Harbour.

When the Provo war out broke in the early Seventies some of the Special Branch we were familiar with were listed as dead in a night of the long knives. It was the end of an era in which Catholic and Protestant comrades had tentatively come together.

The Terence O'Neill/Sean Lemass talks in Belfast and Dublin during 1965 had failed. It may seem mild now but it was quite an event back then. Ian Paisley, king of the Deep-North bible-belt was having none of it. Back in 1962, probably sensing the change to come, he caused the Lower Falls riots by demanding that the RUC sledgehammer the Irish Tricolour out of the window of a shop being used by Sinn Fein during an election. This resulted in dozens of bloodied Catholic prisoners being chained together, after their arrest, by the RUC as if it were the American Deep South. Paisley also caused riots in the Catholic Cromac Square area, around the same time, by belligerently marching through it with his followers and an RUC

escort.

Unionist censorship was beginning to ease up and book shops in Central Belfast were selling Nationalist literature. This began to disappear at Paisley's behest. Next he started a campaign against what he called *Free State* currency being used in *Protestant Ulster*. (I remember the Protestant shipyard men when playing Pitch and Toss—a gambling game—calling out Heads or Harps—instead of Head or Tails as used in England—they so accepted the currency from South of the Border.) It wasn't long before the UVF had shot dead a Catholic barman working in the Shankill Road area. Then came the attempted invasion of parts of the Falls Road by the Loyalists, followed by the Bogside Riots in Derry. By this time the RUC silver band had stopped playing Irish jigs outside the City Hall on a Saturday.

Post 1939-1945 war, a massive building scheme was under way in order to re-house sections of the population and take them out of the Belfast slums. Huge estates had been completed by the early 1950s. Three of them in particular had picturesque settings—the one at Holywood, north of Belfast had a frontal view of Belfast Lough with the Castlereagh Hills at the back. Another one twelve miles from Belfast was built near the ancient town of Carrickfergus. It also had the Belfast Lough within walking distance. Rathcoole, also north of Belfast, had the Belfast Lough, the Carnmoney Hills and Cavehill within a short distance. This estate also had the glen Glas-na-Braden nearby. The houses built there were of a high standard with gardens back and front. Rathcoole had a shopping centre, a cinema, pubs, separate schools for both Protestant and Catholic children with an integrated one being planned. There were also various types of youth clubs and community centres. In these three estates, as well as others around the periphery of Belfast, social engineering was at work. Every Protestant had a Catholic neighbour next door and every Catholic had a Protestant neighbour. Each street had an equal number of both persuasions. My own family, rehoused from Carryduff, lived on the three estates at one time or another, finally settling in Rathcoole. My father agreed with the social engineering brought about by the then Unionist government. The early civil rights movement and many of those in People's Democracy castigated this social engineering and went as far as to wrongfully call these estates sink-estates of despair. Many of these critics were from the Catholic middle-class and later went on to have grand jobs with the British Establishment.

Anyway, the social engineering experiment only lasted about fifteen years. The religion-mixed Bobby Sands family on the Rathcoole estate received their marching orders after the Belfast and Bogside riots and they along with about a thousand Catholic families fled Rathcoole.

A register of all Catholics living on the Rathcoole estate was in the hands of local

Protestant militants. Also fortified with local intelligence two men, with pots of red paint and brushes, began their pilgrimage. They looked at their lists and painted on the concrete paths leading up to the houses the letters BW (break windows) or BO (burn out) BW was a warning to get ready in the days to come. BO meant to go now. Gangs with stones and petrol bombs then followed up the two men, and carried out the painted instructions. The screams of women could be heard all over the estate. The RUC and the British Army didn't intervene. There was also the sound of furious scrubbing as some of the women tried to rub out the painted instruction. Houses vacated then had the word *Infested* painted on the windows, reminiscent of pogroms against the Jews in Nazi Germany or the racist slogans of the American Deep South. Many Catholics survived those nights in Rathcoole because they had not been seen attending the local Catholic Church. They had also been sending their children to Protestant schools as a cover. They practised their religion and dusted-down their politics in the privacy of their own homes, I have been told, and probably still do.

The fact of the matter is that an united Ireland was not on the agenda of most Catholics from these new estates. They would happily have integrated within Northern Ireland if there had been major reforms in policing and if the Orange Order had been put on a leash. Maybe that was to come eventually. Certainly sections of the Unionist government during this period of social engineering were obviously working towards that integration. As Brendan Clifford says in one of his articles: "*Britain put the Protestants in charge of the Catholics.*" Maybe it was a bit late in the day to undo any of this. Unionist Stormont was to fall in 1972, after fifty years in power. Sinn Fein/SDLP/Unionist Stormont, in charge of very little, fell more times than Jesus. Now Sinn Fein and other nationalists would like the Protestants to integrate with *them*. The old Unionist Stormont with real power in their hands had a better chance of succeeding with the Catholics but the sands of time ran out.

The Young Workers' League limped on as the Socialist Youth League, and as far as I can gather, reverted back to being the Young Workers' League. Its membership card still had the starry plough of Connolly on it with one of the stars coloured red. Its secretary was now a young man who was also in the Territorial Army. He had to be persuaded to give up this limb of the British Army. His mother—an executive member of the Party—also had to be persuaded, by what was left of the old CP/NL, to tone down her charity work for an East Belfast Orange women's association.

In 2002 I sat alongside David Ervine, then a Progressive Unionist Party assembly member, at a book signing in Donegal Street in Belfast. I had had a book published by Brandon Books of Dingle, County Kerry and he had had a biography of himself also

## VOLUNTEERS continued

some even, it is an easy touch—defaulters at a Credit Union branch feel litigation would be the last resort, unlike the capitalist institutions.

On a wider scale, you see this in local authority housing where huge rental deficits, ESB and Gas bills remain unpaid—but their SKY TV and automobile debts are promptly accounted for.

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*"The tension between the republican view of the world and the Anglo-Saxon model of globalisation presents a dilemma for Irish policy makers. The emerging culture of contentment in Ireland is part of this dilemma. It expresses itself in a number of ways, from denial that Ireland's economic boom will falter, to a lack of political courage to decisively remedy institutional failure, to the erosion of fraternity. Irish society has long enjoyed a solid civic fabric, with institutions like the GAA and the localised nature of political party organisation being some of the factors that bred a sense of responsibility and involvement. However, fraternity is deteriorating and there is an unmistakable feeling that Ireland has become a more materialistic and consumerist society, two trends that are readily associated with globalisation. The transition of Irish society from frugal to consumerist has been a sudden and in parts an inelegant one, with ugly social changes like an increase in homicide, violent crime, anti-social behaviour and alcohol and drug abuse taking place along the way"* (Michael J. O'Sullivan, *Ireland And The Global Question*, Cork University Press, 2006).

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TO BE CONTINUED

published by Brandon Books. He gave a speech which startled some of the Catholics there for its socialist outlook and anti-sectarian message. It could have come from the CPNI when it had influence in Protestant East Belfast.

The CP/I is now nearer to what Sean Murray would have wanted. It is bi-lingual and it has its Celtic lettering but it is now mainly Southern based. It still has its handful of Northern Protestant adherents, many of whom have been around the Party for over fifty years. The industrialised Protestant has gone in the North so it will struggle to bring in the present-day Protestant. But as they say: When one door closes another one opens. The CP/I now seems to be attracting the newcomers to Ireland like Sikhs from India, East Europeans and black Africans.

**Wilson John Haire**

## VOLUNTEERS continued

individuals participate in, and feel part of, a wider social reality."

Pointing out that giving workers a share in corporate responsibility enhances company "performance", Ahern continued:

"I believe that the quality of life in society, and the ultimate health of our communities, depends on the willingness of people to become involved and active. Active on behalf of themselves and their families, their communities and the more vulnerable members of society. Happy the society that has people who act, rather than lament; who organise rather than complain; who accept a personal responsibility rather than walk by on the other side.

"We are fortunate to have so many active citizens in our society.

"They are to be found in vibrant national organisations, like the GAA, whose strength and vitality are reflected in the marvellous facilities which we are enjoying here today. Active citizens are to be found in the political parties, in Tidy Towns Committees, in credit unions, in parish and church organisations and guilds, in professional and scholarly organisations, in local history and environmental groups, in residents' associations and in youth groups of all kinds.

"We should not, however, be complacent. There are pressures, which militate against this type of engagement. Some of these relate to lifestyle and the pressures of combining working life with home and family commitments. This is particularly the case in the context of more extensive commuting. Some people are put off by the accountability, which can arise from engagement in organised activities, old and new. Others still can be discouraged by criticism or by the indifference of those who stand back and leave the effort to others.

"But we need to consider on a broader basis the policies and actions at official level, which can help or hinder such engagement. We need to identify the supports, which could help encourage people to become involved and to stay involved. We need to consider the cultural resources, which can be deployed to support the values of solidarity and participation, rather than isolation and withdrawal.

"In short, we need to consider how to maintain and develop a culture of active citizenship to build a healthy civic society.

"With that in mind, I intend to establish a Task Force on Active Citizenship to advise me and the Government on the steps which can be taken to achieve these goals. We have a growing body of academic research and reflection, which can help us. We have access to the experience of other

societies, which have sought to engage with this challenge" (An Taoiseach, Croke Park, 14.4.2005).

One of the truly great voluntary movements of the 20th century was surely the Trade Unions, yet, the Taoiseach made not a mention of this in his seminal address at Croke Park last year. A little unusual, as he is one of the few politicians who consistently wears his 'Trade Union heart' on his sleeve. Perhaps, he now takes the Trade Union movement for granted. Certainly, a huge contribution to that state-of-mind is the loss of the 'voluntary' aspect of Trade Unionism itself. To many workers, it is now just a large bureaucratic institution.

People take a similar view of the Credit Union movement. Many of the individuals espousing the great contribution of volunteerism are themselves highly paid executives in these organisations. You see a good deal of this in those organisations which are classified as Non Government Agencies (NGOs).

### CREDIT UNION MOVEMENT

*"Volunteerism brought Irish League of Credit Union's chief executive Liam O'Dwyer from the priesthood, through the prison service, into Human Resources, working with Travellers and directing the St Vincent de Paul"* (Irish Examiner, 15.4.2006).

"Since December 2002, O'Dwyer has been in charge of day-to-day operations at the Irish League of Credit Unions. The movement is a testimony to the enduring nature of volunteerism in Ireland.

"The movement employs 3,500 staff in five hundred and thirty different credit unions with three million members, and can call on a further nine thousand volunteers.

"Last year, its total assets grew by 15.4% to Euro 14.26 bn. The Irish League of Credit Unions is an all-Ireland organisation that operates under two distinct systems of regulation.

"It is a grassroots organisation. Average savings per member last year amounted to Euro 4,200, while average loans amounted to Euro 7,600 in the Republic, and a more modest Euro 4,340 in the North." (Irish Examiner-15.4.2006).

Liam O'Dwyer makes the following comment on Social Partnership: *"...that the unions and business interests have 'undue influence'"* (Irish Examiner, 15.4.2006).

What an infantile statement! Is he seriously suggesting that Barnardos, Simon and the St. Vincent de Paul be give equal status with the producers and wealth

creators?

He then goes on "However, the key was that volunteer organisations like St. Vincent de Paul are allowed a say" (ibid).

A couple of points here: surely Trade Unions have at least as great a claim to the volunteer principle as the St. Vincent de Paul?

We certainly go back as far, further even!

One would have thought a former National Director of St. Vincent de Paul might even appreciate the fact that were it not for the voluntary Trade Union movement, the challenges and tasks facing that organisation would be much more serious and widespread.

The *"Hand-up not the Hand-out"* philosophy is not too apparent here.

O'Dwyer *"spent 15 years in the priesthood, first as a student and later as an ordained priest"*. He left and got married.

When he talks about Trade Unions have "undue influence" in the Partnership process— he surely displays a pathetic ignorance of the role workers themselves played in the founding of the credit union movement worldwide, and still play.

Also, in these days of surveys and statistics, if one took the percentage of Trade Unionists and their families holding Credit Union membership— it would far exceed any of the other sectors that make up the community.

Mr. O'Dwyer claims he can *"call on a further nine thousand volunteers"* besides his 3,500 permanent staff. I doubt it! Indeed, the Credit Union movement is blighted by the lack of the voluntary ethic. Like Trade Union AGMs, were it not for the presence of the paid staff, most Credit Unions couldn't hold an AGM. They go to no end, offering incentives, vouchers, holidays, etc. in an attempt to persuade members to attend their own AGM— but alas, few ever turn up.

When they do, as they did recently in Gurrabraher in Cork city : it is concern over 'dicky' practices and the threat these pose to their interest pay-out.

Very few Credit Unions members have any intrinsic or voluntary commitment to their local branch these days—there was a time when some did—but not any longer. It is just another money-lending institute, local and more convenient that's all. For

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seen by some political observers as an attempt to address a growing sense of unease over some aspects of the country's rapid economic growth, such as longer commuting times, rampant consumerism and a growing sense of alienation and isolation in the community" (19.4.2006).

Various elements of the community are represented in the Task Force, which includes individuals involved in the community, voluntary sector, employers, and unions, along with two very senior civil servants:

Ms Mary Davis, Chief Executive, Special Olympics Ireland (Chairperson)  
Mr. David Begg, General Secretary, Irish Congress of Trade Unions  
Mr. John Bennett, Disability Officer, University College, Dublin  
Fr. Harry Bohan, Diocese of Killaloe and Céifin Centre for Values-led Change  
Ms Elaine Bradshaw, Chair, Keep Kilkenny Beautiful Committee  
Ms Caroline Casey, Chief Executive, The Aisling Foundation  
Ms Mary Cunningham, Director, National Youth Council of Ireland  
Mr. Arthur Duignan, Assistant Director, CREATE  
Cllr. John Gallahue, Governing Body, Limerick Institute of Technology  
Mr. Gerry Kearney, Secretary General, Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs  
Mr. Sean Kelly, Outgoing President, GAA  
Ms Maighr ad U  Mh irt n, Cathaoirleach, Foras na Gaeilge  
Mr. Seamus McAleavey, Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action  
Mr. Dermot McCarthy, Secretary General, Department of the Taoiseach  
Sr. Bernadette McMahon, Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice  
Ms Sylvia Meehan, Irish Senior Citizens Parliament  
Mr. Bobby Molloy, former TD and Minister  
The Venerable David Pierpoint, Archdeacon of Dublin  
Dr. Mary Redmond, Arthur Cox, and Co-founder, The Wheel  
Mr. John Trethowan, Business in the Community Ireland

### BERTIE'S PROFESSOR

In September, 2005, Fianna F il invited a number of high-profile speakers on social cohesion, childcare and the economy to address its annual two-day parliamentary party meeting in Co. Cavan.

These meetings traditionally flag the issues the party see as important for the coming D il session.

Author and Harvard Professor Robert Puttnam, who has written extensively on

the fall in social participation by citizens in the United States, was among those invited.

It was Professor Puttnam who coined the term "*social capital*" to describe community interaction, volunteerism and commitment to local progress.

The Taoiseach has long been concerned that increasing pressures of work and long commutes are causing social clubs, societies and sports and leisure groups to suffer a withering of membership.

Mr. Ahern admires the work of Robert Puttnam, who identified the problem in his book, *Bowling Alone*, summing up increasing loneliness in society.

Puttnam's big idea is that community is suffering because we don't "*reconnect*" enough with each other. He points out that, while in the 1950s people in the US would have gone bowling in groups of five or six, they were now too busy making money. If Americans go bowling these days, it is more likely to be on their own.

Mr. Ahern had told a conference last year

on the future of the community and voluntary sector in Croke Park:

"In his important work on social capital, Robert Puttnam has traced the processes by which the health of societies can be enhanced or diminished, depending on the extent to which individuals participate in, and feel part of, a wider social reality."

### PUBLIC CONSULTATION

On 24th July 2006, the Chairperson of the *Taskforce on Active Citizenship*, Ms Mary Davis, CEO of Special Olympics Ireland, announced the beginning of a public consultation process on Active Citizenship.

Launching a consultation document which is to be widely distributed around the country and is also available on the website [www.activecitizen.ie](http://www.activecitizen.ie), Ms Davis said that the Taskforce was interested in hearing a wide spectrum of views on what it means to be an active citizen in today's Ireland.

Ms Davis said she was keenly aware that in today's society the most difficult thing for people to give is their time:

"Pressures of time, changing values and modern lifestyles have contributed to a sense that it is harder to be an active citizen in Ireland today..."

"The main focus of our work will be to promote discussion and debate on what active citizenship means and what can be done to assist people to become more involved. We on the Taskforce encourage as many as possible to take part and look forward to receiving their

views by the 29th September, 2006."

Regional public meetings are to take place in September to hear the views of individuals, groups and organisations. Details of these events are on the Active Citizenship website [www.activecitizen.ie](http://www.activecitizen.ie) (24.7.2006).

### AHERN SPEECH

Addressing a Conference on *The Future Of The Communist And Voluntary Sector* in Croke Park in April 2005, the Taoiseach described the 'voluntary' sector as being part of the "*economy*", rather than seeing it as part of *society*. This shows how deeply the commercial mindset has bitten. He said:

"Recent research has traced the scale of the voluntary sector in Ireland, in terms of the number of people involved on a regular basis, the number of employees working for voluntary organisations and the scale of the financial resources which they control. By any standard, this is a significant sector of the economy. It is appropriate that it should attract its due share of attention from researchers, from those supporting good management practice, from specialists in finance and, indeed, from the public authorities as hopefully appropriate and sensitive regulators of different aspects of this activity."

He also seemed to assume that 'voluntary' means 'not for profit'. Traditionally it has been understood to indicate that an effort was being 'not for pay':

"The important role of the non-profit sector in our economy and society has been reflected in the development of relations between the Government, the public authorities in general and the community and voluntary sector."

Ahern stressed the value of Social Partnership in allowing a voice to "*those who might, otherwise, be almost voiceless in Irish society*".

He then went on to speak of the high "quality of relationships" in Irish social life, concluding that:

"Given that experience, it is not surprising that Irish people were ranked so highly in the international measurement of happiness reported some months ago in *The Economist* magazine. This results from the combination of high living standards, made possible by economic growth, and mutual support and solidarity, based on shared values, which makes for a happy and contented society.

"In his important work on social capital, Robert Puttnam has traced the processes by which the health of societies can be enhanced or diminished, depending on the extent to which





# The Fate Of The Volunteer

*"I scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine."*  
"People live in each other's shadows."

"Whenever I wanted to know what the Irish people wanted, I had only to examine my own heart and it told me straight off what the Irish people wanted."

*(Eamon de Valera, Dail Eireann, 6.1.1922, in reply to a jibe at his 'foreignness' in the Freeman's Journal).*

De Valera witnessed a revolution; a 'civil war'; the most radical land reform programme ever legislated and a massive cultural movement, all of them, initially based on volunteerism.

A volunteer can certainly look into his heart— all the British Empire could do was dip into its pockets.

Of course, that now, is the direction we ourselves are heading: 'money can buy anything'.

One thing is for sure, de Valera would never have needed to seek out a Harvard professor to find the answer as to why the Irish people have deserted their once beautiful sense of civic and voluntary duty.

To be honest, once that happens— there is no way back. The road we're now going down has no U-turn—boom, expansion and growth just have to continue, even for the sake of a minority of the population, indeed, primarily for the sake of a minority.

Setting up a task force to ponder on the decline of 'volunteerism' is a contradiction. In a sense, it is an affirmation that the volunteer is a thing of the past. Nobody

does anything to-day but for material gain! If there's no gain, why should you do it? 'He must be getting something out of it, he must be, he would be mad to do it for nothing', is a constant refrain in the land of the Celtic Tiger.

### TASK FORCE

Announcing the membership of the Task Force on Active Citizenship, the Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern, TD, said:

"Last week, in the context of discussing the legacy of the 1916 Rising, I pointed out that Ireland has a deep tradition of active engagement by its citizens in every aspect of our national life and culture. During decades when the capacity of the State was limited by a lack of resources, it was the commitment of the Irish people that so often, formally and informally, provided social

services, community leadership as well as a sporting and cultural life for our people.

"Today, when the scarcest resource of all is time, this role of active participation is being devolved to fewer and fewer people. In the process, we all risk being impoverished, especially those who opt out and leave the responsibilities of citizenship to others.

"We need to identify and understand how public policy helps and hinders active engagement. We need to identify practical steps to encourage more of our people to become involved and to stay involved in the life of their own community.

"I am entrusting that task to the Task Force on Active citizenship, which will be chaired by Mary Davis. In her role as Director of Special Olympics Ireland, she succeeded in generating such a tremendous response from ordinary citizens to an extraordinary experience that was Special Olympics 2003. This is one example of the type of voluntary effort and community participation, which sustains a healthy and vibrant society" (18.4.2006).

The *Irish Times* commented editorially:

"The Task Force on Active Citizenship has been given nine months to produce a report aimed at helping shape public policy in a way which facilitates and encourages greater engagement by people in all aspects of life, as well as promoting a strong civic culture. The Taoiseach's decision to establish the group has been prompted by concern over reports of falling levels of civic engagement and volunteerism across the country.

"The establishment of a task force is

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