

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

July 2008

Vol.23, No.7 ISSN 0790-7672

and **Northern Star** incorporating **Workers' Weekly** Vol.22 No.7 ISSN 954-5891

The People Have Spoken

The working class and small farmers have spoken. And since Ireland was the only country that was allowed to speak, they have spoken for Europe and placed themselves at its heart.

They have decided that Europe is a group of nations with a dream and not a bureaucracy which imposes diktats from above. They have determined that Europe is a collection of peoples and not a homogeneous free market which is regulated by a court with the enthusiastic support of a neo-liberal Commission. They have declared that Europe is an area with defined borders engaged in a glorious project of cooperation and not a revival of the imperialistic instincts of Britain, France and Germany as an adjunct to American imperialism.

The enemies of the people have attempted to explain the result away. They have diminished the verdict's significance and have heaped their feeble scorn on the people's intelligence. But it is not the Irish working class and small farmers who lack intelligence. *Au contraire!* By the simple expedient of placing an "X" on a ballot paper they have reduced their critics to cretinism. And they have done this without reading a word of the soon to be forgotten document because their understanding is more profound than mere words on a page. They have looked at Europe and know that it is not the Europe of Delors, Mitterrand and Kohl. They have seen that Britain has sold the Eurocrats the Trojan Horse of expansion, but the people have refused to back that tired old nag, never mind buy it.

And meanwhile the media babble continues to flow undisturbed by understanding: "if only the 'yes' side had started its campaign earlier" they exclaim. They regret that the Mahon Tribunal set piece, which they had enthusiastically supported, had not happened. They wish that Ahern, who they had wanted to resign, had not resigned. Their impotent rage cannot hide their heart's desire: "if only the people could have been manipulated to act against their own interests".

But the people have spoken and their words will not be distorted or diminished. They have voted "no" not because they hate Europe but because they love it. They do not wish to destroy Europe but to save it. They have not rejected it but demand that it be restored to the people through its constituent elements which begin with the nation state.

So where do we go from here? It is not up to the Irish people to work out the nuts and bolts of a reconfigured Europe. All they have done is to tell European leaders what they do not want. The Irish have rejected the subordination of workers' rights to free market values within Europe. They have rejected a purely free market relationship, as decided by Mandelson, between Europe and the rest of the world. And they have rejected military expansion. It has been explained to them that their rejection will result in "immobilism". And yet they have decided that *immobilism* is preferable to the direction that Europe is going. No European foreign policy is preferable to the "ethical" foreign policy of recent years which has led to the destruction of Yugoslavia and coat tailed American imperialism in the Middle East.

That is what the Irish people have rejected. If the political leaders of Europe cannot devise a project that the people of Europe can embrace, the project will deserve to fail.

See also pages 4, 8, 16, 23 and back page

DUP Home Rulers!

Is the DUP the new Home Rule Party, exploiting the conflict between the parties of the State for the purpose of increasing its power in the Six County annex of the United Kingdom, which is in the State but not of it?

That seems to be how its first effective intervention in British politics was seen by British politicians. It tipped the balance in favour of the extension of detention without charge from four weeks to six weeks. It was rewarded with money by the Government, but drew attention to itself as an intruder which, in a balance-of-power situation it might be necessary to do a deal with, but which all parties would much rather ignore. It is a marginal trace element in the life of the State which the real parties all hope to be able to ignore, but which it may occasionally be necessary to take account of.

The illusion of a Northern Ireland state has been restored. At the point of restoration the Official Unionist Party and the SDLP expected to be its parties. The SDLP ceased to be an anti-Partition party and remade itself into an Ulster Home Rule Party for that purpose. But the Six Country nationalist community, which held to Home Rule ninety years ago when the rest of nationalist Ireland became Sinn Fein, abandoned the SDLP in favour of Sinn Fein. Irish Home Rule was one thing. Ulster Home Rule, in only a part of the province, is quite a different thing.

The nationalist Home Rule voice at Westminster is scarcely noticed, being reduced to one. Mark Durkan voted against his "sister party", but nothing was made of it. Sinn Fein has made Irish nationalism more acceptable than it has ever been at Westminster by withdrawing itself from Westminster.

Historically, 'constitutional nationalism' at Westminster has been futile at best, and in the moment of truth in the years after 1912 it was much worse than futile.

"Constitutional nationalism" was never constitutional. Its aim was never to take part in governing the State, and the purpose of the Constitution was to provide for the governing of the State. Redmondism, holding the balance-of-power between the parties of state, attempted to exploit the conflict of the parties. With its 80 seats it put the Liberal Party in office from the back benches on condition of getting an Irish Home Rule Act. It failed to get Home Rule, but brought British politics to the brink of chaos in the course of attempting it, and aggravated Catholic-Protestant relations in Ireland to the point where two Volunteer Armies confronted one another in the first half of 1914.

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Labour Comment, edited by **Pat Maloney:**
Whither Labour>

The disruption of the norms of British politics by Home Rule manipulation of the balance of power was probably a factor in the decision of the Government to use the European crisis of July-August 1914 as an opportunity to make war on Germany, and it was certainly an influence on the way that the state went to war. At the critical moment in late July/early August, as a consequence of the Curragh Mutiny in March, it was without a War Minister.

The Liberal Party put itself in an unsustainable position by making itself an instrument of the Home Rule Party. That was the (British) Unionist case against it, and it was a case that the Unionists made good both during the Home Rule conflict and in the Great War. And in 1915 the Home Rule Party left the Liberals in the lurch when it refused to join the War Coalition, making the Liberals dependent on the Unionists.

A party which calls itself *constitutional* but refuses to join a general Coalition when the state is judged to be in jeopardy is not constitutional. It is humbug.

Constitutional Nationalism is dead. But in its place we have the strange phenomenon of Constitutional Unionism.

"Ulster is British!" we were told. We saw that it wasn't. But in the mid-eighties we provided it with the opportunity of

becoming British, through participation in the system of party-politics through which the British State functions, and outside which everything becomes incomprehensible to the British. Ulster Unionism considered that project for a moment, and then rejected it. And now it is the odd fish in the Westminster pool—the intruder which can generally be ignored, and which is resented when it cannot be ignored.

The DUP got its pieces of silver for voting against its own precedents in the matter of detention without trial and enabling the Government to win. And the parties it defeated made reference to pieces of silver.

At home, in 'the Northern Ireland state', it was given a sharp lesson about the fragile nature of this 'state'.

Paisley was resented for having done a deal with Sinn Fein, and still more for operating the deal with a degree of grace and charm. So he was ousted by his lieutenants, who thought that, the deal having been done, they were free to regress.

But the ousting of Paisley made it necessary to recreate the whole Government under the bi-communal method. The DUP had to act jointly with Sinn Fein for that purpose. When Peter Robinson replaced Paisley as leader of the DUP, he began acting as First Minister—but then

found that he wasn't. The First and Deputy First Minister were Siamese Twins which fell together and could only rise together. If Sinn Fein did not nominate, Peter Robinson would not be First Minister. When Sinn Fein delayed with its nomination, the devilish nature of the system began to bite.

The Northern Ireland 'state' was only restored after emergency meetings of its participants with the Prime Minister of the real State, at which some deals were done that Peter Robinson did not wish to do.

Sinn Fein has not yet become the SDLP under another name. There is still some spirit left in it. It still has a purpose beyond the 'Northern Ireland state', and for that 'state', which Unionism can never have, and this gives it an edge.

Editorial Digest

The Gaeltacht voted overwhelmingly against the Lisbon Treaty. The Tallies (which give a much more local picture of the vote) showed 84% No in Conamara and a similar figure in Gweedore. There is a problem in the Gaeltacht with incomers and second-home owners changing the very nature of these areas. The Government brought in regulations requiring new homes to be occupied by Irish speakers. These rules were challenged by the nobs and the EU court upheld their challenge. The result will be either the disappearance of the Gaeltacht or the burning of houses and the criminalising of the locals. Just like the good old days of British rule.

The Labour Party seems unable to get anything right. Eamon Gilmore, who predicted all kinds of trouble in the event of a 'No' vote gave the appearance after the vote of not being bothered either way. But then Gilmore is a newcomer to any kind of European idea. In the last election he was one of the group insisting on the Labour Party nailing its colours to the Fine Gael mast. He lost. Now he is given the opportunity of being allied with Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, the Green Party and the Progressive Democrats. Again he misreads the mood of the public and loses again.

The BBC main news—News at Ten 12th June—managed to give an extensive report on the 'No' vote in the Referendum in Ireland on the Lisbon Treaty without mentioning Sinn Fein! It showed several shots of Declan Ganley and gave the impression the 'No' campaign was his alone. It also showed a smug and patronising British Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, saying that the Irish

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Tibet

Does John Minahane believe that slavery, serfdom and a feudal system were necessary parts of Tibet's "old, humanly rich, unprogressive culture"? That it was OK that 9 in 10 Tibetans were serfs? That it was acceptable that 1 in 20 was an actual slave? That slaves and serfs had no legal protection against their lords, suffering oppression and mutilation without any redress? Is that what he means by "some element of oppression" in Tibet's old culture?

Lots of visitors to Old Tibet said that the ordinary people were happy. Likewise lots of white visitors to the US South before their secession said the slaves were happy. In both Tibet and the USA, the former slaves said something very different, when they were free to speak.

Can Minahane explain why the Dalai Lama did nothing significant about Tibetan feudalism when he was ruling Western Tibet as an autonomous region of the People's Republic? He made no serious reforms, apart from abolishing hereditary debts in 1953. If the Dalai Lama remained the legitimate government after 1959, as he now claims, then the former serfs and slaves of Tibet must legally remain just that, because he's still not done anything about it.

Surprisingly, feudalism in Western Tibet lasted till 1959, because Mao actually did respect the traditional autonomy of the territories governed from Lhasa. They ended when a revolt was launched by Tibetans who'd fled the end of feudalism in Eastern Tibet.

Eastern Tibet—Amdo and eastern Kham—was never ruled by the Dalai Lama. Well before Mao took over, these territories had lost their Tibetan identity and had become parts of various Chinese provinces. They remained rather lawless, but there was no legal right to autonomy. There were of course a lot of unhappy members of the privileged elite, including the Dalai Lama's elder brother who had been a high Lama and a rising power when his little brother was 'discovered' for the top job.

Western Tibet, the current Tibetan Autonomous Region, did have a long history of autonomy. But not independence. It hadn't had a unified independent government for the last thousand years, though there were times when it was fragmented and it's hard to say that anyone ruled it.

No outside government saw Tibet as an independent kingdom, unlike Korea or Vietnam which did have loose ties to the Chinese Empire. The 13th Dalai Lama proclaimed an independent Tibet in 1912-13, claiming he was free to do so with the Chinese Empire overthrown. International law does not work like that, nor did it suit the British or anyone else to recognise him. He later functioned as one of numerous quasi-independent rulers within the Chinese Republic, and his claim to independence implicitly lapsed.

The central government of the Chinese Republic was invited to attend the inauguration of the current Dalai Lama in 1940. This was seen at the time as a definite acceptance by Lhasa that it was part of the Chinese Republic, which had always insisted that all Tibet was part of its territory. Of course every previous Dalai Lama after the 5th had taken power with the agreement of the Chinese Central Government. In 1940 they flew the flag of the Chinese Republic and sung the central government's National Anthem. It was seen as marking "the cordial friendship and political ties between Tibet and the central government". (From *The Billings Gazette*, February 18th 1940, found in an on-line newspaper archive.)

In 1947, representatives of the Chinese Republic found a Tibetan flag flying among the flags of sovereign states at the ceremonies to mark the independence of the Republic of India. They demanded it be taken down and it was taken down. There's a suspicion that India had ambitions to complete the old scheme of British India and add Tibet to their realm. But, in the end, friendship with China was more important.

India did snap up an area known then as the North-East Frontier Agency, which the Chinese called 'South Tibet' and which

was not marked as part of British India until the 1940s. This was the territory where India and China fought a border war in 1961. It's notable that India did not let the Dalai Lama stay there, but instead shoved him far to the west, to Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh. A region with historic connections to Tibet, but also overwhelmingly Hindu.

International law does not grant any automatic right to Home Rule for a distinctive population. Nor does it allow an autonomous government to upgrade itself to being a sovereign and independent state. I'd be all in favour of some global reform to allow those things, with suitable safeguards. Safeguards that Tibet's slave-owning oligarchy would probably not have passed in the 1950s, of course. But that's utopian for now, since the USA does not want it and nor does Britain. The Anglosphere and their French poodle used Tibet as a stick to beat the Chinese—but instead of cowering them, it produced a surge of patriotism and disgust at Western dishonesty.

The Anglosphere like to rewrite International Law for each particular case, to reward their friends and punish their enemies. Catholic Ireland happens to be a beneficiary—the USA is influenced by the Irish Catholic vote and so puts pressure on Britain to make concessions over Northern Ireland. But, even if you like particular outcomes, you should recognise that the system is corrupt and dishonest. It caused chaos in former Yugoslavia and threatens to do worse over Kosovo.

The 'humiliating' condition that Beijing demands of the Dalai Lama is no more than that he accept that Tibet was never an independent nation. That it was never *occupied*, because it was never a separate sovereign territory. How many other Asian states tolerate secessionists? Definitely not the Republic of India, the world's largest democracy and also the state that used armed force to take over Goa and Sikkim, and to separate Bangladesh from Pakistan. I'm not saying India was wrong to do this, just that this is the standard that China should be measured against.

Madawc Williams

should be given time to reflect and meanwhile Britain would go ahead with ratifying the Treaty. He was supporting the arrogant Commission President, Jose Barroso, who has decided to ignore the Irish decision.

Brian Feeney is something of an institution on the Catholic side of the Belfast Sectarian divide. He has had a weekly column in the *Irish News* forever. On

May 7th he launched a tirade against the SDLP and its leader, Mark Durkin in particular. "*They [Fine Gael and Labour] will be aware, even if Durkin is not, that the committee Durkin set up to 'consider all political options' is his admission that the SDLP is dead...the truth is that there is only one runner, Fianna Fail. There is no 'Labour element' in the SDLP.*" The only problem for the SDLP, according to Feeney, is

what to do about the Westminster MPs since Fianna Fail will not contest Westminster elections.

The Democratic Unionist Party becomes Feeney's target on 11th June. "...we're spectators playing no part in the affairs of either state. The DUP might kid themselves that with their nine MPs they could perhaps hold the balance of power

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LISBON REFERENDUM:

Thank you, Madam.

The Lisbon referendum result has come in as we go to press.

There will no doubt be many calls for reflection after the No result. We offer our initial thoughts. The EU Project is not what it was. The Irish electorate knew this in its bones. So do many other electorates. The Project has not yet recovered from the ending of the Cold War and may not ever do so.

It was originally the main European nations recognising their place in the world was now reduced to their own role as relatively small nation-states in a small area of the world and recognising the sense of making arrangements to work in a co-operative social entity, independent of the UK, the US and the USSR.

Now it is driven by the main nations of Europe and the UK finding again, and exercising again, their old Imperialist instincts and finding a new life for them. They want to add military weight to these instincts. It should not be forgotten that the UK, France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Holland and others have imperial pasts. Ireland's very *raison d'être* is anti-Imperial. It can smell an imperialist a mile off (always determined of course to save them and the world from themselves).

The rag-bag opposition to Lisbon did not win this referendum (even after dispensing with the services of Anthony Coughlan). The arrogance of the Irish political elite and Europe did that. Even before the result was officially announced, Barroso was encouraging those who had not endorsed the Lisbon Treaty to do so because the Treaty was not dead! But the Treaty *was* legally dead!

Uniting Europe needs some basic ground rules. One is recognising that uniting a number of historic political and social entities is a major task. It is quite an undertaking uniting those two small entities on the island of Ireland. These many entities are organic and uniting them is a delicate issue. It is not a mechanical or mathematical matter of voting, planning, scheming, legalising and documenting the process in various ways. The hearts, and not just the smart brains, have to be fully engaged. And having sheer numbers determining the issues will simply not work. It did not work in Northern Ireland

But this is the current EU methodology. This is not working, nor will it work. The Irish know what a written Constitution is. They have an understandable, working model. They know it is a tool for their benefit not a weapon to push policies that people do not want or understand. . A Constitution of this nature was presented in Europe before—and rejected in referendums. This has now been re-presented but called a Treaty—but no European country will be given a vote on it this time. Gordon Brown had promised a vote in England, but will now deny it. The ambition is to force the Constitution-Treaty on the people of Europe.

We may even have the farce of another referendum.

There is of course one thing that could have possibly changed all this and have made the Lisbon result a Yes result and everyone knows it—Bertie Ahern *sans* Mahon. What standing he would have! But the self-righteous indignation generated by the *Irish Times* over the absurd minutiae of some of his old bank records made him unavailable to save the day.

Thank you madam, most sincerely.

this week on the vote on 42-day detention—and that's conceivable—but it doesn't mean they want to play any part in affairs of state." This is true enough. Though it was exactly those nine votes by which Gordon Brown and his fellow punishment enthusiasts won the 42-day motion. When the proposal for direct involvement in the party politics was a serious issue 20 years ago, Brian Feeney publicly opposed the organisation of the British Labour Party in the North. His line was the place already had class politics. The SDLP represented the working class and the Unionists the middle class. Now he tells us the SDLP "is a middle class party".

Sinn Fein's Tom Hartley, Councillor for Lower Falls, has become his Party's

second Lord Mayor of Belfast by one vote. Alex Maskey was Lord Mayor in 2002. He was supported by the SDLP and the Alliance Party, and David Browne of the Ulster Unionists abstained. Mr. Browne is Deputy Lord Mayor. Hartley's opponent, Diane Dodds of the DUP denounced Mr. Browne for betraying the "unionist people". Mr. Hartley is on that wing of his party which thinks that those who died for the British Empire should be given similar credit as those who died for Ireland, a wing that has been somewhat on the wane in Sinn Fein in recent months. The new Mayor of Derry is the SDLP's Gerard Diver. The DUP's Maurice Mills was re-elected Mayor of Ballymena. The new chairman of Down District Council is Colin McGrath of the SDLP.

Local elections have been postponed in the North until, at the earliest, 2011, when the number of local authorities is expected to be reduced to eleven. Or not! The British Government could still change its mind and decide on fewer councils. Meanwhile Omagh District Council's new chairman is Sinn Fein's Martin McColgan. A Sinn Fein Councillor, Kate McEldowney, has become chairwoman of Magherafelt District Council, and Brenda Chivers is the new Sinn Fein Mayor of Limavady. Sinn Fein Councillor Colman Burns from Crossmaglen is the new Mayor of Newry.

Iris Robinson was "outed" on Channel 4 News on 6th June as homophobic. She had ventured the opinion, in keeping with her religious beliefs, that homosexuality could be cured and had a friend who was a psychologist and could effect such a cure. (Her comments came after a serious assault on a gay man in Belfast.) Channel 4 interviewed a gay rights activist from Derry and suggested to him that he should call for Mrs. Robinson's resignation from the Northern Ireland Executive. He said that he wasn't going to be involved in the kind of resignation demands that everyone got up to, and instead would like Mrs. Robinson and her husband, the new First Minister, to visit his group and discuss things with them. He was the very soul of common sense. Sinn Fein and the SDLP denounced her but without much enthusiasm. It was left to the British media, the broadsheets, ITV, the BBC, to howl for her to go—especially the front pages of *The Daily Mirror* and *The Sun* (yes, *The Sun!*). Liberals in full pursuit of their quarry is not a pretty sight!

President McAleese's visit to a school in a Protestant heartland in Co. Derry was greeted by a noisy but peaceful protest. The SDLP and the *Irish News* have been outraged. Calm down girls! The protesters carried posters objecting to remarks made by the President some time ago to the effect the Unionists treated Catholics in much the same way that Nazis treated Jews. People shouted "republican scum" and "****" off. Big deal. Get used to it. Mind you the President was right—at least to the point where the extermination began. And even then there were plenty of Unionists who would have been happy to go down that road. In the item above Mrs. Robinson saw homosexuality as an abomination, but took the line of hating the sin while loving the sinner. In the past, and for some people still, the feelings of Unionists about the abomination of Catholicism didn't usually mean that they made any distinction between the sin and the sinner.

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The British Army has doubled the number of its recruits from the South in the last year from 300 to 600 according to the *Irish News* on 13th June. The paper quoted a load of flannel from the British officer doing the recruiting. What it omitted, and what was reported in the *Irish Independent*, was that a large proportion of these were men who had been rejected by the Army in the South.

Sinn Fein seems to have got the message that distancing itself from its recent past has done it no good at all. People who are put off by the IRA connection are not going to support it no matter what. Those who do support it regard its more militant and military figures as courageous people who put their lives on the line and can be trusted to say what they mean. Tom Hartley aside, the organisation is exhibiting more and more pride in its military role in changing the political map in the North. *An Phoblacht* has become readable again. Mary Lou MacDonald showed remarkable leadership and political skills during the referendum campaign. Yet she took time off to carry the coffin of the late Belfast IRA leader, Brian Keenan. Martin Ferris accompanies Brendan McFarlane each day to his trial at the Special Court in Dublin. And still the sky has not fallen in!

The Raytheon Accused have been acquitted at Belfast Crown Court. Raytheon was involved in the production of the bombs that the Israelis used to attack civilian targets in Lebanon—especially the school massacre in Cana. The group, which included the civil rights campaigner, Eamon McCann, occupied and thrashed Raytheon's offices in Derry. Their defence was that they were acting to prevent more war crimes. The judge

accepted this and wished to dismiss the case, but the prosecution appealed successfully to a higher court to have the trial run its course. (This bit of law is a new one on us.) But the jury cleared them anyway. It would be interesting if someone took a case now against Raytheon for complicity in war crimes.

Micheal Martin. Of all the reactions to the referendum results, Micheal Martin's stands out as sober and thoughtful: "*We are going to analyse the underlying reasons why people not just voted No but the underlying attitudes to the European Union itself because I would accept that there appears to be a certain disconnect between European institutions and its people.*" That is not a bad attitude for the Minister for Foreign Affairs to take with him to Brussels.

Ben Dunne & Sinn Fein

"Part of the problem was the people didn't understand the treaty but the other part of the problem was, I think, there was a terrible slant put on it. They tried to call everybody on the No side a Sinn Feiner or a pack of loonies and liars misleading the public. That was unfair and everytime it came up about the increase in the arms situation in Europe, it was thrown at Sinn Fein's face, well you have your own private army. I don't think that was fair either. Up till Thursday it was said by all the leaders of the main parties that a better deal couldn't be negotiated. Now if it was a business decision and I had sent out these people and they came back telling me this, well I wouldn't be sending back the same team to renegotiate. They should send out a new team to renegotiate and this time include Sinn Fein." (Sunday Tribune, 15th June)

Follow Me Up To Carlow

The Libertas anti-Lisbon campaigner, Declan Ganley, was Eamon Dunphy's guest on Radio Eireann on 14th June. His first choice of music was *Follow Me Up To Carlow*, sung by Planxty. It celebrates the victory of Fiach McHugh O'Byrne over 3,000 English soldiers at the battle of Glenmalure in 1580. It certainly doesn't pull any punches and is reproduced below:

Lift MacCahir Óg your face, brooding o'er
the old disgrace
That black FitzWilliam stormed your
place, drove you to the Fern
Grey said victory was sure—Soon the
firebrand he'd secure
Until he met at Glenmalure with Fiach
MacHugh O'Byrne.

Chorus:

Curse and swear Lord Kildare
Fiach will do what Fiach will dare
Now FitzWilliam, have a care
Fallen is your star low
Up with halberd, out with sword
On we'll go for by the lord
Feach MacHugh has given the word,
Follow me up to Carlow!

See the swords of Glen Imall,
flashing o'er the English Pale
See all the children of the Gael,
beneath O'Byrne's banners
Rooster of a fighting stock,
would you let a Saxon cock—
Crow out upon an Irish rock—
fly up and teach him manners.
From Tassagart to Clonmore,
there flows a stream of Saxon gore
Och, great is Rory Óg O'More,
sending the loons to Hades.
White is sick and Lane is fled,
now for black FitzWilliam's head
We'll send it over, dripping red,
to Queen Liza and the ladies.

Conor Lynch

Victory to the Raytheon 9

On 11th June 2008, 6 people, who had occupied the offices of Raytheon in Derry and destroyed computers, were acquitted of criminal damage by a Belfast jury. Raytheon is a huge US arms manufacturer, with sales of \$20 billion in 2006 and over 70,000 employees worldwide. It makes Patriot, Tomahawk, Cruise and Sidewinder missiles, and much more besides.

The action which gave rise to the criminal charges took place on 9th August 2006 during Israel's war on Lebanon, in which well over 1,000 Lebanese civilians were killed by Israeli bombing and shelling. On 30th July 2006, an Israeli aircraft targeted a residential building in

Qana in southern Lebanon with a Raytheon-supplied "bunker buster" bomb. As a result, 28 civilians, from two extended families, the Hashems and the Shaloubs, were killed. The dead included 14 children.

This event led to 9 members of the Derry Anti War Coalition occupying Raytheon's offices in Derry ten days later. They remained there until forcibly removed by police in riot gear about 8 hours later. Substantial damage was done to Raytheon property:

"Documents found on the premises were thrown from the windows to supporters outside. After our supporters were moved away by the police, computers, already damaged, were hurled out. Our main target was the mainframe: we knew that putting this out of action would disrupt Raytheon's ordering system and thus hamper production, including production of missiles. The mainframe was

decommissioned with a fire-extinguisher."

This account is taken from *The Raytheon 9: Resisting war crimes is not a crime*, an excellent pamphlet about the affair by Eamonn McCann, who took part in the occupation.

The action eventually led to 6 of the participants appearing before a judge and jury in Belfast in May 2008, charged with criminal damage and affray. On 4th June 2008, after the prosecution had put its case, the judge expressed the opinion that there was no case to answer on either charge. However, the prosecution appealed to a higher court and won with respect to the criminal damage charge, which then had to be put to the jury. A few days later, the jury found all the accused not guilty on the criminal damage charge. The charge of affray was dismissed by the judge without it being put to the jury.

The trial went largely unreported in the local Northern Ireland media, and in the Dublin and London media. The same is true of the verdict, even though it has sensational implications. The defence argued that the accused had undertaken their action in order to prevent war crimes being perpetrated in Lebanon by Israel using Raytheon-supplied weapons. In the words of Eamonn McCann in a statement afterwards, by finding the accused not guilty:

"The jury has accepted that we were reasonable in our belief that: the Israel Defence Forces were guilty of war crimes in Lebanon in the summer of 2006; that the Raytheon company, including its facility in Derry, was aiding and abetting the commission of these crimes; and that the action we took was intended to have, and did have, the effect of hampering or delaying the commission of war crimes." [1]

In other words, in the opinion of the jury, having heard the evidence, it was reasonable of the defendants to believe that Raytheon was engaged in criminal activity by supplying Israel with armaments and that they were justified in perpetrating criminal damage on Raytheon property in order to hamper this criminal activity. In his statement, Eamonn McCann called

"on the office of the Attorney General and the Crown Prosecution Service, in light of this verdict, to institute an investigation into the activities of Raytheon at its various plants across the UK, with a view to determining whether Raytheon is, as we say it is, a criminal enterprise."

GAGGING ORDER

The Raytheon trial would normally have taken place in Derry, where the offences alleged were committed. However, on 14th September 2007, the prosecution requested a change of venue, on the grounds that protests outside the court might intimidate jurors, and coverage in the local media might prejudice them.

At this time, the presiding judge, the Derry recorder, Corinne Philpott, banned publicity about the case, but in such general terms that journalists present didn't know what they were allowed to report and what was banned. There was no reporting of the application for a change of venue. On 10th December 2007, Judge Philpott imposed a blanket ban on reporting in Northern Ireland of any matter relating to the trial, including anything at all relating to Raytheon. Even the fact of a trial could no longer be reported. The objective seems to have been to prevent publicity in Northern Ireland about Raytheon's arms business, which might make a jury incline to the view that damaging its computers was a good idea.

There was no attempt by mainstream media organisations in Northern Ireland

or elsewhere to have this extraordinary gagging order lifted or modified, despite the fact that their work was being hampered by the ban. For example, the *Village* magazine reported on 29th February 2008:

"Suzanne Breen (formerly of *Village*, now writing for the *Sunday Tribune*) has been referred to the Attorney General for possible contempt in an article published on 18 November in the *Sunday Tribune*. She had mentioned possible witnesses from the USA and Lebanon, and that, if convicted, defendants could face lengthy jail sentences.

"Also RTE has ordered Belfast independent production company *Below the Radar* to delete sections on Raytheon from a film about Ireland and the arms trade transmitted on 14 January. The effect of the ban is that all discussion of Raytheon's presence in Derry has been shut down." [2]

However, a legal challenge to the order was launched by Shane O'Curry of the Foyle Ethical Investment Campaign. As a result, the Belfast recorder, Judge Burgess, modified the order in late February 2008 to limit the ban to the usual one on pre-trial reporting of material directly relevant to the trial. It could then be reported for the first time that the Derry recorder had acceded to the prosecution's request to move the trial from Derry to Belfast.

David Morrison

References:

- [1] www.raytheon9.org/
[2] www.village.ie/Ireland/Northern_Ireland/Media_gag_over_Derry_arms_factory_occupation/

Statement by Eamonn McCann on the Raytheon case (11 June 2008)

The outcome of this case has profound implications.

The jury has accepted that we were reasonable in our belief that: the Israel Defence Forces were guilty of war crimes in Lebanon in the summer of 2006; that the Raytheon company, including its facility in Derry, was aiding and abetting the commission of these crimes; and that the action we took was intended to have, and did have, the effect of hampering or delaying the commission of war crimes.

We have been vindicated.

We reject entirely and with contempt the statement by Raytheon this evening suggesting that the result of the trial gives them concern about the safety of their employees. This is an abject attempt to divert attention from the significance of the outcome. Not a shred of evidence was produced that we presented the slightest danger to Raytheon workers. The charge of affray was thrown out by the court without waiting to hear defence evidence.

Our target has always been Raytheon as a corporate entity and its shareholders and directors who profit from misery and death.

There is now no hiding place for those who have said that they support the presence of Raytheon in Derry on the basis that the company is not involved in Derry in arms-related production. We have established that not only is the Derry plant involved in arms-related production, it is also, through its integration into Raytheon as a whole, involved in war crimes.

We call on all elected representatives in Derry, and on the citizens of Derry, to say now in unequivocal terms that the war criminal Raytheon is not welcome in our city.

We call on the office of the Attorney General and the Crown Prosecution Service, in light of this verdict, to institute an investigation into the activities of Raytheon at its various plants across the UK, with a view to determining whether Raytheon is, as we say it is, a criminal enterprise.

We believe that one day the world will look back on the arms trade as we look back today on the slave trade, and wonder how it came about that such evil could abound in respectable society. If we have advanced by a mere moment the day when the arms trade is put beyond the law, what we have done will have been worthwhile.

We took the action we did in the immediate aftermath of the slaughter of innocents in Qana on July 30th 2006. The people of Qana are our neighbours. Their children are the children of our neighbours. We trashed Raytheon to help protect our neighbours. The court has found that that was not a crime. This is what the Raytheon case has been about.

We have not denied or apologised for what we did at the Raytheon plant in the summer of 2006. All of us believe that it was the best thing we ever did in our lives.

The following letter was published in the *Sunday Business Post* (8 June 2008)

Israel said no to UN resolution

Kenneth Baker, the press officer of the Embassy of Israel in Dublin, writes that Israel accepted the UN partition resolution in 1947 (Letters, 25/5/08).

That is simply untrue. If Israel had accepted the UN proposals, Israel would today consist of about 56 per cent of the land area of Palestine, and Jerusalem would be under international control.

That is what the UN General Assembly recommended in Resolution 181, passed on November 29, 1947.

David Morrison, Belfast

The OECD Report

Reform of Public services to increase efficiency and provide public services at optimum cost has been a recurring theme in Irish politics for a very long time. One of the first actions of Brian Cowan as Taoiseach was to present to the Dáil the Government commissioned OECD report "Ireland: Towards an Integrated Public Service".

While acknowledging the reform process in the Civil Service to date, the report queries the extent to which the reform agenda has penetrated the wider public service.

The basic premise is that lack of integration in the Public Service drives up the cost of provision and decreases efficiency and effectiveness. The Public Service, broadly defined to include education, health, local authority, civil service, Gardaí, defence forces and semi state bodies, employs in the region of 360,000 people (16% of the Republic's labour force). Of the total, the Civil Service itself employs 38,000.

Briefly, the report proposes reforms which would integrate the Civil and Public services in terms of providing mechanisms for staff mobility between the elements of the Public Service and by increasing organisational interconnectedness to provide economies of scale in the provision of shared services. It also proposes the creation of a single, integrated "Senior Public Service" to provide leadership to the whole system. In itself this seems a sensible reform programme, but of course the devil will be in the detail of any actual implementation plan.

There are some interesting nuggets of information in the report. For instance, contrary to public perception, fostered by the media, of Ireland having a bloated public service, employment in the general government sector in the Republic, as a percentage of the total labour force, is at the lower end of the spectrum compared to other OECD countries; while Public expenditure as a percentage of GDP, including the massive infrastructural expenditure of the last decade, is the third smallest of OECD countries (ahead only of Mexico and Korea) and the figure has actually decreased by about ten per cent over the last ten years.

Since 1995 it has been government policy to limit non front line public service employment and the report notes that this policy "has actually decreased the total number of public sector employees as a percentage of the labour force and decreased the overall public sector wage bill as a percentage of GDP." The slight of hand which has allowed Government to continue to function during the Celtic Tiger years while restricting the growth of the Civil and Public Service has been to oversee a massive increase in the number of agencies set up to deliver services and spend money on behalf of the state. There are now over 500 of these in existence, and incredibly, the report confirms that no one knows how many people are employed in this sector or how much public funding they use for their own functioning, for further distribution or for investment. The report notes that while the use of agencies has added much needed capacity to the Public Service, the way in which they have been set up has in fact decreased accountability and increased complexity, fragmentation and duplication of service delivery. Thus some of the problems identified in the report have actually been created by existing government policy, although as one might expect this is never spelled out clearly, the report being written in what the Taoiseach himself has called "sometimes heavily encrypted" language. The report only goes so far as to say there is now required from Central Government a rethink in terms of what functions should remain in Departments, what should be devolved to Local Authorities and what functions should be carried out at arms length from the Civil Service.

Nowhere is the language in the report more cryptic than in its treatment of the elephant in the room, the governments current decentralisation programme. This programme, announced by then Minister of Finance Charlie McCreevy in 2003, envisaged moving from Dublin 10,000 public servants, including whole departments and state agencies, to 55 regional locations, by the end of 2007. The report notes that the decision was taken without wider consultation or cost/benefit analysis with senior management or the public service unions and that the exercise is leading to a loss of expertise in the relocated offices. Only 2,000 staff had moved at the time the report was written.

The Governments commitment to public service reform is rendered incoherent at best and utterly cynical at worst by its persistence with trying to implement this ill judged programme. Of course, in an integrated public service model, the possibility of completing the programme would be much improved through the creation of a bigger pool of workers from which people could be drawn to move to the new locations.

On the 20 of May the Taoiseach announced the setting up of a task force to develop an action plan for delivering Public service reform. The Task Force is chaired by Dermot McCarthy, Secretary General to the Government and the membership consists of four civil service heads of department and four external members, 3 of whom are drawn from the business community while the fourth is Paul Haran, Principal of the College of Business and Law in UCD. One would have thought that if the Task Force is to produce recommendations which will have implications for terms and conditions of employment for public service workers, a membership drawn from a somewhat wider pool than one with only a management/business focus might produce a better result in terms of a plan which can be delivered without going through a protracted, possible confrontational, negotiating and implementation phase. As it is, I can see this process having a profound impact on future Social Partnership negotiations. The Task Force has been instructed to report back to Government before the end of the Summer.

Colm Moylan

Irish Foreign Affairs

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Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

CONTEMPT FOR THE PEOPLE

And so the EU didn't succeed in intimidating the only country to have a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty. Our leaders traded on the impressive past performance of the EU to mask its current free market and militaristic ideological orientation. But they failed.

They failed because they could not summon one good reason to vote for the Treaty. Towards the end of the campaign the supporters were reduced to urging a vote on the basis that the supporters of this Treaty were nice respectable people like Brian Cowen, Eamonn Gilmore and Enda Kenny, whereas the opponents were Shinners and worse.

The Irish Times editorial of 7th June reverted to the hysteria that it reserves for election campaigns. There was a minor variation on the "we have disgraced ourselves yet again" theme. This time the title of the editorial following an opinion poll showing a No majority was: *Are we out of our minds?* It began:

"Are we out of our collective minds? We are not going to win our money on 'horses' if we say No to the Lisbon Treaty. We bought that nag in the last general election and, yet, here we go again."

As has been mentioned before in this column, when *The Irish Times* uses the pronoun "we" it is not referring to itself, but the presumed frailties of the Irish people. Is there anywhere else in the world where a so-called 'national' newspaper has such contempt for both the people of its country as well as one of its most successful politicians?

CONTEMPT FOR OUR HISTORY

But by far the most interesting part of the editorial was the second last paragraph:

"Remember our decision to join in 1973 was the most liberating action taken by this independent State setting us on the way to reversing the Act of Union. We moved out from the shadow of Britain for the first time and established our own identity. We took our place among the nations of the world with an influential voice."

Certainly, joining the EEC was a liberating event. It made our economy less dependent on Britain, particularly our agricultural exports. But "*setting us on the way to reversing the Act of Union*"? Was not the 1916 Rising the event that set us on that road? Did not the 1918 Election

confirm the Republican sentiment of the people? And what was the 1919-21 War of Independence about or for that matter *Bunreacht na hEireann* in 1937 and the departure of the British from the Treaty Ports in 1938? Had not the declaration of the Republic by the Pro-Treaty side no significance for establishing the Republican consensus?

And did it really take the decision to join the EEC for us to establish "*our own identity*"? None of this would be worth commenting on if it were not for the fact that it seems to be a view that is shared within the highest echelons of Fianna Fáil. On the same day that *The Irish Times* editorial was published, Micheál Martin expressed similar views on the Rodney Rice show on RTE radio 1. In Martin's view we were narrow and insular before 1973 and joining the EEC enabled us to overcome this. Is this a representative view within Fianna Fáil? Were de Valera and Frank Aiken, for instance, insular?

From a Fianna Fáil perspective there is a certain attraction in history beginning in 1973. It means that it does not have to deal with 1969 and the capitulation of the party as demonstrated by the Arms Trial of 1970. But if Fianna Fáil cannot begin to deal honestly with its own history it will disable itself from combating other interests which it whinges about but does nothing to counteract.

Martin isn't the only person with a distorted view of history. Ulick McEvaddy of *Libertas*, in a debate with Ruairi Quinn, claimed that the vote of the deputies in Grattan's Parliament to dissolve that Parliament, ushering in the Act of Union of 1801, led to the tragedy of the Famine, the 1916 Rising and the Civil War! Quinn who seems to have some grasp of history pointed out that the deputies in this corrupt Parliament were bribed. He might also have added that even the Act of Union was more acceptable to the rebels of 1798 than this corrupt Parliament, which represented a decadent Landlord class.

CONTEMPT FOR NATIONS

In the course of the referendum campaign the pernicious influence of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) was highlighted in relation to the Laval and Viking cases. However, there is another dispute which, although of less immediate importance, is even more revealing of the EU's ideological orientation. It is not new for the ECJ to adopt a neo-liberal position, but in the era of Mitterrand, Kohl and Delors there was at least a countervailing social tendency from the European Commission. But no more!

FIFA, the governing body for European football wants to restrict the number of foreign players in each club team. Its very modest proposal is that from a starting eleven there should be 6 players from the club's country. But this proposal has put it

on a collision course with the European Commission which insists on unrestricted movement of labour between member states of the EU. Here is the reaction of the Commission:

"The Commission is giving a red card to the 6+5 rule," EU Employment Commissioner Vladimir Spidla said.

"If any country allows its soccer associations or leagues, they will be in violation of EU rules which would oblige the Commission to apply infringement proceedings (court action)" (*The Irish Times*, 28.5.08).

Let us consider this a bit further. FIFA is not a greedy country acting in its selfish interests to undermine another country. It is a multinational organisation which wants to develop football across the world on a national basis. It realises that recent global capitalist developments (encouraged by the ECJ such as the Bosman ruling) have meant that the best players in the world have gravitated towards the wealthiest leagues undermining the national leagues of poorer countries. The wealthiest league in the world is the English league, which is largely financed by American (e.g. Liverpool and Manchester United), Russian (e.g. Chelsea and Portsmouth) and Middle Eastern (e.g. Arsenal) capital. In this year's UEFA Champions league three out of the four clubs in the semi-final were English clubs and both of the finalists.

But if the FIFA proposals are *unacceptable* to the European Commission, is there anything that would be *acceptable* to the free market ideologues of that institution? *The Irish Times* sympathetically reports on the sweet reasonableness of the Commission:

"Earlier, the EU executive offered Fifa an olive branch by formally backing the "home-grown player rule" of European governing body Uefa, in a bid to avert Friday's vote.

'After intensive discussion, in-depth analysis and a report carried out by the European Commission, I can for the first time say that Uefa's so-called home-grown player rule is compatible with EU rules concerning free movement of workers,' said EU Sports Commissioner Jan Figel."

And what is this "home-grown rule" that is acceptable?

"Uefa's home-grown player rule sets a quota of locally-trained players at clubs but without any discrimination on nationality. But Fifa had said it opposed the rule arguing it encourages recruitment at a young age."

Let us now consider a little more the "*home-grown*" rule which is acceptable to the EU Commission, but which FIFA opposes.

This rule encourages wealthy European clubs to scour the world for talented young boys. But everyone knows that of the tens of thousands of aspiring footballers that

go through these clubs, only a very tiny percentage make the grade. This is a hard lesson for a young boy from Europe. But how much crueller for a poor African or Latin American boy who has been uprooted from his environment and then discarded for being of no economic use!

What a despicable institution the European Commission has become.

THE GREATEST PARTY

Fianna Fail showed yet again why it is the greatest party in the State. Throughout the country its party workers did their duty to the party. They hung up posters of local candidates advocating a "yes" vote. However, their duty to the party did not oblige them to vote against their conscience because political principles are more important than loyalty to an institution.

But in Laois-Offaly the rank and file went against their principles because their own man was the leader of that institution. And ties of friendship are even more important than those political principles.

It now remains to be seen if the leader is worthy of his rank and file. Loyalty and friendship should not be abused!

THE GREATEST NEWSPAPER

Whatever about our political leaders, the Irish media showed that it was out of touch and therefore made itself irrelevant. If there are any journalists left in this country who still take their craft seriously, they should subscribe to a real newspaper, a newspaper which describes the world as it is.

On June 16th the front page of the French communist newspaper *l'Humanite* summed up the political situation.

"Europe. They do not wish to respect the Irish 'No'."

And then in bold print. "*Conspiracy against Democracy*". There followed 3 pages of comprehensive coverage which would shame our local hacks if they were still capable of that emotion.

One of the articles begins: "*In Ballybrack there is pride at having voted 'No'. In the working class suburb of South Dublin the voters have voted overwhelmingly 'No' because Europe is not going in the right direction.*"

The article proceeds to interview ordinary people explaining their reasons for voting 'No'. When has an Irish newspaper ever taken an interest in the views of the people of Ballybrack or any other working class area?

The newspaper's editorial gives a reasoned analysis:

"Those who have rambled on about liberalism in politics cannot accept that the Irish have voted against the Treaty of Lisbon. They will throw contempt and insults against the Irish people just as they did against the French and Dutch 'No' of 3 years ago. We have already

seen their love of democracy when they refused the other peoples of Europe a referendum on the Treaty."

The editorial concludes by saying:

"The 'No' of Ireland can be of service to the European idea. The European summit at the end of this week must declare this Treaty obsolete. At the same time it must launch a process of greater democracy, promoting peace and cooperation and non-aligned to Washington."

Mad Dogs are Limerickmen?

or Dr. McDonagh's Patent Remedy

Part II

Henry McDonald's profile of playwright Martin McDonagh (*The Guardian* 25.04.08) modulates from paramilitary, (invariably *Republican*), criminality to common criminality. Damien Smyth "one of Northern Ireland's leading poets" says what McDonagh writes is "powerful, legitimate and relevant". He alleges, "[w]hen JM Synge wrote *Playboy* of the Western World there was more outrage in Ireland over a woman coming on stage in her nightdress than the murder of the father by the son". (The main character Christy Mahon (the *Playboy*) turns up in a Connacht village claiming he has killed his father by striking him with a shovel. Instead of dragging him off to the police, the parish priest, (or both) the idiot villagers celebrate his 'achievement'). It is not, (despite Damien Smyth), a realist drama.

Europe was awash with new art at that time. Painting and sculpture, music, ballet and drama were greeted, in hyper-sophisticated Paris and Vienna with catcalls and riots. Pegeen Mike (Christy's 'love interest') in her shift was surely a provocative *coup d'théatre*, probably dreamed-up by Yeats. (The Lord Chamberlain would have refused it a license for the London stage). Yeats managed the Abbey Theatre which needed publicity to keep the punters interested.

There follows the question of "outrage in Ireland". There was outrage in the Dublin theatre-going classes. A number probably went to the Abbey just to be outraged. Yeats did them proud over two decades. But, was "Ireland" (Mr. Smyth presumably means us, the mere Irish people), interested in a dowdy Dublin theatre? "Ireland" took up *The Playboy* because it holds the stage and has a number of juicy parts. Every amateur theatre group

in Ireland performs it - probably - once a decade. Much material shouted-down in hyper-cultured Vienna, Paris, Petersburg, or lesser venues like Berlin and Budapest have barely seen the light of day since.

Damien Smyth says McDonagh "has made people think about the reality of violence". He lives in Belfast. Did he need to go to a McDonagh drama to encounter the reality of violence? Apparently "it is all the more relevant because... he sets... them, the rural west...". But it is a west of Ireland that was disappearing even when McDonagh (presumably) holidayed there as a child, in the 1970s and '80s. The population of Leitrim, according to the last Census, rose for the first time since 1841. The psychological underpinning of McDonagh's material is threadbare. The west of Ireland is growing, not shrinking. Damien Smyth goes on, "the violence he portrays is a very true picture of... modern urban Ireland today." (Why set them in isolated Connacht ruralia?). Smyth would like to see McDonagh do a play set in an Irish urban environment. Why not one set in London, his home town? He would, to quote McDonald "have plenty of blood soaked material" to work on. The youngster stabbed to death in my street was thirteen years old.

McDonald mentions a housing estate in Limerick "where gangs driving around in armour-plated BMWs spray houses with Uzi sub-machine guns". The implication being that this sort of criminality is the same as that of the IRA. The IRA engaged in violence in pursuit of political ends. Most of the 'criminality' complained of was also engaged in for political ends. The 'Provisionals' are being attacked these days for *not* engaging in 'criminal activities'. Policing west Belfast. There is a minor journalistic industry of digging up any dirt that can be thrown at Sinn Féin. It makes the journos money, and adds to the uneasiness felt by many in west Belfast about the increase in criminal behaviour. The implicit comparison between actual criminality and what the IRA did to raise the money to make war on a hugely superior opponent is laboured and crass. The Loyalist paramilitaries are up to their oxters in drug-trafficking, and are having (Irish and UK) State and EU cash thrown at them. They have not decommissioned, but are not the objects of the same scrutiny as the IRA, which has decommissioned and even wound itself up as a fighting machine.

Martin McDonagh could write about fellow Camberwellians who are currently

serving in Basra, or who served in Belfast in the late 1980s and early '90s. He must know some. He left school in 1986, and spent "ten years in dead-end jobs", almost the perfect recruit for Her Majesty's armed forces. His theatrical monotone is irritating people, like Malachi O'Doherty, who ought to be admirers.

In regard to the warm regard felt by anti-Republican publicists for McDonagh, (a punk anarchist suspicious of all nationalisms), a point has been made in the *IPR*, a number of times. The element that defended the Catholic areas of Belfast in the first instance, was the CESA (Catholic Ex-Servicemen's Association). It carried a number of national flags in its public demonstrations — the Union Jack wasn't one of them. But the CESA (to the tune of 90+%) was made up of *British* ex-service personnel. There were two major political tendencies among Northern Catholics, immediately prior to the war. One was the Civil Rights Association, slogan '*British Rights for British Citizens*' ('Subjects' stuck in the collective craw). Most on NICRA demonstrations may have been tongue in cheek about the slogan. Some were not. And the repetition of the demand surely had some effect.

Working class people were joining the big (British-based) trade unions, and voted for the NILP (NI Labour Party), or for Gerry Fitt, regarded as satellites of the British Labour Party. Not even the ex-servicemen wanted to wrap themselves in the Union Jack, but 'nationalism', (though possibly not 'cultural nationalism'), and a united Ireland, were postponed indefinitely. The war specifically arose out of the events of 1968 / '69. It was not the outcome of centuries of enmity, another 'trope' beloved of the Beeb. (It fits in with the 'crude, simple-minded, backward, Irish' image carefully cultivated by the British media. McDonagh, despite his background seems to have swallowed the notion whole).

This 'profile' publicised McDonagh's film, *In Bruges*. It's about two thick Micks, incompetent hit men, who have fled to Belgium, having killed the wrong people. Belgium is an interesting venue for 'Irishmen with guns'. There have been a lot of 'Irishmen with guns' in that country. In particular from 1914 to 1918. They got killed in large numbers, and killed large numbers in their turn. Why? It is a conundrum to which Martin McDonagh could turn his punk anarchist sensibility. Why did the Irish go to war for Belgium? It was the centre of a wealthy and brutal colonial empire. Why did they make war on Bulgaria? What were they doing at

Suvla or Sud el-Bar?

The war in the North of Ireland rose out of the perverse form of government inflicted on the people of the place by the victors in the Great War to destroy Germany. Grubbing about in the 'dim and distant past' (it's always 'dim and distant' when the London Establishment want us to disremember it) or the distasteful interior of the crude Irish psychology, is not necessary to understand it. McDonagh

has been famous for a decade. The UK State has been at war for most of that period. His name has never appeared on any of the letters or petitions published (for or against) these wars. He is presented in this 'profile' as implicitly a political playwright it is legitimate to wonder if this is accurate. Or does 'paddy-whackery' just pay better than attempting to analyse Sierra Leone, Serbia, Iraq, Afghanistan?

Seán McGouran

Report

'Remember Mitchelstown'?

The second Trevor/Bowen Summer School was held on 23rd-25th May by the Mitchelstown Literary Society. There were 11 events on a variety of topics.

As it has done at other such events, the Aubane Historical Society (AHS) organised a literature stall in agreement with the hotel where most of the events were to be held. However, when representatives of the Mitchelstown Literary Society arrived they objected to the stall (without actually reading any of the literature on display) and prevailed upon the hotel to prevent us selling any of it. We then gave it away to anybody who was interested. Most were. How odd that a Literary Society does not welcome and facilitate relevant literature being available at its major literary event? Particularly as this was the only literature in sight and there was no sign at all of any publications by the Literary Society itself. And there was no shortage of space.

The first big attraction was to be Fintan O'Toole (for it was him), Deputy Editor of the *Irish Times*, to give us his profound thoughts on "*Time and William Trevor*" on Saturday night. The problem was that he did not manage to find the time to turn up to give his talk. With no warning, explanation or apology from Mr. O'Toole the Literary Society people had a ton of egg on their faces and a host of very frustrated people. I will not repeat some of the comments made as this is a respectable journal.

But the Mitchelstown Literary Society are slow learners. This was *déjà vu* all over again for them. The same thing happened last year when another *Irish Times* luminary, Ellen Battersby, was billed to talk on "*The common man and how his life of quiet desperation is treated in the works of William Trevor*". She never turned up either and also without warning, apology or explanation before or after the event. She was highly offended at being asked for an explanation despite all her costs having been paid.

The organisers, despite all their best

efforts, were again made to look foolish this year, having to run around like headless chickens with mobile phones trying to get in touch with Mr. O'Toole to find out if he was coming or not right up to the last minute. But Mr. O'Toole did not deign to take their calls or contact them even though he probably knows how to use a phone, or text, or write a letter.

I suggested "*Time and Mr. O'Toole*" as an alternative lecture as many people were contemplating this general theme with some strong and considered views being expressed on it. A lot of audience participation seemed guaranteed for such a lecture. Especially as people also wanted to get some value for the registration fee they had paid for O'Toole's lecture.

The Mitchelstown Literary Society should realise that they are outside the Pale and can, and are, therefore treated like shit by *Irish Times*' luminaries and that they are expected to eat as much of it as the latter see fit to throw at them. It was an embarrassing and sorry sight to see decent people treated like this. Will they ever learn?

The next VIP was Martin Mansergh TD, the new Junior Minister for the Arts. In the circumstances he deserves full credit for honouring his commitment by turning up to state his case. His was the only event, out of the eleven, on Elizabeth Bowen at the School. It was the last event, a lecture entitled "*Elizabeth Bowen and her wartime role; an ideological class problem of national identity, neutrality and world wars, then and now*". This was an intriguing title but did not bode well for a clear view of her wartime espionage role — which is the actual issue in question and what the audience clearly wanted to hear discussed.

The speaker rehashed the usual case to try to make the case that Bowen was not a spy, including the assertion that she was not paid — which she was. He relied most heavily on Brian Girvin's book and '*the personal communication*' he had with

Girvin, one that sought to assert that John Dulanty was responsible for her doing her secret work. Girvin does not make the case for this and Mansergh admitted quite specifically that it was a case of "evidence without proof". In other words he and Girvin do not have a case. It would not even make it to a court, to be thrown out. Girvin's sources refer to Dulanty's encouragement to Bowen—and many others—to write and report openly favourable material on Irish neutrality. It is bluff and sleight-of-hand to equate this with what Bowen did in her secret reports. This was a completely different kettle of fish. It is sheer trickery to try to equate the two and it only impresses those who do not know, or don't want to know, the difference, i.e., the facts of the case.

Mansergh could not challenge the clear, positive, unassailable evidence put to him that Bowen's work was espionage—based as it was on her deceiving people, reporting to a foreign Government, treated as top secret by that Government who paid for it and destroyed it when it had served its purpose. Copies of the available extant evidence were made available to everybody in the audience—and snapped up. The speaker claimed that her behaviour was just "unethical" in some sort of unspecified way. But why would she act unethically if her activities were benign and above board? This does not make any sense. Mansergh was effectively conceding the case for her espionage. The only ethics in this area is success or failure and she was a total success and therefore totally ethical.

Mr. Mansergh also tried to get us to ignore her whole actual life on the basis that a great literary person's real life does not really matter—as is the case with Homer, Shakespeare etc. But he was reminded that the topic being discussed and what he had chosen to talk about was not her literary worth but a piece of her actual life. It is a bit too soon to transform her into a disembodied entity out of time and place. And if that time had come, the first bit of her that would surely disappear into the ether would be her very, very tenuous connection with Mitchelstown and where would that leave the Summer School's credentials?

Hopefully, we will be able to provide more details of Mr. Mansergh's lecture and do it full justice when it is transcribed.

The net result for the Mitchelstown Literary Society School was that there was no actual lecture on Trevor and the one on Bowen was on a totally false premise. Is there a lesson to be learned from this? Despite their hard work are they flogging dead horses in Mitchelstown? The fact is that Bowen/Trevor theme is a very shallow and barren basis for their Literary School. The *Irish*

Times, for one, certainly seems to think so and have no respect for the work of the Literary Society and have lowered the School's status in many eyes by the behaviour of some of its grandees.

Why not organise the event as simply the Mitchelstown Literary Summer School and base it on the rich and fertile literary/cultural heritage of the Cork and/or Munster area? There is Kickham and Canon Sheehan just for starters. Have *Glenanaar* and *Knocknagow* been surpassed in the literature of this area? These are true classics of the area, having been read by millions over several generations. Then, perhaps, there could be new life in a new context for that great slogan of the Land League era and we could indeed be proud to again say "Remember Mitchelstown" without embarrassment.

Jack Lane

New Publication

The Aubane Historical Society distributed a publication at the Summer School, *Elizabeth Bowen: a 'debate' in the Irish Examiner* which consisted of the letters exchanged in the *Irish Examiner* following last year's Summer School (see *Irish Political Review* Dec. 2007) with the following introduction:

Why all the fuss about Elizabeth Bowen?

Elizabeth Bowen was a British writer who happened to be born in Ireland, and to inherit a Cromwellian property in Co. Cork. Britain was an Empire and a great many of her well-known writers were born in the Empire. For example, Kipling was born in India and Orwell in Burma. Bowen was Irish only if one takes Irish as a subset of British—as was done, of course, for centuries.

She adopted an Irish persona for espionage purposes during the War. But in various memoirs, written without an ulterior motive she made it clear that she was not milk and watery British but English. The part of the world that made her buzz was Kent.

She was English Churchillian. After the rejection of Churchill in 1945 England was no longer English enough for her. She could not stand it when the lower classes came to the top. So she retreated to her property in Ireland—not because it was Ireland but because it was not Welfare State England.

Her espionage reports to Churchill are objective, well informed and well written accounts of Irish opinion during the War. It is a great pity that more of them are either withheld or destroyed. But they are espionage reports to her Government, written frankly in the confidence that they would remain secret.

*

Following the inaugural Bowen/Trevor Summer School in Mitchelstown in 2007 an exchange of letters took place in the *Irish Examiner*. The most well-known contributor was Martin Mansergh TD.

Why does Mr Mansergh get so exercised about Elizabeth Bowen and her activities here during WWII?

The facts of the matter are now indisputable. At the beginning of the war she immediately volunteered her services to the British Government to do espionage work in Ireland. She befriended people under false pretences, reported in secret, got paid for it, wrote about 200 reports (according to her biographer, Heather Bryant Jordan)—approximately one per fortnight—and delivered a number of personal reports too sensitive to be put in writing. She deceived all her Irish acquaintances and was well pleased with what she did. James Dillon was mortified and humiliated when the truth was brought to his attention in 1974.

Innumerable other English writers and artists did similar. It was their patriotic duty and they cannot be criticised for doing so. She succeeded in her main aim of helping to get Churchill to resist his instincts to invade and so helped him avoid a costly bloody nose. Southern Ireland always was 'unfinished business' for him and he was 'bulling' for another go after the failure of his Black and Tans. She was also successful in never having her cover blown.

And now we have the extraordinary situation of a legislator here seeking to maintain her cover! What does it say of his priorities and judgement? And he is no ordinary member of Fianna Fail, he is "Fianna Fail's most venerated elder statesman", no less, according to the *Irish Independent* (January 4, 2008).

To seek to make his case he has to turn Irish history, and common sense, inside out and upside down. Elizabeth Bowen becomes someone else. In fact she becomes some sort of monstrosity because she did all the above and was neither a traitor nor a spy but was an agent for both governments. The logic of this is that the Irish government needed someone to go around the country deceiving people in order to inform itself about how people felt about neutrality! Furthermore, that they got the British government to pay for this and never asked for a copy of any of the reports! She becomes not just a double agent in the normal sense, more a duplicate or parallel agent. The logic gets more bizarre the more one thinks about it.

A good example of Mansergh's methodology is the way he tries to get an ultra-revisionist book "The Emergency" by Professor Brian Girvin further revised

to seek to prove his case that it was really the Irish Government that set Bowen up for her spying.

In his book Girvin says that the Ministry of Information, for whom she worked, had to fight to get Bowen permission to come to Ireland as the Dominions Office had refused her permission because they understood that "*her trip involved spending some time working on a novel.*" To them this was skiving and such frivolity was not to be encouraged in a time of war. Culture could wait. The Ministry then sought allies to get her a permit to travel and these included John Dulanty (the Irish High Commissioner, or Ambassador), John Betjeman, Stephen Gwynn and others and this was clearly under the guise of her writing journalistic pieces which nobody could object to. Girvin says that he is not sure if, even in this regard, Dulanty was acting on his own or not.

However, according to Mansergh, in a '*personal communication*' with Girvin all this becomes transformed into the Irish Ambassador setting the whole thing in motion by suggesting to Bowen that she write these secret reports for the British Ministry of Information—which is not even suggested by Girvin in his book, never mind any evidence being provided for such an assertion. Then Mansergh spins it even further and, hey presto, the story is now transformed into the Irish government '*sponsoring*' her espionage as an agent for both governments.

Revisionism moves at a very fast pace these days—as quickly as any three card trick man. It should be interesting to read the next edition of Professor Girvin's book to see if this is developed even further—or has he been bounced into a hole by, shall we say, Mr. Mansergh's verbal dexterity and will Girvin be trying to extricate himself?

As it happens, I have known Professor Brian Girvin for over forty years and I have practically read all he has ever written and we have shared much together, including the same school in Cork for a period. Brian has never been backward in coming forward with his views on anything and everything. However when I asked him about any evidence to support Mansergh's assertions he went uncharacteristically silent.

Then there are a whole series of half truths used by Mansergh in this debate which in effect are a total distortion of the facts, such as:

*De Valera allowed people to join the British Army. But what army did he ever prevent people from joining, apart from the IRA? Irish people joined several armies during the war. In the 30s he allowed

people to join both sides in Spain even though he was on the Republican side. He had no totalitarian instincts. But for Mansergh Ireland should only be judged by its relationship with England. No other relationship matters.

*De Valera was neutral friendly to Britain, he says. But Dev was hostile to no state during the war. That of course was not reciprocated by Churchill who considered De Valera's neutrally hostile right to the end and that was of more political and historical significance than de Valera's desire to be friendly. De Valera's '*friendliness*' was that shown to bullies when it is wise to do so. It is a euphemism for the reality of such situations but Mansergh wants us to accept it as the real thing. He is either trying to kid us or kid himself.

*

Of course, all this is good old fashioned bluff, blather and bluster on Mansergh's part. This is his style as a TD as well. He does not seem able to distinguish between making a convincing argument and bluster.

In the case of Bowen's espionage, Mansergh's denials are very transparent bluff and bluster and he has not got the talent to carry it off. Instead his case loses all credibility and he then resorts to slander and lies—a sure sign that one has lost an argument.

He accused me of being a Nazi sympathiser—and a hardline Unionist supporter for good measure. In fact there is now a 'law' that describes such behaviour. 'Godwin's Law' says that the first person who introduces Nazi and/or Fascist slanders into an argument these days is confirming that they have no more to say and have conceded their case.

Mr. Mansergh says a lot more about himself than he does about Bowen or me in resorting to abuse.

However, what is of more concern is the behaviour of the Editor of the *Irish Examiner*, Tim Vaughan, who assisted Mr. Mansergh by ending the correspondence after publishing his lies.

There is no recollection in living memory of a correspondence being declared closed in the *Irish Examiner*. The Editor should be ashamed of himself.

The paper sought to make a mark nationally and showed signs of being more open and fair than the other national papers in its letters and opinion pieces.

That was short-lived.

Jack Lane
Aubane, May 2008

(We hope to carry other reports on events at the Summer School. Editor)

Statement By Anthony Coughlan

**On 4th April the following letters were sent by Anthony Coughlan to
*An Phoblacht***

TO: The Editor, An Phoblacht, Dublin 1

There is a serious and implicitly defamatory insinuation against me in a remark of Brian Keenan's in Jim Gibney's interview with him which is carried in the current issue of An Phoblacht.

This may well be unintentional, but it could do me lots of damage nonetheless - not least in the context of the current Lisbon Treaty referendum campaign, in which I am actively involved.

May I ask you therefore to carry the correction below in your forthcoming issue.

I have never met Brian Keenan and he has not got the facts of this matter right, whatever impressions he may have formed or whatever allegations may have been made to him by others in the 1969/70 period which he refers to.

I expect that these and related matters will be much discussed by historians and commentators during the latter part of this year and the coming period generally, as we come up to the 40th anniversary of the Northern Civil Rights Movement, and I would not like to see these kinds of loose allegations or insinuations repeated again all over the place.

I am quite willing to launch legal proceedings to correct them if need be.

Looking forward to your carrying the correction below in your next issue. . . If you have any query about it, please give me a ring at the above phone number.

Yours sincerely
Anthony Coughlan

PS. I am sending copies of this e-mail for their information to Jim Gibney, Richard McAuley, Gerry Adams, Tom Hartley, Caoimhín O Caoláin, Mary Lou McDonald, Ruairi O Bradaigh and various other Republicans whom I know for their information also.

LETTER OF CORRECTION FROM ANTHONY COUGHLAN RE BRIAN KEENAN/JIM GIBNEY INTERVIEW IN THIS WEEK'S "AN PHOBLACHT" :

In his interview with Brian Keenan in last week's An Phoblacht on his involvement with the late 1960s civil rights movement, Jim Gibney quotes Mr Keenan as saying: "Certain IRA leaders wouldn't talk to me for a long time after the split because they believed I was a card-carrying member of the Communist Party. In their eyes I was not to be trusted. They believed I was aligned with Tony Coughlan, who was with the Sticks."

For the record, and contrary to what seems to be implied in Brian Keenan's remarks, may I say that I was never a

member of Sinn Fein or the IRA, pre-split or post-split. Neither for that matter was I ever a member of a Communist Party, either in Ireland or elsewhere.

Such influence as I had on the politicization of the pre-split Republican Movement during the 1960s was exercised as an entirely independent private person who had no organisational connection whatever with any of the bodies Mr Keenan mentions. Indeed that has been my political position all my adult life up to the present time.

The only involvement I ever had with a political party was a couple of years' membership of the Irish Labour Party when I was a student at UCC in the middle 1950s, along with Barry Desmond and the late Michael O'Leary, who were contemporaries of mine there.

I was assistant-secretary and secretary of the Dublin Wolfe Tone Society from 1965 to 1969 and as such encouraged

those whom I knew in the then united Republican Movement to take up the issue of civil rights in the Six Counties during those years. I was present as an observer from the Society at the foundation meeting of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association in Belfast in January 1967. I took part in the first Coalisland-Dungannon civil rights march in late August 1968 and was in Duke Street Derry on 5 October that year when the RUC's assault on the civil rights march brought the whole issue of discrimination and abuse of civil liberties in the North to world attention.

Doubtless commentators and historians will be mulling over these and subsequent events in the latter part of this year, which will be the 40th anniversary of the first civil rights marches. I am naturally anxious that they should get such part as I played in these events right. Hence this letter.

Anthony Coughlan

never authorised any Government or Army representation. In November 1979 the Fianna Fáil Taoiseach Jack Lynch was to authorise a number of Army officers to represent both the Minister for Defence and the Chief-of-Staff, but solely as members of the Cathedral congregation and not as active participants. Following his overthrow of Lynch as Fianna Fáil leader, the new Taoiseach Charles Haughey, far from cancelling such representation, actually increased the level and status of its profile. For not only was the Chief-of-Staff represented by Brigadier-General W. Callaghan at the November 1980 Remembrance Sunday service, on this occasion the Minister for Defence was now represented by Sean Moore TD, the Minister of State at Haughey's own Department of the Taoiseach.

It was at this juncture that the British Legion sabotaged all such goodwill by making a hullabaloo of the fact that President Patrick Hillery had declined an invitation to participate on that same occasion, on the grounds attributed to his spokesman that the President of Ireland "did not attend the ceremonies of foreign armies". The fact that the Royal British Legion continued to berate the President of Ireland a year later made it impossible for Haughey as Taoiseach to authorise any further Government or Army presence in November 1981, and he was even less inclined to do so during the General Election campaign of November 1982. And rightly so, for this was a thoroughly imperialist event whose warmongering manifesto was particularly chilling. "Remembrance Day was not merely an English affair, but also to honour thousands of Irishmen who died in the British forces", proclaimed the sermon given by the Rev. Matthew Byrne, who had served as a British Army chaplain while on active imperialist service in Korea, Kenya and Cyprus. "We helped to run the wars. We made the weapons. We fought the battles. We gained the victories. Name the generals. Muster the sergeants. Roll-call the privates, the irks, the dogsbodies, and they'll include names from every county in Ireland." He spoke of the regular occurrences which brought them all to the edge of World War Three. "Ireland in that war, whatever party is in power, whether she likes it or not, will be involved. And her preoccupation then will not be how to remain neutral, but how to survive", he said. (*Irish Times*, 15 November 1982).

The defeat of Haughey in the December 1982 General Election led to the new Fine Gael Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald appointing Paddy Cooney as Minister for the Defence. Cooney should have been proud of his family pedigree. His uncle Seán MacEoin, the famous "Blacksmith of Ballinallee", was one of the most

Haughey In The Service Of The Nazis?

Myers, Damned Lies And Statistics

In one of the send-up pieces that so often constituted his "Irishman's Diary", Kevin Myers wrote in the *Irish Times* on 5 November 1988 of "the Government boycotting the service in St. Patrick's to commemorate the Irishmen who gave their lives in two world wars, but sending representatives to commemorate the Germans who were killed in the service of the Nazis and are buried at Glencree." This is a theme to which he has returned two decades later, in the *Irish Independent* this 7 May, where the chief accused no longer remains anonymous but is personally targeted: "In 1984, Charles Haughey, in one of the most degrading acts by any government since independence, not merely withdrew the Army from the Remembrance Day Service at St. Patrick's Cathedral, but actually increased the presence of the Defence Forces, adding the Air Corps and the Naval Service, at the memorial service for the German war-dead of the Second World War. The state was now effectively honouring the dead of the Third Reich, but not the scores of thousands of Irishmen who had fallen in two world wars. That there was no outcry within Fianna Fáil about this tells us something of the secret scripture of the party at that time".

So, then, was Charles Haughey guilty of a "pro-Nazi" war-dead "crime"? Benjamin Disraeli once spoke of three types of lies: "Lies, damned lies and statistics". Let us first dispose of the statistical lie. Charles Haughey was not in a position to take any Government decision

in 1984, because he was on the Opposition benches. The Taoiseach responsible for any decisions of this character, if such there were, was the Fine Gael leader Garret FitzGerald, who held office from December 1982 until March 1987.

The British Legion Remembrance Sunday commemorations in St. Patrick's Cathedral each November have gone through many metamorphoses in style, but one thing they have never ceased to be is British. This was a lesson to be learned the hard way by the USSR following the establishment in its first Embassy to Ireland in 1974. In November of that year the Soviet Ambassador participated in the St. Patrick's wreath-laying ceremony, along with the ambassadors of the USSR's World War Two Allies, under the misguided assumption that, with a significant number of World War Two veterans still alive and present, it was their common victory over Nazism that lay at the heart of Remembrance Sunday. Such Soviet participation in the St. Patrick's Cathedral ceremonies continued until November 1978, when a sermon from the pulpit turned it quite explicitly into a Cold War event, with the preacher's attack on the lack of freedom in Poland and Czechoslovakia being specifically targeted against the Soviet Union.

The previous Fine Gael leader Liam Cosgrave, who served as Taoiseach from 1974 to 1977, had never viewed the British Legion's Remembrance Sunday as anything other than a British event and

outstanding IRA heroes of the War of Independence. A Collins man to the bone, he seconded Arthur Griffith's motion in favour of the Treaty in the Dáil Éireann debates but was above reproach in personally fighting a clean Civil War. Chief-of-Staff of the Free State Army during the late 1920s, MacEoin went on to serve two periods of office as Minister of Defence during the 1950s, before successively, but unsuccessfully, challenging both Seán T. O'Kelly and Eamon de Valera for the office of President of Ireland.

Cooney proved to be a disgrace to both his pedigree and office. Not content with resuming Haughey's 1980 policy of having Government and Army representation in the congregation on Remembrance Sunday, the coup he effected for November 1983 was actual participation in the Royal British Legion ceremonial procession, with an Irish Army officer parading with a UN flag in the midst of all those Union Jack-cornered regimental flags. Haughey was indeed outraged, but left it to the late Brian Lenihan to lead the Fianna Fáil protests on this. It would, however, give Fianna Fáil too much credit to say that it made any decisive impact on the resulting controversy. It was Army officer veterans' opposition that counted.

Minister Cooney tried to dismiss as irrelevant a committee that had been set up in opposition to his coup, on the grounds that – encompassing both Captain James Kelly and former Minister for Defence Kevin Boland – it amounted to little more than a case of "the usual suspects". But it was this selfsame committee which actually forced Cooney's defeat on the British Legion issue twelve months later. The fact is that both Kelly and Boland were more than willing to remain foot soldiers behind an officer corps leadership that was impeccable Free State in its pedigree. The committee was headed up by a namesake but no relation of Cooney's illustrious uncle. This second Lt. Gen. Seán MacEoin had joined the Free State Army in 1931 and rose through the ranks to become the Irish Army's Chief-of-Staff 1960-1971, his service including that of Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Forces in the Congo 1961-1962. An even more forceful presence was that of Lt. Gen. Michael J. Costello, who, during the Civil War in 1922, at only 18 years of age, had been made a Colonel of the Free State Army by Michael Collins. In 1924 he was promoted to the rank of Director of Intelligence and in 1927 to Director of Training, while for the duration of the War years 1939-1945 he served as General Officer Commanding the Army's Southern Division. As such, he was responsible not only for the apprehension by his Chief Intelligence Officer Florrie O'Donoghue of the support network for

German spy Hermann Goertz, but also for mobilising and organising the resources required to resist the much more serious threat of a British invasion.

Under the heading of "Former Army Chief opposes UN Flag use in ceremony", the *Irish Times* reported as follows on 5 November 1983:

"The use of the United Nations flag in the Remembrance Day ceremonies organised for Dublin next weekend by the British Legion was criticised yesterday by a former Chief-of-Staff of the Army, Lieutenant-General Seán MacEoin, when he and nine other senior ex-Army personnel met the press to explain their opposition to the proposed participation of the Army in the event ... Lt. Gen. Seán MacEoin, who is also a former commander of the United Nations forces in the Congo, said that the departure from the previous form of procedure in regard to the Remembrance ceremonies was sinister. When he heard that the Army was to participate, his first reaction was disbelief. Due homage had been paid in the past to the Irishmen who died in two world wars, by the Legion, and that was right and proper, but he did not know why it had now suddenly been decided that the Army should take part in this particular service, even though their participation would be on a small scale. 'Big things very often begin on a small scale as so-called trial runs'. He believed this was a trial run, with the ultimate aim behind it of having participation on a much wider scale of the Army in the future. He said the use of the United Nations flag in the event was 'faulty' and a cover for the carrying of our own national flag, which for obvious reasons could not be carried."

"Lt. Gen. MacEoin said that Irish people who participated, and in some cases died, in the service of the United Nations would not like to see the UN flag carried in a commemoration service fostered by the British Legion. 'This should not happen.' He said that if the Irish who died in the world wars, in 1916, 1919 and 1920-21, or with the UN, were to be commemorated, the way to do it was through a day of national commemoration, no matter what cause they were serving. 'We'll leave causes out of it, Men serve for different reasons.' The British Legion had made a grave mistake over this event ... The public should, he added, have had warning through the Dáil on whether or not army participation was correct."

"Lt. Gen. Costello, formerly O/C Southern Command, who was introduced as having been one of the [Michael Collins] 'boy colonels', said he had come along to give the lie to two things; first to deny the group represented only the voice of a few bigots or that it was only a rump speaking, but also to deny that because they were silent about this issue the acquiescence could be assumed of those currently serving with the Army. He had received many letters which showed that this was not the case. In the Dáil earlier this week the Minister for Defence Mr. Cooney described the group's attitude as

the bigoted reactions of a company of retired officers. Lt. Gen. Costello said that the tradition of the Army was that it served neither King nor Kaiser but the Irish people. It had been an uphill fight to establish that precedent, but that was its tradition and it was important that it remained so. The Irish who fought in France in the first World War were motivated either by a desire to fight for little Belgium or to follow the lead given by Redmond, but on their return home from the British Army they did not join the British Legion. It was an insult to people who anathemised everything the British Legion stood for that the Army should now be used to further a sectional cause. He said he believed that the Legion had now succeeded in arousing an antagonism here which would lead to its destruction in Ireland and for that he would shed no tears. He denied that the group's protest about the Army was in any sense anti-British."

If Cooney had got his way on November 1983, he had in the process caused such unrest among Army ranks that he had to beat a hasty retreat the following year. In November 1984 he had to suffer the personal indignity of attending the Remembrance Sunday ceremonies unaccompanied by any Army presence whatsoever, even in the ranks of the congregation – in other words, with a reduced status compared to what Haughey had authorised in 1980! It was not Fianna Fáil opposition that would force Fine Gael to backtrack, but the wellspring of opposition spearheaded by former Army leaders of impeccable Free State pedigree. These, in turn, were also joined should-to-shoulder by a former ADC to two Taoisigh, Seán Lemass and Jack Lynch, and a former Captain of the Guard at Dáil Éireann. Moreover, the initial setback in November 1983 for those veteran Army officers only forced them to redouble their efforts in a sustained campaign that would ensure the Minister for Defence's retreat in November 1984. Under the headline of "Costello urges national day for war dead", the *Irish Times* of 1 August 1984 reported:

"A nationwide day of national commemoration of all Irish men and women who died as a result of war was called for by Lieutenant General MJ Costello at a meeting held in Cork and presided over the Lord Mayor of Cork. 'The association of which I have the honour to be the elected chairman came into existence as a direct consequence of the arrangements made last year for the participation of Irish troops in the 1983 Poppy Day ceremonies', he said, continuing: 'Its immediate aim is to ensure that Irish troops do not participate in the 1984 Poppy Day ceremonies and its ultimate aim is to secure the establishment of a Day of National Commemoration on which all Irishmen and women died as a result of war, irrespective of the causes served, could be commemorated in a single ceremony with Irish Defence Forces

participation, under State control. The vast majority of Irishmen who joined the British forces in the 1914-18 war, and in the 1939-45 war, didn't join out of loyalty to the British Crown. Economic pressure, misguided leadership, sense of adventure, etc. were the principal factors. It is, accordingly, inappropriate that such men be commemorated by the Royal British Legion which is a British Institution incorporated by Royal Charter under the patronage of the Crown and which exists 'to inculcate a sense of loyalty to the Crown' ... Participation by Irish troops in a parade with such a body in Poppy Day ceremonies is clearly wrong in view of the requirements of the Constitution ... As will be evident from the backgrounds of the various members of this association, it is strictly non-political. Men who took opposite sides in the Civil War, and men who served in both the British Army, and in the War of Independence—like Colonel Tony Lalor—are represented. It is open to everyone who supports the concept of a Day of National Commemoration, and when it had reached the objectives it is aiming to achieve it will have fulfilled its function, and hopefully will not be needed after that."

The *Irish Times* of 24 September 1984 reported on the attempt by Colonel Brian Clarke of the British Legion to present a *fait accompli* in confirming that "senior Army personnel, and the Minister, will again be invited to attend this year's ceremonies. As far as he knew, the arrangements for Army participation would be the same, although he had not yet been in contact with the Department of Defence about them." But the same issue also reported on a meeting in Limerick that same weekend of the National Day of Commemoration Association: "General Costello said in Limerick on Saturday that his association had pointed out repeatedly last year that in any public parade of troops in this country the national flag should take precedence over all other flags. They had also stated that the UN flag was for use by forces from different nations on peacekeeping missions, and that it would be a fraudulent use of that flag to have it at the head of any war commemoration on Poppy Day."

The *Irish Times* of 26 October 1984 reported Minister for Defence Cooney's comments that these distinguished retired Army Officers were "making a show of themselves". Costello's response was to achieve a full page interview and profile by Seán Cronin in the issue of 3 November. [This will be republished in a future issue of *Irish Political Review*] That same evening, at a meeting of his Association in Kilkenny, which was also attended by General MacEoin, General Costello announced that the first objective of the association has been achieved with the announcement by the British Legion that it had withdrawn its invitation for the

participation of Irish troops in that year's Poppy Day ceremonies and he called for a National Day of Commemoration, to be scheduled for a date in July of each year.

Irish Army Officers were back in the congregation on Remembrance Sunday in November 1985, but were never again to repeat their 1983 participation in the Royal British Legion pageantry. Meanwhile, while finally designating 13 July 1986 as a National Day of Commemoration, the FitzGerald Government subverted the whole concept by fixing the venue for such a ceremony to take place in the very Garden of Remembrance that had been opened in 1966 by President de Valera in order to specifically commemorate and honour the 1916 Rising. The Fine Gael - Labour Government added further insult to injury by installing a plaque in that same Garden, bearing the inscription "In honour of all those Irishmen and women who died in past wars or on service with the UN". The *Irish Times* of 1 July 1986 reported on a press conference held by Generals MacEoin and Costello, at which the latter said the planned rededication to include Irishmen who fought in the British Army to destroy the cause of Irish freedom was 'altogether ill-fitting'. It would include Irish members of the Black and Tans, he said. The Garden of Remembrance was already dedicated 'to those who gave their lives in the cause of Irish freedom' and the Government had no right to dishonour it in the manner proposed. To do so would be to hand over the commemoration of those men to Sinn Féin and the Provos, he said.

On his return to power the following year Taoiseach Charles Haughey removed that plaque from the Garden of Remembrance and transferred it to the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, which he also designated as the most suitable venue for a National Day of Commemoration to be held in mid-July of each year. Notwithstanding Costello's further protests, however, Haughey considered it appropriately inclusive to continue inviting representatives of the British Legion to be quietly present in the congregation for such a ceremony.

But what of the Myers charge that in 1984 Haughey had forced the State to honour dead Nazis instead? It is a damned lie *par excellence*. Once again the statistical lie is that Haughey was not in power in 1984. Furthermore, at the November 1984 ceremony in the German War Cemetery in Glencree there was no question of 'adding the Air Corps and the Naval Service' to that of the Army, since all three components of the Irish Defence Forces had already been dispatched by Minister Cooney to attend such a ceremony in November 1983. More important still, the cemetery in Glencree, Co. Wicklow,

is anything but a Nazi cemetery. Its 134 graves primarily contain the remains of German airmen whose planes crashed, or German seamen whose bodies were washed ashore, during the course of the Second World War, as well as the remains of a small number of German seamen from the First World War. True, it does contain the remains of one German spy, Hermann Goertz, who committed suicide in 1947 rather than be forcibly repatriated into the hands of Allied Forces in Germany, and whose remains were unofficially transferred there from Dean's Grange Cemetery about 30 years ago. But it also contains the remains of a German Jewish refugee who was a Second World War victim of both Nazi Germany and the British Empire. An article by Michael Kennedy in the May-June 2008 issue of *History Ireland* publishes a photograph of one particular gravestone in that cemetery, with the following caption: "Adjoining graves of Hans Moeller and Hans Denes who both died in the sinking of the *Arandora Star* ... Despite being a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, Moeller had been interned by the British as an enemy alien." This British ship had been sunk by a torpedo from a German U-boat 75 miles off the coast of Donegal on 2 July 1940. The ship had been crammed with 1,300 German and Italian internees, together with their military guards, who were being transported from Britain across the Atlantic Ocean to far more distant internment camps in Newfoundland. Kennedy further relates:

"The internees were portrayed as a security threat because of their ethnic backgrounds and British fears of a 'fifth column' ... 'Collar the lot', Winston Churchill had ordered ... They were men like the tall, dapper, 28-year old Hans Moeller, a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany Unwanted in Britain, instead bound for Canada ... dead along with 800 fellow internees... Moeller's badly decomposed body was found on 29 July at Maghery, Dungloe, Donegal ... Moeller was buried in the remote graveyard at Termon, Maghery, Donegal. His body was later reinterred in the German war cemetery at Glencree, Wicklow. It was a strange twist of fate for a refugee from Nazi Germany, but a reminder of the universal suffering of war."

The German War Graves Commission of the Federal Republic of Germany had received permission from the Irish Government to establish a cemetery in Glencree in 1959. It spent the next two years reintering the remains of more than 130 German war-dead, including the Jewish refugee Hans Moeller, from over a 100 separate graves scattered over 15 counties in Ireland. At a ceremony attended by the parents, sisters and widows of some of those war-dead on 8 July 1961, it handed over the cemetery to the care of the Irish Government, represented by the Minister

for External Affairs, Frank Aiken. That ceremony occasioned the following editorial rebuke from the *Irish Times* on 10 July 1961, under the heading of "A False Note":

"For the Officers and crew of the training ship *Gneisenau*, which at present is paying a courtesy visit to Dublin, the ceremony must have been impressive both as a symbol of Irish neutrality during the war and as a warning against the futility of war as a means of settling international differences. Those who gathered in Glencree yesterday were there to honour the dead of a sovereign nation which had been at war. This was no place for political speeches. It may seem a little strange, therefore, that the Ambassador to Ireland of the Federal Republic of Germany should have introduced a note of acrimony. By pointing out that the Germans buried in Glencree were victims of the 'criminal regime of National Socialism' he may have been warranted in reminding people of Hitler's misdeeds, and thereby have done his country a political service. Nevertheless, his words not merely were unkind to the visiting relatives of the dead, but could be interpreted too clearly as casting a slur upon gallant men who died in the honourable faith and fear of soldiers."

No, certainly not the kind of *Irish Times* editorial we have come to expect. But then it was written by Alec Newman, who had succeeded RM Smyllie as *Irish Times* editor in 1954, only to be forced out of that position before the end of 1961 itself. While personal problems and commercial deficiencies may well have been to the fore in that involuntary "resignation", the above editorial cannot have helped Newman's stay, and must have stuck in the gullets of those whom Brendan Behan had christened "the Captains and the Kings" and who were in the tradition best represented by the monocled Major Tom McDowell himself. Newman subsequently found a home in the *Irish Press* as a leader writer. As Lionel Fleming pointed out, in an appreciation in the *Irish Times* of 8 March 1972 following his death, while Newman as wartime assistant editor had been no less vigorous than editor Smyllie himself in struggling against de Valera's Emergency censorship, "two more dissimilar characters could hardly be imagined ... Smyllie still a 'loyalist', Newman already edging towards Republicanism."

And what about the Irish armed forces representation at Glencree in 1983 and 1984, whose history has been distorted to the point of total invention by Kevin Myers? They were there as part of yet another British-sponsored package to be eagerly embraced by Fine Gael Minister for Defence Paddy Cooney. Under the heading of "Army takes part in Poppy Day Ceremony", the *Irish Times* front page coverage in its issue of 14 November

1983 gave pride of place to the Royal British Legion's own ceremonies:

"A small number of demonstrators protested outside St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin yesterday as the Army took part for the first time ever in Remembrance Day ceremonies organised by the Royal British Legion in Ireland The Army and the Government had been represented at Remembrance Day ceremonies before, but it was the participation of the Army personnel in the ceremonies which caused controversy on this occasion ... Also for the first time, before the church service began, the *charge d'affaires* of the West German Embassy laid a wreath on the war memorial ..." On the same page it was reported: "The Defence Forces (Army, Naval Services and Air Corps) and the British Embassy were represented for the first time at the Remembrance Day ceremonies in the German cemetery at Glencree ... The West German Ambassador and the British Embassy (on behalf of the Royal British Legion) laid wreaths at the war memorial." The role played by the West German Ambassador at this ceremony was to express war guilt, not just for the Second World War but just as much for the First World War as well: "(They) came to this cemetery to remember the victims of the two World Wars ... The ambassador said that Germans had not forgotten that the disaster had emanated from their country. They were very grateful that after the war, their European neighbours, the US and Canada turned to them with understanding the reconciliation." That this Glencree ceremony was essentially one being orchestrated for NATO Allied Forces was underlined by the following year's ceremony, as reported in the *Irish Times* on 19 November 1984: "For the second year the Defence Forces were officially represented ... Army Headquarters ... the Navy ... the Air Corps. Wreaths were laid by the (West) German ambassador ... by the US Defence Attaché, Col. Carl Gustav Finstrom, by the British Defence Attaché, Brigadier John Osborne, and by Mr. Reginald George, the chairman of the Royal British Legion in Ireland."

On with this new Anglo-German alliance towards an anti-Soviet World War Three, to recall the sentiments of the 1982 St. Patrick's Cathedral sermon!

Contrary to the Myers damned lies, when Charlie Haughey returned to power in 1987 he put an immediate stop to any further Irish armed forces presence at such German war cemetery ceremonies, no less than he had put a stop to such participation in Royal British Legion ceremonies. His solution was the annual National Day of Commemoration, which this year takes place on Sunday, 13 July. But the Myers predilection for telling whoppers of lies about the not-so-long dead [knowing that, being dead, they cannot sue for libel] is just as strongly alive and kicking today as when I first drew attention to it thirteen years ago. Lest anybody think that I have plagiarised Myers himself with reference

to "Myers, damned lies and statistics", I began this article in immediate response to Myers's lies about Haughey in the *Irish Independent* of 7 May. I had in fact written the bulk of the above before Myers himself published an article in that same paper on 27 May, entitled "Lies, damned lies, and the wickedness of Wikipedia". It was here, unable to take a dose of his own medicine, that he whinged about lies concerning himself. Let us again recall the biggest whopper of a lie that he wrote on 7 May: "In 1984, Charles Haughey ... was now effectively honouring the dead of the Third Reich ... That there was no outcry within Fianna Fail about this tells us something ..." It does indeed. For what other Party with any sense of self-respect would now "stand idly by" and have all its ranks, from top to bottom, stay absolutely silent when its recently deceased former leader is so viciously slandered as a Nazi?

Manus O'Riordan

Lisbon Treaty Debate

The Irish Times published a letter by **Barry Desmond, a former Labour Minister, critical of the stance of Jack O'Connor and SIPTU on 4th June, and a reply from the SIPTU President on 5th June**

The letter below from Manus O'Riordan, replying to Barry Desmond, submitted on 4th June, failed to find publication

As an ITGWU-Siptu member since 1957, may I point out that my union president, Jack O'Connor, does not speak for me when he adopts "a euro each way" policy on the referendum? His demand for a Government declaration to implement statutory union negotiating rights, prior to June 12th, as a precondition for our union's Yes vote simply does not wash.

He knows full well that successive taoisigh have already given commitments to Ictu that in the event of the Charter of Fundamental Rights being adopted with the treaty, it will be given legal force. He also knows that Ictu and the European Trade Union Confederation, representing 60 million workers in 36 countries, fully support the treaty and the charter. Jack O'Connor surely knows that thousands of fellow union members have had their social rights greatly enhanced by progressive EU legislation. The €40 billion net Irish receipts from EU budgets since 1973 have provided employment for thousands of our members.

I am dismayed that our union's president should have indulged, in effect, in the cynical No opportunism of Sinn Féin, now embedded in Northern Ireland with the deep Euroscepticism of the DUP. That he should, by default, allow our union to drift into the hysterical pro-lifers' No camp or give comfort to the US-oriented neo-

conservatives of Libertas is deplorable. I omit the No campaigns of the designer Trots of various hues because they at least have a class-ridden agenda all of their own.

Jack O'Connor is gravely and rightly concerned about the exploitation of low-paid casual and migrant workers. May I suggest that, rather than demanding statutory state underpinning of union membership, he should heed the admonition of my late father, who worked unceasingly for our union from 1924 to 1974. He said: "Go out and organise the exploited at the workplace; seek no favours from Church or State and the employers will then know the strength of your union's rights."... **Barry Desmond**

Although I never agreed with Barry Desmond's attitude to the republican movement, I nonetheless hold him in the highest personal regard....

However, he grossly misrepresents our union's position on the Lisbon Treaty in his letter of June 4th. We have made no demand for a Government declaration to implement "statutory union negotiating rights". Our position is that we will support the Lisbon Treaty if the Government commits to legislate for an entitlement to the benefits of collective bargaining for workers (and, by implication, prohibition against discrimination for seeking to organise to achieve it). This is enshrined in the treaty through the Charter of Fundamental Rights. It is already enjoyed by workers in virtually every other country in the EU. However, it will be of little practical value here even if the treaty is ratified, unless the Oireachtas legislates for it.

The issue is far far more significant than industrial relations, important though they are. It is one of the critical measures balancing the interests of workers with those of business in the treaty, which promotes a free-market economy. It affords ordinary people some possibility of developing a countervailing force to the awesome power of global capitalism. It provides a basis for articulating their interests in political lobbying, affording them some influence in the course of events. It strengthens democracy in society and it has been central to the success of the EU project.

Barry's allegation that I "know full well that successive taoisigh have already given commitments that, in the event of the charter being adopted with the Treaty, it will be given legal force", is simply untrue. I know nothing of the kind. However, if it were the case, it must be possible for the Taoiseach to reiterate those commitments and offer some reassurance as to what they mean. In that case we would be able to recommend support for the treaty.

Jack O'Connor

I was saddened by Barry Desmond's letter (June 4), in which misrepresentation of SIPTU's position was coupled with highly personalised invective against SIPTU President Jack O'Connor

...I myself, as a senior ITGWU-SIPTU official since 1971, will be taking my own personal decision to vote Yes. Such democratic rights were not always acknowledged in the past. In 1971-72 I conscientiously fulfilled my obligations as a union employee to produce arguments in support of the ITGWU's opposition to entry into the EEC, while reserving my right to politically campaign in my own personal time for a "Yes to Europe" vote. The fact that, as the Irish Times reported on 1 March 1971, "the Labour Party Conference decisively opposed entry to the EEC in any form", and that this was used as yet another stick with which to beat me, did not lessen my resolve to stand up to all such attempts to bully me into a "No" position. These memories now evoke from me an abhorrence of the behaviour of some of those, whose support for the EU is of shorter duration than my own, who have been currently attempting to bully SIPTU into becoming "Yes" campaign foot soldiers for the present referendum, no matter what.

On RTE on 31 March Labour Party leader Eamon Gilmore charged that SIPTU's "conditional support for the Lisbon Treaty" was an attempt "to advance sectional interests", while on 30 May the Labour Party spokesman on European Affairs, Joe Costello, came out with the accusation that "SIPTU is now mirroring the stance of the IFA". I am no admirer of the Mullingar Accord, which resulted in such self-inflicted damage to Labour in the General Election, but on this occasion Labour might have taken a leaf out of Fine Gael's book. Fine Gael did not dismiss the 85,000 members strong IFA as just another sectional interest, but recognised the validity of its concerns, and helped the farmers force the Taoiseach to concede on the possible use of an Irish veto in trade negotiations. But your headline of 31 May, that "Cowen rejects SIPTU demand on bargaining rights", still remains in effect, in no small part due to the failure to date of the Labour Party leadership to appreciate that the concerns of the 276,000 members strong SIPTU are no mere "sectional interests", but constitute fundamental issues of workers' rights. Had Labour acted otherwise it might have helped the Taoiseach change his mind and, as a consequence, guaranteed SIPTU's unequivocal endorsement of a "Yes" vote.

While I am not a member of the Labour Party, I do appreciate that Labour MEP Proinsias de Rossa has had a record of championing Irish workers' rights in Europe that no other MEP - past, present or for a long time to come - could claim to be within an ass's roar of matching. But he

does tend to gild the lily when overselling the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the absence of matching domestic legislation. I fully support that Charter, while recognising that it will remain as yet a rather thin garment for Irish workers. But I fully agree with Proinsias de Rossa that the effect on Irish workers' rights of a No vote would result in nothing but hypothermia, as such a vote would be correctly viewed in Europe as having been won by the well-oiled Libertas campaign for unrestricted capitalist greed. That is why my own vote will be an unequivocal Yes. **Manus O'Riordan**

Luck And Roy Foster

Roy Foster's latest book *Luck and the Irish: A Brief History of Change, 1970-2000* has had a series of very bad reviews by some of his greatest admirers. This is a new phenomenon. Has the anti-revisionist movement grown enormously, quite suddenly?

The bad reviews began with Olivia O'Leary in the *Irish Times*. After fulsome praise for Foster she says:

"That said, however, I have some major reservations about 'Luck and the Irish', starting with the title. I'm reminded of young Margaret Thatcher's rejoinder when someone told her she was a lucky girl to have won a piano prize: "I wasn't lucky. I deserved it." Is Foster implying somehow that the peace and prosperity of recent years is wholly undeserved and that we did nothing to help bring it about? He says the growth rate that reduced unemployment "appeared like a miraculous beast materialising in a forest clearing, from 1990, and economists are still not entirely sure why". Aren't they?These pages bristle with Foster's pride in being a "revisionist". It all becomes a little tedious—so much has happened to destroy the old nationalist belief system that one wonders at this stage who is revising whom. The sources he quotes to back up his views, particularly on the Belfast Agreement and the peace process, are quite selective. A broader list would have been reassuring.....One is taken aback, too, by a number of errors of fact."(27 Oct.2007)

Ouch!

John A. Murphy and Ronan Fanning were very critical of it on the "Off the shelf" book review programme on RTE with the former reacting very strongly against the chapter on "How the Catholics became Protestants" by quoting a character from Joyce who reacted to the suggestion put to him that as he had lost his Catholicism he had become a Protestant

by responding that he had lost his religion but not his self-respect. Ouch!

Even worse (or better) was to come from David McWilliams in *History Ireland*:

"It is less an objective history than a venting of spleen by Professor Foster on contemporary Ireland—full of invective against Fianna Fail, the church and county councillors. We've heard it all before in Grogan's....The main problem with the Professor's thesis about luck is that, to anyone with a passing knowledge of Junior Cert Economics, it is clear that the Irish economic boom can be explained by the key economic factors of demography, credit and industrial policy, all of which were planned....The major hero of the book is Garret Fitzgerald, whose hagiographical treatment here left this reader speechless.....Garret Fitzgerald's Ireland was a country of mass emigration that accelerated under his leadership, and no amount of rewriting of history can disguise that. Haughey, on the other hand gets slated at every opportunity....Let's hope that 'Luck and the Irish' was an aberration." (March/April 2008).

But it is not an aberration. It is classic, vintage Foster. Foster has not changed his approach one iota in this book. It is the same style and approach. The same snide remarks passing off as analysis. The shallowness and superficialities are all there. So why the change in his readers? Why has Foster been suddenly seen by them in his true light as a charlatan?

Incidentally, McWilliams is effectively admitting that the basis of the Irish boom leads back to Haughey. That, of course, is yet to be acknowledged by the chattering classes but as the scales have fallen from some eyes concerning Mr. Foster maybe other scales will begin to fall as well.

A few years ago the Aubane Historical Society published a book called *Envoi—taking leave of Roy Foster* where it washed its hands of Foster as a waste of time and space. Even though the above luminaries are doing the same it is most unlikely that they are doing so under the influence of Aubane. What they are influenced by is the logic of their own knowledge. Foster made the mistake of dealing with something these people could actually relate to. If Ireland's luck was in, his luck ran out in dealing with it. All these reviewers lived through the period in question. They were engaged with it. They were not spectators. They did not need to empathise with it. It was their own story as much as—and even more so—than Foster's. There was no need for historical imagination. They had the information and therefore the confidence to critically assess his treatment of it. And they found it absurd, embarrassingly absurd. Like meeting an old friend who had suddenly developed a large mole on the tip of his

nose.

But Irish history proper has become such an unknown quantity in terms of the lack of sheer information available that these same people simply do not have the knowledge available to them and therefore the critical skills to judge Foster when he deals with ancient history, i.e., pre 1970—never mind pre-historic times like 1916 and the War of Independence.

There were never so few people studying history in our schools and there were never so many Professors of History, of the ilk of Professor Foster. There is a direct relationship between the two because Foster is saying essentially that Irish history is meaningless. Who in their right mind would want to be interested in a meaningless subject?

Let's hope the new Minister for

Education, Batt O'Keeffe, gives this matter some thought. He is eminently qualified to appreciate the problem. He comes from the heart of Sliabh Luachra where history has not (yet) lost its meaning; he is also a very conscious successor to Sean Moylan, both as a TD for the same constituency and as a previous Minister for Education. Moylan had no existential problems about life and history.

Having '*come from nothing*', losing his seat at one stage and having had to fight and win in a new constituency at the last election in what was known, rightly, as the '*the constituency of death*' I think Batt O'Keeffe does not rate luck as a determining factor in life. I imagine that Professor Roy Foster would not be his preferred bedtime reading. Look closely at what he says and does.

Jack Lane

The Lord Professor Bew And The Forging Of A Shared Past

Part Four

In the magpies' nest of bits and pieces, *Ireland: The Politics Of Enmity*, by Lord Professor Bew, which is the Irish volume in the *Oxford History of Modern Europe*, we read: "Michael Collins insisted that Lloyd George never made a "threat of immediate and terrible war"" (p421).

So Collins negotiated freely as an equal, and signed up for the Crown, the Oath and the Empire because he wanted them, and not because they were forced on him by an Imperial Power that he reckoned was irresistible? And he acted in freedom when making war on the IRA to enforce his Treaty because it was his desire to remain within the Empire under the Crown? And he did this after spending his lifetime up to December 1921 pretending that his ideal was an independent republic!

The Lord Professor's authority for this remarkable claim is Hayden Talbot's 1922 pot-boiler, *Collins' Own Story*. I do not recall that reference on the spur of the moment. But I recall that Collins said something like it in the Dail in response to anti-Treaty jibes about giving way before British threats. But his meaning as I recall was that Lloyd George's particular expression of the threat of war was not what made him sign the Treaty, because he had always regarded the British threat as being continuously operative. He had not needed Lloyd George's reminder to keep him in mind that everything done in Ireland was done under British duress.

But the Lord Professor offers it as his own opinion that the 'Treaty' was not signed under British threats—at least not under "*credible*" ones:

"What role did the threat of renewed British force play in the Irish decision to compromise in the treaty negotiations? There is no question that the threat of massive British troop investment in Ireland played a role in the decision of the IRA leadership to call a ceasefire. There is also no doubt that in the late phases of the negotiations both Churchill and Lloyd George were seen to go out of the way to make sure that C.P. Scott, the editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, heard some blood-curdling threats; the British leader may well have calculated that... these threats would reach the Sinn Fein leadership. But how credible were these threats, given the mood of British public opinion? Scott himself acknowledged that parts of the British political establishment could never have countenanced a renewal of war. Michael Collins insisted that Lloyd George never made a "threat of immediate and terrible war". Perhaps more revealingly, the *Daily Chronicle*, Lloyd George's own organ, stated that if talks broke down with the Sinn Fein delegation they would be followed, not be renewed fighting, but by further negotiation" (p421).

So De Valera got it right. What was needed was controlled brinkmanship on the Irish side. But Collins jumped the gun, and seven months later he was fighting, in alliance with Britain, a war against the Republican Army that had forced Britain to call a Ceasefire and negotiate.

That follows from the Lord Professor's assessment, but naturally he does not say it.

Bew seems to have been increasingly orientated towards counterfactual history—history that did not happen—in recent decades. But the counter-factual is not a fact—except perhaps for Heidegger on a diversion—and history that strays from what happened becomes something else.

What happened was that Collins made the Irish delegates sign the 'Treaty' after Lloyd George had persuaded them that they would be responsible for an intensified and irresistible British war effort, which would be set in motion at once if they did not sign. The fact is that the threat was made credible, to those at whom it was directed, in the situation in which they had to act.

Was Lloyd George bluffing? His personal secretary, Mr. Shakespeare, thought the *immediate* resumption of war—by means of the letter to be put on the train that was waiting—was a bluff, but intention to make war if the Irish refused the 'Treaty' was not.

My opinion, for what it's worth, is that Lloyd George himself did not know whether he was bluffing, and that if put to it he would probably have found that he was. He was facing a catastrophe in Turkey in the war of conquest into which he had impelled the Greeks, and he was cut off in his political prime less than a year later by the feedback from that war. He had grabbed the world but it was beginning to leak out through his fingers. But the revisionists do not reckon with British world affairs. Their outlook is provincial.

The Lord Professor says the Irish delegates were not "*credibly*" threatened, but thought they were. And Professor Garvin says they were given independence but thought they weren't. As the *Irish Times* says, "*What kind of people are we?*"—"we" being of course the polite form of "*you*".

Bew comments as follows on another threat of war:

"a language of threat entered mainstream politics embodied in the Ulster Volunteer Force: senior Tories as well as Ulster Unionists connived at illegal gun-running. It can be said that this was an extreme form of the politics of theatre, and that the danger of civil war was always more apparent than real—but there is no question that nationalist Ireland felt mightily provoked. The unionists having borrowed some Fenian methods, the nationalists, in turn, took them back: in such a context, Parnell's and Redmond's hopes for a domestic reconciliation of creeds and classes were destroyed" (p369).

"*More apparent than real!*" When the eye is filled with seeing and the ear with hearing, where is the "*real*" if that is not it.

Where was the "*real*" in 1913-14, if not in the appearance that the British Constitution had discarded its fripperies and resolved itself into its elements, the two parties which constituted the functional state. Those parties had broken off consensual relations. They were equal in size. An alien intruder in the English Constitution put the Liberals in the office for the purpose of changing a Constitution in which it refused to participate. The Unionists (not the Tories but the Tories/social reform Liberals) said they would not stand for it. The Unionists raised an Army, which did not drill secretly in the hills, but on the lawns of Great Houses, and with rifles not hurleys, and with officers from the Army of the Empire. And the Government was not in effective control of the Army of the State.

Thirty years ago the Lord Professor said I was an arse-licker of the Unionist working class, while he was a scientist viewing the conflict dispassionately. I could never see what bearing science had on a conflict within the English Constitution. And from my vantage point I was able to see what the English Constitution, however unpleasant, actually was.

I doubt if the Lord Professor has ever looked at a fraction of what was apparent in 1913-14. The *apparent* included Dicey, the foremost authority on the Constitution then and for decades afterwards, being able to envisage civil war as being necessary to defend the Constitution, and F.S. Oliver trying to imagine a way of avoiding it. I wonder where the *real* was hiding.

The thing about the English Constitution in its prime was that what you saw was what there was. It was a case of "*Look! No hands!*" There was no mystery to it—apart from 'the usual channels' and cabals that were not really secret or actually in control. It might even be said that there was nothing to it. It just worked. Its workings were often catastrophic for other peoples, but catastrophe had been warded off at home by an oligarchic sense of prudence or camaraderie. The thing about 1913-14 was that the oligarchic sense of camaraderie had been heavily diluted by democratic elements and particularly by the Nonconformist infusion into the Liberal Party.

When the eleventh hour arrived in July 1914 there was still no sign of the emergence of a "*real*" from somewhere which would give the lie to the "*apparent*". The reason the twelfth hour did not strike was that another war supervened and the possibility of domestic war was set aside for the duration, on the condition that the Home Rule conflict would resume when Germany was crushed.

The Lord Professor's "*real*" which lay

behind the "*apparent*" and contradicted it is an abstraction constructed after the event, when all that was present to the mind during the event was no longer present. The fact that the Home Rule conflict did not result in civil war is what he describes as *real*. But that is not a "*real*" that was present in the conflict and ensured that it did not result in war. It was not anything within the conflict that averted civil war. The conflict did not run its course and resolve itself, either peacefully or violently, through the conduct of the forces involved in it. It was set aside by the foreign war that the State chose to engage in at the critical moment. The Bachelor's Walk shootings were the headline news when war on Germany was decided upon, and then they were quickly forgotten.

It became a standard item of the British war propaganda that the intensity of the Home Rule conflict gave the Germans to understand that the moment was opportune to wage war as Britain was disabled by its internal rupture. I could find no evidence to support that argument, but I could see a strong case for its inversion: Britain seized on an opportunity to ward off civil war by using a European conflict as a means of launching a World War.

But, because of the Home Rule conflict, Britain was unable to fight the kind of World War for which it had planned.

An indisputably real consequence of the apparent in the Summer of 1914 was that Britain was without a War Minister to put into operation the kind of war for which the Committee of Imperial Defence had made preparation. The War Minister, Seely, had used himself up in warding off the Curragh Mutiny. He had acted beyond his authority in making a deal with the mutineers, who were officers essential for the war on Germany for which preparations had been made, and he had to be sacked in order to placate the back benches. His greatest service to the State, as he records in his memoirs, was that by acting on his own authority he warded off a formal Mutiny and saved the Army for the war on Germany.

That was in March 1914. There was still no replacement Minister by July. Not just anybody could be given the job. Most members of the Government were not in on the secret arrangements of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and the Liberal backbenchers would have been outraged if they had got wind of the preparations that had been made. The Prime Minister double-jobbed as War Minister while trying to find a way out of the Home Rule conflict.

Kitchener, the great war hero from the Colonies, happened to be Home of leave at the beginning of August. A War Minister was required, and Kitchener was obviously

the man for the job. The people called for him and the Government had to comply.

In all of this I can see a sensible use for the terms "apparent" and "real". The Liberal Imperialist inner group of the Cabinet had made detailed secret preparations for war on Germany, but had to make it appear that it had not done so. And then it had to manipulate events so that a willingness for war was generated within the realm of appearance.

The detailed arrangements for the placing of an Expeditionary Force in France were set in motion by the Lord Chancellor, Haldane. He had made those arrangements as War Minister six years earlier. But they were still so secret that he had now to get down off the woosack and make them operational.

And then Kitchener—living in the realm of appearances—took over and made preparations for a very different kind of war, in which Britain would slog it out with the Germans, instead of fighting its usual naval war with only sufficient land forces to keep its Allies engaged.

Actual situations are rarely simple, and the singling out of a particular constituent of them as being determinant, rendering the others somehow unreal, is usually politically inspired. And the political inspiration in the case of the Lord Professor's history is both apparent and real.

Brendan Clifford

(I really must try to get on to the deleted segment of the Lord Professor's political biography next month. That is, neither his brief association with the People's Democracy and Athol Street, but his long and close involvement with Official Republicanism (the Stickies) under one or other of its many names.)

Does
it
Stack
up?

THE BRITISH ARMY AND RECRUITMENT.

We were informed that Cork was going to have a visit from the British Army and it was all arranged by the locals! So we ferreted out that Knochnaheeny (one of the poorest and most deprived suburbs in the north of the city) was the location for the visit. What comes next is really ugly even for the times that are in it. The local school, St. Mary's on the Hill, found in its Principal, Kevin O'Callaghan a vocal cheerleader for the event. He stated; "St. Mary's on the Hill has over 400 children on campus ranging in age from three to 12

years of age. On the day each child will get an opportunity to board the helicopter and walk through it, seeing at first hand the complexity of the technology on board." Rather amazingly, this was endorsed by the local youth centre, 'The Knocknaheeny Justice Project. (It is a venture by the local gardai at Gurrabraher, overseen by Superintendent Con Cadogan, along with Cork City Council and the Fianna Fail Cllr. Tony Fitzgerald.) Cllr. Fitzgerald stressed that: "It will be a great day for the community, it is a huge task to undertake and organize such a visit, but the community is looking forward to the challenge and it promises to be a very exciting day." The day dawned and out of the skies rotated a huge RAF Sea King rescue helicopter with 11 crew on board. It was bristling with the expected technology (some of its uses were left unsaid, after all the children needed only so much information). Lieutenant Commander Steve Hopkins of the Royal Navy Sea and Rescue Service said that "the visit to Knochnaheeny and Hollyhill was the best they had ever encountered" and they were "privileged and delighted to receive such a huge welcome to the community." Speaking later at the City Hall, Deputy Lord Mayor Cllr. Tony Fitzgerald welcomed the crew and listened as Lieutenant Commander Hopkins spoke about their visit: "I must say we are all taken aback with the reception we received and the huge interest from the children at St. Mary's on the Hill Primary School. We were delighted also to visit the local youth centre where we received a full Irish breakfast from the staff which we thoroughly enjoyed and kept us going all day." By the way, Cllr. Fitzgerald was specially deputised by Fianna Fail Lord Mayor Cllr. Donal Counihan who wears the plastic poppy on occasion.

Macroom boy's visit with the Duchess of York.

It was a special day for a young boy and his parents when they recently lunched with the Duchess of York. Jerry, aged 5 is a student of the Special Unit at St. Colman's who, with his dog Gaz which he received from the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind, and his parents, was invited by the Daisychain Foundation to dine with Sarah Ferguson at the Quality Hotel in Dublin. There were ten invited families in all and the boy's mother whose son is autistic showed Jerry the Duchess's photographs so he'd recognise her. The Duchess arrived around midday for the lunch and posed with all the families. She also spoke with each family. Jerry seemed to pick up on her kindness and rather attached himself to her, even accompanying her while she made her speech. The guests sat down for lunch and there was little formality. Indeed after the starter, the Duchess gave each

child an autographed copy of her book 'Little Red'. When lunch and the speeches were finished the Duchess was presented with a cake for her upcoming birthday, and went to cut it with Jerry's assistance. "The Duchess had a lovely way with her", said Jerry's mother Mary "She said goodbye to every child by name when she left at 4 p.m. The Duchess commented to the Press that "My work is with children and I am honoured to be Patron of the Daisychain Foundation. It is because I am the mother of two daughters that I am especially interested in children's charities. This is one of the reasons that the Daisychain Foundation appeals to me. It always feels like coming home when I come here and I am very much looking forward to meeting those special families", she said of her visit to Ireland and the charity. Choice Hotels Ireland put out a statement that they "feel privileged to be in a position to support families with disability. Our objective this year is to increase the standard of living for over 25,000 families affected with disability."

GORMLEY'S EAGLES.

Minister Gormley (he of the soxless sandal wearing) is up to his tricks again. After another dead eagle turned up, he had called in the guards and issued threats to the local populace of County Kerry where the bird's body was found. Toxicology tests showed that the chemical Trodaz was involved. No less than **two post-mortems** were carried out, one at the Department of Agriculture's Regional Veterinary Laboratory in Cork and the State Laboratory in Celbridge, in Co. Kildare. It was concluded that, as Trodaz is used as a wormer in cattle and sheep that that was how the eagle got it. As there was a **partially eaten sheep** found near the carcass it didn't take a genius to guess what the eagle had been up to. Did we hear a word of comfort for the poor farmer for the loss of his sheep? Were we told how much and how soon compensation was being given out to the said farmer for the loss of one of his flock? Indeed were we told all the facts relating to the case – e.g. how many more sheep or other herd animals were killed and eaten? And look at the wanton waste. These predator eagles are living high on the hog in Kerry what between sheep, lambs and salmon. When is that idiot Minister of the Environment going to realise that introducing a specimen predator back into an area one hundred years after its extinction is not being environmentally aware. Rather it is in itself, **environmental terrorism**.

ANOTHER ROYAL AWARD.

Television presenter and journalist Joe O'Shea received a special RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institution) supporter

award at the RNLI's annual presentation of awards recently. Joe, originally from the Rebel County, received the award at a ceremony at the Barbican Centre in London from the wife of Prince Charles of Wales, the Duchess of Cornwall in recognition of his support for the charity over the past year. It was a great pity that the Irish kept on this title for the rescue service and it isn't the empty fiction that some would like to believe it is. Those in the know see it as a source of power and above all – money. If you ever see the street collectors with their boat-shaped collection boxes, if you look real hard, you would be surprised like me to see that it all goes back to the UK. And we are talking serious money. It is said that the women-members of the Royal Cork Yacht Club literally fight (well not quite) over vantage pay-points in the South Mall, Cork. Are the boats and equipment made in Ireland? It does not stack up.

EU REFORM.

Why "reform"? Answer because the EU is now 27 states. (Well maybe 26 after our vote!) Where is the logic in this? The USA did not need to draft a new Constitution every time a state was added to the original 13 states up to 50 now. So the Eurocrats will not give us the real reason for the Reform Treaty, previously more or less the EU Constitution which was defeated by France and the Netherlands. The rejection by Ireland on 12th June is still being referred to as "a disaster" and a "crisis". The EU President has said Brian Cowen will have to explain "his failure" to have the Treaty approved. The Treaty was rejected by 53.4%. This sort of democracy is not wanted by the Eurocrats. Barroso stated that the other 26 states should continue to ratify the Treaty. This attitude in Brussels completely vindicates the NO voters in Ireland who are afraid that Brussels has become too arrogant. EU Commissioner Charlie McCreevy is behaving like a *shoneen*, pleading with the EU "not to consider the Irish ungrateful". What should the Irish be grateful for? For receiving EU money to leave our land fallow so as to support other states' agriculture—especially France? Or for having our fishing grounds plundered by Spanish/French/Dutch and UK trawlers? The amount taken out of Irish waters in fish annually is far far more than all the so-called "EU grants". Charlie McCreevy gets this month's O B N.

On the other hand, the British Conservative Party says the Irish NO was a great day for Britain and William Hague said "The British Government must respect the Irish people's verdict. Ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in parliament (UK) must be stopped immediately." The Dutch and French were jubilant—the people not the politicians. The Croatian, Stipe Mesic,

showed his ignorance of Irish affairs when he said "I'm surprised by this result as Ireland resolved all its problems by joining the EU". It has been demonstrated that the Celtic Tiger owed very little to the EU and economic advances in the years 1963 - 1973 (before Ireland joined the EEC) were more than between 1973 and 1983 after Ireland joined the now EU. Fintan O'Toole showed his incisive and "intelligent" mettle as assistant Editor of the *Irish Times* on June 14th by facetiously comparing the Referendum Day with the 20th Anniversary of Ireland's (sic) defeat of England in the 1988 European soccer championships. (sic) His usual wit and wisdom. Stephen Collins, in the *Irish Times* also, said "Ireland could agree to proceed with the elements that do not require a referendum and opt out of those that do". That is to say, the Government could go against the will of the people expressed in the democratic referendums. It just does not stack up but nothing surprises us any more from that lot.

LEST WE FORGET.

The Red Kettle Theatre Company said on their leaflet advertising their play *Boy Soldier* that they "are proud to present their tour of 'The Boy Soldier', a play based on the story of John Condon, the youngest allied soldier killed in WW1 and a native of Ballybrickan, Waterford. John Condon was just 14 years old when he was killed during the second battle of Ypres, on 24th May 1915—the first time gas was used in warfare."

This play, based on a disgraceful and disgusting episode, was sponsored incredibly by FAS, Waterford City Council, the Arts Council and by Clem Jacob. When will they ever learn? The first time gas was used in war was by the British Army on 24th and 25th April 1915 and the wind blew the gas back on the British soldiers. By nightfall, 15,470 were dead or wounded (for life) by the chlorine gas. It seems likely that poor John Condon was killed by the British themselves. John Condon was forced to join up because his father had died and he wanted to help his mother to feed the family. His need, and that of millions more Irish people, was caused intentionally by successive British Governments and their policies to keep Ireland poor so that jobs in the British Army and the British Navy would be filled by Irish boys. Did they know he was only 13 or 14 when he joined up? Did they care? Do they care now when they conduct what is actually to all purposes a recruiting drive in Knocknaheeny, Cork? Conducted with the approval of the Irish Government. Have we no sense of outrage? Is our national dignity so gone? Just think, would the Recruiting Sergeant be welcome in Rochestown/Douglas or Dublin 4?

Michael Stack.

Review: *The Best is Yet to Come* by Marc Coleman

Coleman: *Jacobite Economics?*

The author of this book is the economics editor for *Newstalk 106* and a columnist for the *Sunday Independent*. Before joining that newspaper he worked for *The Irish Times*. It would be interesting to know why he made the move from the daily newspaper to the Sunday. Certainly, his subsequent articles for the *Sunday Independent* and some of his ideas in this book would have been "off message" from the perspective of his former employers. And at the time of writing he is engaged in a quite personalised spat with Fintan O'Toole on the subject of economics.

Unusually for an economist, Coleman is interested in history. In one of his *Sunday Independent* articles he declared his opposition to Ireland rejoining the commonwealth on Jacobite grounds! He thinks that as long as the statue of Oliver Cromwell remains in front of Westminster, Ireland should not even contemplate rejoining. That is certainly not an idea that would have much chance of being published in the self-proclaimed "newspaper of reference".

In his short book Coleman conducts a brief survey of Irish history and advances the thesis that Ireland's economic problems were exacerbated by a low population density following the famine. A sparse population which is dispersed makes certain types of economic activity difficult to sustain. Public transport becomes less viable. Also the social interaction between various entrepreneurs which comes from high population density facilitates capitalist development.

He says Northern Ireland was able to recover more quickly from the famine because it was less affected by it and its industries were not subjected to protectionism from Britain. He gives as an example the woollen industry in Yorkshire which was protected from competition from Southern Ireland. This was in contrast to the linen industry in the North which had unfettered access to the British market. This is the standard nationalist explanation for the uneven development of capitalism in Ireland. (I am surprised that this view still persists 35 years after the publication of *The Economics of Partition* by Brendan Clifford. As readers of this magazine will know the decisive factor was not the woollen industry but the different systems of land tenure in the North and South. The class struggle on the land was at a more advanced stage in the North, which facilitated the accumulation of capital among a dynamic emerging bourgeoisie.

These conditions did not exist in the South. There was just a rack rented peasantry subordinate to a decadent absentee landlord class until Balfour/Wyndham's land acts).

Coleman is unashamedly in favour of the free market. But his free market beliefs are tempered with a sense of realism. He is not against environmental regulations. He also considers state planning of infrastructure at central and regional level is a prerequisite for economic success. He makes the valid point that local interests have prevented effective regional planning and blames this on our electoral system, a system bequeathed to us by the British under the terms of the Treaty.

Another obstacle to effective planning has been the excessive constitutional protection given to property rights as well as our obsession with land ownership. He gives the example of the millions of Euros in cost and time overruns on the project to extend the Luas to Bray, which was diverted from the original Harcourt street line because a few houses had been built on its path.

He decries excessive property prices. However, Coleman was a virulent critic of Stamp Duty in articles for both *The Irish Times* and the *Sunday Independent* even though most economists accept that the elimination of this tax to both first time buyers and others would have preserved the inflationary spiral. In the book he disparagingly compares the State's role in relation to Stamp duty with the gombeen men of the nineteenth century.

One of the strengths of this book is that Coleman brings a continental perspective to his analysis. He spent part of his childhood in Germany and also worked for a number of years for the European Central Bank. He compares favourably the local government planning of Berlin with Dublin. Berlin has a land area marginally less than Dublin and its suburbs and yet has a population that is 3 times that of Dublin. The greater population density means that all the amenities required by Berliners are within walking distance. On the other hand he says that Dublin is more competitive because of its lower capital taxes. It doesn't seem to have occurred to Coleman that high taxes might be a prerequisite for effective public planning.

Coleman also has an ideological blind spot in his analysis of the cost of living in this country. He sees greater competition as the panacea and cites the example of the abandonment of the grocery order as an example of what can be achieved. But this reform has had a minimal effect on general price inflation. Coleman says nothing about the more likely cause which is greater disposable income in this country compared to our continental neighbours as a result of low income taxes and high

consumption taxes such as VAT and excise duty.

But Coleman does make a plausible case for control of "once off" housing. He claims the price for granting individual liberty in this area was the dramatic deterioration of the water supply in Galway last year. Nevertheless, he concedes that many of the critics of "once off" housing were perceived as being cosmopolitan elitists with no interest in preserving local communities.

I am inclined to accept Coleman's *bona fides* on this issue. Although he is a free market supporter he recognises its limits in the cultural sphere. In his *Sunday Independent* column, for example, he has supported State intervention in preventing the Gaeltacht areas from being swamped by non-Irish speakers. In the book he criticises Fine Gael for advocating the lifting of the compulsory Irish requirement from schools as an example of "cultural self-hatred". Some readers of this magazine might experience a certain queasiness at his pointing to Israel as a model for how a language can be revived. But in fairness to him he states at the outset that a discussion of how Israel has treated the Palestinians is beyond the scope of the book.

Unlike *The Irish Times* which talks about "redefining our identity", Coleman believes that our Irish identity should be strengthened in response to immigration. We must give the "new Irish" something worthwhile to give their allegiance to.

In conclusion, despite its shortcomings (there is hardly a mention of social partnership) this book is a valuable contribution to the social and economic debate in this country.

John Martin

Palestine

The following three letters by David Morrison failed to find publication in the *Irish Times*

Vincent Browne (January 16) describes President Bush's call for "an end to the occupation that began in 1967" as "momentous". I wish it were but I don't think it is. I say so because it has been explicit US policy since April 2004 that Israel may annex large parts of the West Bank (and hold on to East Jerusalem, which it has already annexed along with the Golan Heights).

This policy was enshrined in an agreement between President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon set out in an exchange of letters on 14 April 2004. In return for Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, the US agreed:

"In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli populations centers, it is

unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949 ..."

President Bush also agreed that Palestinian refugees should not be allowed to return to Israel.

This agreement with the US helped Prime Minister Sharon defend his decision to withdraw from Gaza. When asked on 15 February 2005: "How does it help the state of Israel to pull out of Gaza and get nothing in return?", Sharon replied:

"I don't think we made that compromise without getting anything in return. On the contrary, in the agreement between President Bush and myself we had tremendous achievements that Israel never had since its establishment, like the issue of the Palestinian refugees who will only be able to return to a Palestinian state. I would say the issue of the population blocs that are heavily populated by Jews, will be part of the Jewish state in the future ..."

Christopher Hitchens

Christopher Hitchens (22 March) writes that "a battlefield defeat has been inflicted on al-Qaeda and its surrogates" in Iraq. Mr Hitchens claims this as an example of the "good" that has come out the US invasion of Iraq. That claim is bizarre, given that al-Qaeda wasn't present in Iraq at the time of the invasion. Doubly so, when one considers the following:

"The Iraq conflict has become the 'cause celebre' for jihadists, breeding a deep resentment of US involvement in the Muslim world and cultivating supporters for the global jihadist movement".

That is from a US National Intelligence Estimate on Trends in Global Terrorism dated April 2006.

Charles Krauthammer

Charles Krauthammer (Opinion, May 19) writes that the Jews in Palestine accepted the partition proposals made by the UN General Assembly in November 1947. That is simply untrue. If the Zionist leadership had accepted the UN proposals, Israel would today consist of about 56% of the land area of Palestine and Jerusalem would be under international control – since that is what the UN General Assembly recommended in resolution 181 passed on 29 November 1947.

In fact, the Zionist leadership never had the slightest intention of sticking to the UN General Assembly's proposals. About 500,000 Jews lived in the area assigned to the Jewish state, but there were nearly as many Arabs—about 440,000. The presence of such a large Arab minority made the construction of a Jewish state in the area problematic.

The Zionist leader, David Ben-Gurion, who became the first Prime Minister of

Israel in May 1948, referred to this difficulty in a speech on 3 December 1947, a few days after resolution 181 was passed. He said:

"There are 40% non-Jews in the area allocated to the Jewish state. This composition is not a solid basis for a Jewish state. And we have to face this new reality with all its severity and distinctness. Such a demographic balance questions our ability to maintain Jewish sovereignty. ... Only a state with at least 80% Jews is a viable and stable state." (quoted in *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* by Israeli historian, Ilan Pappé, p 48)

A month earlier he had warned of the danger of Arabs inside a Jewish state becoming a fifth column and, if so, "they can either be arrested or expelled; it is better to expel them", he said. (ibid, p 49).

Lest there be any doubt that ethnic cleansing of Arabs was on the Zionist agenda, listen to this:

"I am for compulsory transfer. I see nothing immoral in it."

Those are the words of Ben-Gurion speaking about ten years earlier to a meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive on 12 June 1938.

As Ben-Gurion recognised, the expulsion of Arabs was necessary in order to create a functional Jewish state. That's what happened in the months before and after the declaration of the state of Israel in May 1948. The territory allocated to the Jewish state was expanded to include more than 78% of mandate Palestine and around 750,000 Palestinians were expelled into the rest of Palestine and the surrounding Arab states, where they and their descendants live today. That is how a viable Jewish state was established in Palestine in 1948.

Impressions Of The Debate

The following commentary was written on 31st May

I notice the *Irish Times* (officially now the 'National Record') has become an abject propaganda rag for Lisbon this week. The only coverage given to 'No' side arguments (40% of the population - admittedly mostly peasants and other low sorts) are "funny" pieces like the *Corr* report yesterday concerning his three-year study of the 'New World Order', and presumably some selected nutters in the letters page (I didn't get that far).

The Siptu position (support Lisbon if the blatant anti-trade union elements of the Treaty are short circuited by national legislation first) is given dishonest treatment in today's edition. The basic issue for trade unions (who of course no longer matter, according to Harney-Gilmore, as only 0.5m people are members of them) is that recent court judgements at European level have ruled that free trade in services mean that services can be provided in one country at

The English In Ireland

The following letter was submitted to the *Sunday Independent* on 2nd June, but did not find publication

Derek Ross (letters, June 1) denies that English people living here need to integrate into Irish culture or that there is even a separate culture here: "there is essentially no material difference in the way English people and Irish people lead their daily lives." Seeing the Irish as the same as the English is the problem. One of the main differences between us is the way that we conduct industrial relations and form social policy. A formal system of Social Partnership was established in 1987. But an actual system has existed since the founding of the state. Such a system was proposed by the Heath and Wilson governments in Britain in the 1970s and was rejected by both the employers and the trade unions in favour of class struggle in the market place. Much good that has done for the trade unions.

The Irish system is similar to the systems prevailing in the rest of Western Europe – whoever is in government. Our system arises from the twin influences of Republicanism and Catholicism. The trade unions were at the heart of the National Revolution and have remained central to what has followed from that Revolution. Most English workers here have therefore no concept of the idea of social partnership and this gives rise to friction. British based unions operating here also favour the British industrial relations system and have consistently opposed partnership agreements. The two systems are not simply different but are mutually opposed. That is why English people find it difficult to integrate and treat the Irish as being the same as themselves. This is what irritates.

There are other differences, such as the all pervasiveness of the GAA. Mr. Ross is correct in saying that we are tending to ape the English with our "high-street shopping... and fashion". More serious is the recent tendency, especially in academia and the media, to accept the English imperialist position in world affairs. But I would suggest that our traditional anti-imperialist instinct is still predominant in the population at large. Many English people say that they come to Ireland to get away from the uncongenial society at home. But they must face the history and philosophy that that has produced that uncongeniality, and realise that what they find attractive about Ireland was produced from a different culture. A culture that they might find pleasant to embrace and which would be only too pleased to include them. **Conor Lynch.**

the wage levels pertaining in another, and that any attempt to stop this would be an impediment to free trade, and trade unions would therefore be outside their rights in seeking to secure the "rate for the job" for foreign labour.

The report (by Wall-Hennessy-Mc Greevy) doesn't mention this. The main argument against this being a problem (in the Lisbon context) is that we have minimum wage legislation. But that's not the point. Minimum wage is about €9, while the going rate for carpenters, for example, is about €18 per hour. Even with minimum wage legislation, these rulings mean that Latvian or other companies deliver services here at strictly minimum wage levels rather than Latvian rates. For example, Latvian contractors could now offer say journalist services on the Irish market for €9 an hour, and trade unions would have no legal right to insist on applying the rate for the job!

The whole ictu position also was misconstrued in reports during the week. The ictu executive is said to have voted 7 in favour, 3 against and 5 abstentions and finally argued that its support presupposed new labour legislation based on the 'Social Charter' to secure wage levels - hardly the ringing endorsement reported by the *IT* last week. So far the TEEU and UNITE (formerly TGWU and Amacus) have called for a 'No' vote.

Today (Saturday) we have an entire issue devoted to sermons from the great and good. Fitzgerald's rant is given front page billing - though the only argument he seems to have is that 40% of the population are being misled by nutters. I also noticed a blatant lie in great Goebbels style. There is coverage of the Kilmore Quay Fishermen's demo in town yesterday. A photo shows the fishermen on O'Connell Bridge light heartedly handing out free fish and with various placards around them which are incomprehensible. The reason they are incomprehensible is that the photo shows them out of context. The substance of the Goebblesque article is that they were campaigning against the new quotas being imposed by Brussels.

As it happens I was passing them during their protest march. The main banner of the march, carried up front by the leaders of the KQ Fishermn's Association, stated "Kilmore Quay Fishermen's Association Say Vote No to Lisbon". Pretty clear position I thought. The 'report' wrote of the various banners carried, without mentioning the main one. This has been airbrushed out of both the photo and nazi-style 'report', giving an entirely misleading account of what took place. The *IT* has a right to take a stance and support a particular position, but it's fairly unimpressive when it needs to resort to this level of lie, especially as the 'National Record', but there you go.

Liam Murphy

**Lisbon Referendum****Whither Labour?**

On the afternoon of Friday, 13th June last the current leader of the Irish Labour Party showed himself to be made of metal, stern stuff or whatever, but far too late in the day. With the referendum result patent, he pronounced emphatically that 'Lisbon' was "dead". Everyone else on the 'yes' side was going 'ho hum', but Gilmore was emphatic, "dead", dead as the Monty Python parrot, "dead".

Gilmore's quick and emphatic dispatch of 'Lisbon' though, raises a question: how real was his loudly expressed embrace of the 'Lisbon' cause and dismissal of all aspects of the 'no' case? Was his embrace of the 'yes' case warm and total or was it simply a calculation to stay within the establishment, such as it is?

What was happening on the ground was clear—if those who politically tapped into it were a very mixed bag, some spinning all kinds of nonsense into the popular pot. But in a sense that was Labour's opportunity—to provide real leadership and a sound case for voting 'no'. Instead Labour chose to enter into a grand coalition with the Fianna Fail Leadership and Fine Gael, with the Greens and what is left of the PDs [Progressive Democrats] as bobtails to this grand coalition. They were a ragbag—of bluff and wind-baggery.

Many ordinary members of Labour were inclined to the 'yes' camp and the party leadership's decision to join in a grand coalition with the national political establishment for a simple reason: they could not stomach being in the same camp as Sinn Fein, or indeed Catholic irredentists. In this misplaced prejudice and bile they—the party members who so thought (if that is the word) and the leadership (such as it is)—gave away the ground to the very people they detested and walked away from the people. They left the people to themselves, ignored their concerns, and left a coterie of disparate forces of little real standing or substance

in the southern context to make noise, claim leadership and don the mantle of victors.

Privately and publicly Jack O Connor of Siptu has been trammelled and traduced—privately as the worst leader the Union has ever had and "only a shop steward". Jack played no more—and as good as—a game as the IFA [Irish Farmers' Association] and the farmers played, if in relation to a different agenda.

Irish people are pro-Europe, unquestionably so. Those of us who took our cue from unthought instincts in the 1970s soon saw the error and embraced the then project. But that was then and this is now: the then project is not that of today.

The project of 1973 delivered quickly a welfare state; significant advance in the workplace (labour legislation and equal pay); and enormous release and relief from British rule for rural Ireland and Irish agriculture, freedom from Britain's cheap food policies and entry into the CAP [Common Agricultural Policy]. Today's project is a rather different affair.

It entails embracing the liberal-market agenda—whether at the level of the Council, the Commission, or critically, the European Court of Justice. It is all one-way traffic, whether we think of the WTO [World Trade Organisation], Irish Ferries, the 'Swedish' case at the European Court, or the self-aggrandisement of the bureaucrats of Brussels and the trousering of 'expenses' by MEPs.

Today's 'Europe' is not the 'Europe' we joined in 1973 and is a million miles away from the 'Europe' of 'Rome'. It is also so far away from the 'Europe' of Delors (and Mitterand and Haughey) as to be unrecognizable—and that is the problem of Europe *vis a vis* its citizens, including the people of Ireland.

The Labour Party must surely have recognised and known all of this, must have sensed that this was the opinion of the people, whether farmers concerned about WTO, fishermen recognising the stupidity of the Common Fisheries Policy, small entrepreneurs concerned about tax harmonisation, workers about the 'chase to the bottom', or just citizens faced with an increasing impetus to 'marketize' public service provision. It chose to ignore all of this in favour of being a bit player in a grand coalition of the 'great and the good'.

Gilmore might have recognised all of this before the event: maybe he did privately, given his prompt dismissal of 'Lisbon' as the result of the referendum revealed. But that is not good enough for a leader, so-called.

If he and the Party really have a sense of opposing Sinn Fein, irredentists and others in the context of the people feeling deep disquiet about the departure of the European project from its original and intermediate agendas, then he and the party should have provided leadership instead of sitting for crumbs at the top table.

On such a performance what is the point of Labour?

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**2 Heskin Court, Merrion Rd, Dublin 4, or
PO Box 339, Belfast BT12 4GQ or
PO Box 6589, London, N7 6SG, or**

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

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