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Interesting Times!

The Irish electorate voted wrong over Lisbon. The vote was unacceptable to those who are in authority over them. But, instead of punishing the voters, as British authority did when they voted wrong in 1918, the Irish and European authorities have kindly decided to give them another chance to vote right, as they did over Nice.

This new European democracy is a guided democracy, subject to authority. The old form of democracy—which was taken to be the source of authority—was disorderly and will no longer be tolerated. The meaning of the New Democracy is that the people are given the opportunity to agree with what has been decided for them by an authority which they did not elect. Voting wrong is to be treated as a kind of rebellion—just as Britain treated it in 1918-19.

The voters voted wrong because they were misled by an evil influence called Ganley. The European Parliament has investigated Ganley for Un-European Activities with a view to morally intimidating the electorate for its own good. But the operation was spoiled by the Czech President on his visit to Ireland, when he treated Ganley as a person with legitimate views on Europe who publicised those views legitimately.

In the European Parliament the Czech President was harassed on behalf of majority opinion in the Parliament by Rudi Dutschke, the famous dissident of the 1968 happening who cannot tolerate dissidence now. Such is the way of the world, especially with regard to student revolutionaries.

The Czech President—a dissident in a Westward direction today as he was in an Eastward direction way back then—was driven to hint at a similarity of attitude between Rudi Dutschke and President Brezhnev of the Soviet Union. Which is of course of a bit of an exaggeration—so far at least.

Originally the plan was to make the Irish electorate take its medicine neat: to vote on an unamended Treaty. Now there is notional talk of some small changes in Lisbon provisions as far as Ireland is concerned—to be introduced at some distant date—on the condition that the new Referendum is held before the end of 2009. A British General Election is expected soon after that. And Tory leader David Cameron has let it be known that, if the Lisbon Treaty has not completed its ratification process by then, he will grant the British electorate a vote on the Treaty. More democracy. A dreadful prospect.

Ganley, the Un-European demon, is investigating the possibility of forming a European Party to contest the next European election. And the European Parliament sees that as a great menace to Europe.

The European Parliament is a gigantic gravy train with little or no actual power. Politicians of the various parties of the various States are put out to grass in it. Its purpose is what in another context would be called corruption. It helps to elicit consent by dispensing lavish patronage.

Corruption is a slippery concept. It is called something else when it is approved of. But functional liberalism in the modern world had its origin in the massive system of corruption operated by the first British Prime Minister, Robert Walpole, for more than 20 years in the first half of the 18th century. Walpole appeased the conflicts of principle, by which England had torn itself apart for a century, with large doses of patronage dispensed on all sides. Principles were bought off, with little pretence that anything else was being done. And the system of corruption that nurtured liberalism was continued for a century after Walpole. The bribery by which Pitt induced the Anglo-Irish Parliament to dissolve itself in 1800 was nothing really exceptional. It was just another instance of principle being undermined by patronage in the development of functional

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Swelling The Ranks Of The British Military ***by 0.01%***

On 27th November 2008, BBC Radio 4's PM programme carried a story about a large increase in the number of recruits to the British military from the Irish Republic. The story was trailed on BBC news headlines throughout the day. Since then, the BBC website has carried an article written by PM journalist, Michael Buchanan, under the headline *Irish Swell Ranks Of UK Military* **[1]**.

One could be forgiven for thinking the British Army's serious recruitment problems were at an end and that, thanks to the fighting Irish, Britain was, happily, in a position to continue its imperial mission in the world.

* * * *

The BBC website story begins:

> "The British military is experiencing a large rise in recruits from the Irish Republic, figures obtained by BBC Radio 4's PM programme have shown.
>
> "They reveal a four-fold increase in military personnel from the Irish Republic during the past three years."

The least one would expect from an article making such a bold claim would be a set of numbers showing exactly how many recruits from the 26 Counties joined the British military in the past three years. Remarkably, the article doesn't give any such numbers.

The only figures given relate to recruits to the British military through its recruiting centres in Northern Ireland. According to the article, the percentage of these from the 26 Counties has risen as follows in the past few years:

2005-06	3%
2006-07	4.5%
2007-08	10%
2008-present	14%

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liberalism—in this case, the earnestly-held principle of Protestant Ascendancy which guided the Irish Parliament in keeping Papism at bay.

Money makes the money-world go round. The money-world was created by Walpole and his associates and successors. Swift campaigned as a Jacobite Tory against the Whig war on France on the ground that it was being funded by a massive increase in the National Debt, which was dissolving traditional values and establishing money as the universal value. He lost. Money has increasingly taken the place of all other values ever since. The ideal of the money-state and the money-society settling down into a stable harmony in which there will be no corruption survives as a Utopian fantasy only.

The great objection to the European system, as it has been altered since the 1980s, is not the corruption by which it lubricates itself, but the absence of purposeful statecraft behind it. It has set itself on a drift towards unlimited expansion of which the only outcome that can be extrapolated is war on Russia under the direction of the USA. And it has expanded into Asia through its special relationship with Israel, where it gives actual support to Jewish colonisation while tut-tutting for the sake of conscience.

The European Parliament has been trying desperately to pin a corruption charge on Ganley. But it is obvious that his real offence is that he has not submitted to the EU system of corruption. And that he has the object of making the European Parliament a responsible body, by means of a European party, instead of a gathering of kept men and women.

*

Meanwhile, at home, Sinn Fein and the DUP have agreed something like a Government again for a while, despite the efforts of the SDLP. This has happened largely because Gordon Brown did not intervene in support of the Unionists, as Tony Blair usually did.

Brian Cowen called off the project of extending Fianna Fail organisation to the North, which Bertie Ahern initiated. Mark Durkan, the leader of the SDLP remnant, insisted that the project be called off, and he got Rory Quinn in the Labour Party to say that the Labour Constituency Council in the North, set up by Pat Rabbitte, would be wound up, so that the North would again be made stew in its own juices as a lost province between two States, as it was for two generations after 1922.

But things are not working out as smoothly as Cowen and Gilmore expected. A Fianna Fail Forum was launched in Crossmaglen during the month, and its first meeting was attended by Fianna Fail VIPs from the Republic, led by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. And the anti-North policy of the Labour Party received a check at the Party Conference in November. Gilmore could not bring himself to say that Northern Protestants with a Labour orientation should join the SDLP.

And then David Cameron announced that the Tory Party is resuming a connection with the Ulster Unionist Party and will fight the next election in the North in alliance with it. There were echoes of CEC [Campaign for equal Citizenship] propaganda of the 1980s in his speech to a Unionist conference. But his project is different in kind from that of the CEC, which advocated normalisation of political arrangements in the North within the British party system, and both Catholics and Protestants were active in its campaign.

The Conservative and Unionist Party, which Cameron now wants to restore, was a figment after 1921. Of its leaders at the time, only Lord Londonderry took part in the Northern Ireland Government. Churchill, his cousin, thought he was mad to give up a seat in the real Government to take part in the Belfast sham. And Londonderry soon returned to the Government of the State. (That there ever was a Northern Ireland state is something that only academic historians whose mental processes are lubricated by patronage could believe.)

The Ulster Unionist part of the Conservative Party was never Conservative. It was an all-party alliance of Ulster Protestants, whose ten or twelve MPs at Westminster voted with the Tories for some symbolic reason, but which agreed that at Stormont it should be bound by the outcome at British elections. Around 1947 it voted with the Tories against the Socialist legislation of the Labour Party at Westminster, but re-enacted all of that legislation at Stormont. (This fact escaped the notice of Trinity Professor, David Fitzpatrick, who wrote that a Northern Ireland state obstructed social welfare legislation.)

The Ulster Unionist Party wrecked itself under David Trimble's leadership. The remnant, led by Reg Empey (and in Westminster by Lady Hermon, its only MP there and an admirer of Labour's Gordon Brown) will be committed under

this new arrangement to fighting elections on Conservative policies, which should please the DUP and help it remain the major Unionist Party.

It has been revealed that Cameron also has the ambition of linking with Fine Gael, and that a Fine Gael delegation is to go to England to study Toryism. Will this lead to a restoration of the full United Kingdom? Or just make problems about another Fine Gael/Labour Coalition?

Editorial Digest

The Ulster Unionist Party Conference, called off a couple of months ago, finally took place on December 6th. The Dave and Reg show is the common and fair description of it. UUP leader Reg Empey appears to want closer ties between his Party and the Conservatives, leading to unity, on the basis of having a single British Party in favour of the Union. He doesn't want it mentioned that the Tories have had a Party organisation in Northern Ireland which has stood for election (mainly in the North Down posh area) for the last 20 years. The Tories seem to want that forgotten also. The Dave (Cameron) and Reg show follows a joint statement by both of them in July on closer party ties.

The Northern Ireland Tories were led by Lawrence Kennedy, now working as a surgeon in Florida. He gave up on politics because, he says, the authorities did not give him proper protection after an attempt on his life by the INLA. Kennedy responded to the Empey/Cameron statement in July as follows:

"I hope you will all forgive me for believing that the Conservative movement that I played a part in setting up may be in the process of being "stitched up"—I will be delighted to be proved wrong, but nothing in either the joint article by Cameron/Empey or the report by Andrew Porter makes me believe that former UU people will declare themselves now to be Conservative and willing to run as Conservatives at elections. Anyway, I am out of all this, but keep in touch via the internet, and sometimes distance gives a clearer perspective than close involvement. Do not underestimate the propensity of the Tory establishment, be it under Thatcher, Major, or Cameron, to manipulate and ultimately piss all over potential supporters. I would suggest that the reason the Conservative Party is not doing well in elections in NI on its own is the same as always—when Tory leaders and shadow cabinet people come to NI they go out of their way to lavish praise on the wonderful, farsighted people in the local parties and pointedly avoid projecting the message that they want people to vote Conservative. Please explain to me how Catholic conservatives in NI will be attracted by a cobbled up arrangement with the UU." (Impala Publishers Blog Page 26th July.)

Lawrence Kennedy wrote in the Belfast Telegraph (26th July):

"Sir—If David Cameron is really interested in breaking the sectarian mould (Comment, July 24) he should welcome members of any of the local parties, not just the Ulster Unionists. Along with others in the late 1980s, I campaigned for the Conservatives to organise in Northern Ireland. The grassroots were wholly supportive, while the party hierarchy were aghast. As the Conservative candidate in 1992, I came a respectable second in North Down, with more than 14,000 votes. The proposal of David Cameron and Sir Reg Empey smacks more of opportunism than genuine political progress, and is unlikely to attract support across the religious divide in Northern Ireland."

The Irish News: Brian Feeney pronounced on the matter on December 10th. He warned the Unionists that they were being made the tools of the Tories, using the analogy of the dog and the lamp post with the Unionists being the lamp posts. But, of course, the mouthpiece of Ulster Hibernianism won't be seen as trying to support the Unionists either, and mocks them with phrases like *"Sir Reg 'never-to-be MP' Empey"*. But the Hibernians need the Unionists more than ever and must warn off the Tories as they have tried to warn off Fianna Fail and the Irish and British Labour Parties. The SDLP and the Ulster Unionist Party (what's left of them) can live only in communal politics. At least one of the parties running Stormont (Sinn Fein) has the ambition to be a leading Party in a real state. So commenting on David Cameron's speech to the UUP Conference, Feeney says:

Don't Give Up On Six Counties!

In Julianne Herlihy's article: *Es Ahora* (*Irish Political Review*, Dec. '08) she describes, what was for her, a frightening experience while on a trip to Belfast with some companions. I don't suppose I can assure her that scene there is an every-day normality.

First of all the train journey from Dublin to Belfast is the equivalent of the USA's *Get Your Kicks/On Route 66*. Train-hopping by spooks is an old game. As teenage communists around 1949/1950 some of us decided to meet up with youth of a similar political point of view in Dublin.

Yes, *your man* plonked himself right down besides us in our carriage (some of the trains had no corridors then). He had no hand luggage, no raincoat (when raincoats were carried): he just sat there in his sports jacket and trousers with lots of pens and pencils sticking out of his top pocket to prove he was educated. At the Dublin station he followed us for a bit and then disappeared.

After a one-night stay over in Dublin we got to the station and looked around for your man but neither hair nor hide of him could we see.

He re-appeared when the train stopped at Newry. This time we were on a corridor train. He stood in the corridor looking into our compartment throughout the two-hour journey.

Then at what was then called the Great Northern Railway Station, in Belfast's Great Victoria Street, he dashed to the ticket barrier in front of us, in time to give us that psychotic stare, Julianne describes.

We used to wonder which police force was involved in trying to frighten us but that stare is definitely a unionist one. That kind of spook is most likely committed ideologically to the former rabid setup in the Six Counties. He will probably loathe power-sharing. Loathe *Freestaters*. Spooking is more than a job to him. Who knows, his dad could be one of those 55 year-old union-jacked tattooed skinheads, Julianne describes so vividly.

The poppy is almost extinct in England, especially London. You might see one being worn out of every two hundred people who pass in the street. But of course it still flourishes in Belfast.

Some time back in the 1950s, when air travel was beyond the pockets of most people, an English football team came by boat to Belfast to play Linfield (the Blues—a Protestant team). As the cross-channel boat came in carrying the English team, all they could see on the jetty was masses of Union Jacks being waved at them in an aggressive manner. The captain of the English team and his players were quoted as saying they thought they were about to enter a foreign country.

All I can say to Julianne and her companions is not to give up on the Six Counties, have a good look around it, eventually you'll become immune to the shock of it all.

Wilson John Haire

"It's a cheap cruel gimmick thought out by a dangerous Dilettante and with possible repercussions for him a couple of years down the line if he needs the support of nine DUP MPs. For Empey it's pure lunacy."

Reg Empey's Goal, apart from trying to stop the disappearance of his Party, is to nullify the line from John Major's Government that Britain has no selfish economic or political interest in maintaining the border. Major's statement was true in the context of a massive campaign orchestrated in Britain to subvert the Free State over the last thirty years, but being finally exposed and publicly opposed in the last few years. Holding the Six Counties prior to that gave a leverage to Britain over Irish politics. At that time the British had a definite political and economic interest in partition. DeValera's tearing up of the Treaty, neutrality in Britain's war with Germany in 1939, Ireland's break with Sterling and its joining the Euro, all weakened Britain's control of Ireland. The British now have hopes for the re-incorporation of the whole of Ireland, albeit in a loose form. The more they are successful, the less partition will matter to them.

Reg Empey said:

"David Cameron says he is passionate about the Union. So am I. So, too, is the Ulster Unionist Party. David says he wants to be Prime Minister of the entire United Kingdom. And that's what we want, too. A Conservative Leader and Prime Minister who is not neutral on the Union. A Conservative Party and Government which is not a neutral observer of events here. An Ulster Unionist-Conservative relationship which shifts Northern Ireland from the *"ledge of the Union"* to the very heart of the United Kingdom. That's what the Conservative Party believes in and that's what the Ulster Unionist Party believes in. Ulster Unionism was forged and formed from the Home Rule crisis in the late 1880s. The geographical and political shape of the United Kingdom as we know it today is partly the handiwork of the Ulster Unionist Party. Our Party has taken the significant step of restoring Unionism's historic relationship with the Conservative Party. It is a relationship that is about much more than mere party politics. It is a constitutional statement. It declares and demonstrates that Northern Ireland is not a place apart—not an internal colony. It is an outward and visible sign of Northern Ireland's rightful place within the United Kingdom. The Union championed by David Cameron is the Union and the United Kingdom that this party and his party helped to fashion. So at a time when the constitutional integrity of that Union and United Kingdom is being challenged by a variety of regional nationalisms, how fitting that the Ulster Unionists and Conservatives—the two oldest parties in the United Kingdom as it happens—should again come together to forge a common identity and shared values. And that constitutional integrity isn't just under threat from regional nationalisms. It is also under threat from the empire builders within the European Union. So it is good to know that Jim Nicholson, our MEP will be standing shoulder to shoulder with Conservatives in the European Parliament and defending our shared heritage and political identity." (UUP Conference. 6th December.)

David Cameron's speech to the UUP Conference:

"Today we come together—Conservatives and Unionists—to create a dynamic new political and electoral force, a new force to cement Northern Ireland's position as a peaceful, prosperous and confident part of our United Kingdom… Today I want to tell you why I utterly reject this view and the whole notion of no-go areas for the Conservative Party and explain why I believe that Conservatives and Unionists are better together than apart. It comes down to three things. A deep commitment to the Union. A strong belief in democracy. And a great respect for the Ulster Unionist Party…

"I've never been a little Englander. I passionately believe in the Union and the future of the whole United Kingdom … We're better off together—England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland—because we all bring our strengths to the mix… But standing up for the Union isn't just about expressing our important feelings about our shared heritage. It's also a rational argument based on mutual interest. Together, we are the fifth largest economy in the world. Together, we have a seat at the top table and are listened to in a way that other countries can only dream of. Together, we have one of only five permanent seats of the United Nations Security Council. Together we are a major player in the EU, in NATO and other international organisations. And together, we have the British military—one of the most respected armed forces in the world. Northern Ireland punches above its weight in Britain's armed forces and Britain punches above its weight in the world because of the expertise and bravery of those forces. Indeed, nothing embodies the Union better than our military bonds. Last century, when we stood alone against a deadly threat to all we hold dear, we stood alone together. The servicemen of our islands fought together in every single theatre of the Second World War… A few weeks ago, you welcomed home to this city the brave men and women of the Royal Irish Regiment. All of them heroes—risking their lives thousands of miles away protect our security at home. We rightly salute them for their courage and professionalism as we do those who over thirty long years paid the ultimate price to protect democracy and the rule of law here in Northern Ireland. We owe them an immense debt of gratitude…

"But the constitutional certainty that Northern Ireland now enjoys opens the opportunity for that to change and for normal politics to develop. Normal politics in which people in Northern Ireland can participate at all levels of government in the United Kingdom, from the council chamber right the way to the cabinet table itself. But people in Northern Ireland need to be involved in decisions about their lives that are not devolved: taxation, public expenditure, pensions, the broad thrust of social policy, defence and foreign affairs. As things stand, Northern Ireland MPs are effectively excluded from exerting a real influence on any of these matters. This is not true representative democracy and it has got to change. Why are there great Ulstermen and women on our television screens, in our boardrooms and in our military but not in our Cabinet? The semi-detached status of Northern Ireland politics needs to end. It's time for Northern Ireland to be brought back into the mainstream of British politics. Northern Ireland needs MPs who have a real prospect of holding office as ministers in a Westminster government. That's what a dynamic new political force of Conservatives and Unionists offers a revival of real democracy across the United Kingdom.

"But let me pay a particular tribute to the Ulster Unionist Party, to Reg Empey's leadership and to other leaders of the past. It is largely through your efforts that Northern Ireland's constitutional position is settled. The consent principle is paramount, enshrined in national and international law. Nationalists and republicans now work with Unionists in a shared administration at Stormont. The territorial claim in the Irish constitution is gone. The relationship with the Irish Republic is of the kind one would expect of two neighbours that share a land border."

Roy Garland, the Ulster Unionist Party resident columnist on the *Irish News*, was not as taken by David Cameron's speech as the enthusiasts in the UUP were:

"…it was wrongly reported that it {Cameron's speech about the constitutional position of Northern Ireland}"overturned Conservative rhetoric". It clearly did no such thing… Cameron thinks the new alliance could attract Catholic votes but a Tory alliance won't produce a more Catholic-friendly party. The Orange Order has gone and despite everything a few unsung Catholics remain but even a few more Catholic recruits would neither make a summer nor compensate for a party in danger of losing the common touch." (Irish News. 8th December.)

Defection Rumour It is believed (Irish News. 16th December) that Ken

Robinson, UUP Assembly Member for East Antrim, is about to defect to the DUP. The UUP denies the rumour, but Mr. Robinson refuses to comment.

A Fianna Fail Forum has been established in Crossmaglen. It is the first NI branch outside a University; already existing are the William Drennan Cumann in QUB and the Watty Graham Cumann at Magee. It will be able to send delegates and speak at the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis to be held on 29th February. About 35 attended a meeting addressed by Justice Minister Dermot Ahern, along with former Dail Ceann Comhairle Dr. Rory O'Hanlon (who is current TD for Cavan-Monaghan), FF Party Chairman Seamus Kirk TD, and FF General Secretary Sean Dorgan. The meeting elected an officer-panel which is to be chaired by Martin McAllister of Crossmaglen. James Kernan, a former leading Irish show-jumper, also from Crossmaglen is Vice-Chairman. The Party was registered in Northern Ireland on 7th December and the question of contesting elections will be considered by the National Executive at a later stage.

Intimidation Increasing: 'Special Purchase Of Evacuated Dwellings' is a scheme which allows the Housing Executive to by homes of people who have been intimidated out of them. Last year the total number of houses bought was 22. In the first eight months of 2008, 32 homes have been bought under the scheme. This is one of many indications that the sectarian divisions in the North are increasing since the War ended.

Great War groupies: The "Our War" campaign is now going local. There was a TCD clone in Howth delivering the Our War message to the Heritage Society on 26th November—packed meeting of 120 at least. The presentation was pure propaganda and was accompanied by a slide show of British propaganda posters—described as being essentially accurate. He also called the Central Powers the *"Axis powers"* and the National Volunteers the *"Irish Volunteers"*. Germany's *"Belgian atrocities"* figured large, as did the Lusitania etc. This was mixed with accounts from some local unionists, who provided tearful memories of how their fathers/grandfathers had been *"excluded"* (including allegedly being refused houses by Dublin Corporation). This was followed by 1914-18 war songs by an entertainer now living in Britain but who came from the area. 1916 and War of Independence were ridiculed as *"nationalist myth"*, *"nationalist icons"* etc. No mention of course of 1918 Election. Hard to get a word in against the torrent. But for all that, the 'Our War' line is very shallow and very fragile.

John A. Murphy was the interviewee on RTE's *One To One* programme on December 1st. He came across as a confused man—not in the sense that his mind was going. But, while his instincts are with the revisionists, his colleagues in that crusade have regularly annoyed him with observations, such as the Protestant mind being somehow superior to the Catholic mind. But Murphy got quite animated over one *"achievement"*, as he called it. In the 1930s UCC was dominated by a statue of Queen Victoria which was removed and buried unceremoniously. It was replaced by a statue of St. Finnbar, Patron Saint of Cork. Murphy and friends had the Famine Queen dug up and replaced in a prominent position.

Swelling The Ranks… continued

Since no figures are given for the total recruited through these centres, it isn't possible to calculate the actual number recruited from the Republic in these years.

The *"four-fold increase"* in recruitment from the Republic is justified by comparing the 3% in 2005-06 with the 14% in 2008 so far.

Making such a claim assumes that the total numbers recruited through Northern Ireland centres were approximately the same from year to year (since, for example, if total numbers fell, 10% of the 2007-08 total could be greater than 14% of the 2008 total).

The *"four-fold increase"* claim also ignores recruitment from the Republic through other recruitment centres. The latter was justified after a fashion by saying that *"most of the southern Irish recruits join up"* in Northern Ireland.

* * * *

Lt. Col. Dick Rafferty, the man responsible for recruitment in Northern Ireland, was interviewed in the programme. Obviously, he knows the precise number of southern Irish recruited through his centres, otherwise he wouldn't have been able to calculate the percentages.

This begs an obvious question: why are actual, readily understandable, numbers absent from Michael Buchanan's article? The answer is that, had actual numbers been present, the article could not have been entitled *Irish Swell Ranks Of UK Military*—the *"swelling"* would have been revealed to be a pimple, because the numbers involved are extremely small, even after the "four-fold" increase in the past 3 years.

My guess is that recruitment has gone up from under 10 per year to about 30 per year since 2005. Given that the British Army is about 100,000 strong, the Navy nearly 40,000 and the Air Force over 40,000, it is a bit of a stretch to describe an extra 20 recruits from the Irish Republic as *"swelling the ranks of the British military"*. The actual *"swelling"* amounts to around 0.01%, that is, one ten thousandth, of the British military's total strength.

That's why the story contained no actual recruiting figures. The message that the British military wanted delivered about increased recruitment from the Republic would not bear the inclusion of actual recruiting figures. And BBC journalist, Michael Buchanan, colluded with the military in excluding them.

* * * *

What do I base my guess on?

First, an *Irish Times* article by Conor Lally on 6th September 2008, entitled *Lure Of Combat Draws Irish Men And Women To British Army*. This stated:

> "Last year, of the number of soldiers from the island of Ireland to join the British army, just three per cent were from the Republic. This year, that figure has jumped to 16 per cent, or about two recruits per month." **[2]**

This means that, up to then in 2008, only 16 soldiers had been recruited from the Republic (and the annual rate was 24). Those figures must have come from the British military. Could it be that Conor Lally refused to be fobbed off with the meaningless percentage figures that later appeared in the BBC story? It should be said that his percentages are difficult to reconcile with the BBC's above. Note, however, that they are for British Army recruitment only.

* * * *

Second, an *Irish Independent* article by Security Editor, Tom Brady, on 10th October 2008, which began:

> "A recruitment drive by the British Army in the Republic has had little impact on the Defence Forces.
>
> "The expensive drive has been focused on potential recruits here for more than a year. But the Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces, Lt Gen Dermot Earley, revealed yesterday that between April last year and the end of September, only 24 applicants had signed up. He did not want to comment on the drive but made it clear the campaign had not interfered with the recruitment process here." **[3]**

This figure, which again appears to be for the British Army only, represents an annual rate of 16 for the period April 2007 to September 2008.

(Defence Minister Willie O'Dea is quoted in the article as saying *"there were currently five applicants for every vacant post for enlisted personnel in the Defence Forces, while the rate for officers' positions was 25-1"*.)

* * * *

Third, a written question in the House of Commons on 18th February 2008

revealed that—

> "In 2007, 257 people from Northern Ireland, who applied through one of the four Armed Forces Careers or Army Careers Information Offices in Northern Ireland, joined the Army" **[4]**.

That was the written answer given by Defence Minister, Derek Twigg, in reply to Conservative MP, Andrew Rosindell, who asked *"how many people from Northern Ireland joined the British Army in 2007?"*

In addition to these 257 people from Northern Ireland who joined through these offices there were, of course, others from the Republic. Taking the 10% figure given by the BBC as the percentage from the Republic in 2007-08, at a rough guess this means around 28 from the Republic in 2007. (It's only a rough guess because the 10% figure is for 2007-08, rather than 2007, and it applies to all recruits to the British military, not just the British Army).

This figure (which is for the Army only) is higher than the other two, but it is still very small beer in a British military complement of around 180,000.

* * * *

On 1st April 2006, there were only 325 people in total from the Republic in the British military, 215 in the Army, 50 in the Navy and 60 in the Air Force, that is, roughly 1 in 500 of the Army, 1 in 1000 of the Navy and 1 in 1000 of the Air Force, were from the Republic. This was revealed in a written answer in the House of Commons on 5 June 2006 **[5]**, which sets out in detail the extraordinary numbers of non-British people in the British forces, particularly in the Army.

In April 2006, 6.2% of the British Army wasn't British (6,670 personnel) and that doesn't count over 3,000 Gurkhas, which brings the total non-British close to 10% **[6]**. Of this, the contribution from the Republic (or *"Eire"* as it is called in the answer) is small compared with Fiji (1,995), Jamaica (975), South Africa (720), Ghana (660) and Zimbabwe (565). Even the Caribbean islands of St Vincent and St Lucia, with 280 and 225 respectively, each contribute more. The *"swelling of the ranks"* by 20 or so, which seem to have occurred in the last few years, will not change matters significantly.

The British Navy and Air Force are much less dependent on foreign recruits than the Army—only 1.2% of the Navy and 0.4% of the Air Force are not British.

(If an article in *The Sun* on 27th December 2007 is to be believed, the number of foreigners in the Army has rocketed in recent years. There were, *The Sun* says, only 300 foreign troops in the Army a decade ago, not counting the Gurkhas **[7]**.)

* * * *

Why is the British military engaging in this outlandish attempt to convince the public, with the help of the BBC, that the Irish are *"swelling the ranks of the British military"*? Their objective is obvious: it is to make it seem that it is not an unusual event for people from the Irish Republic to join the British military, and by so doing encourage recruitment from the Republic.

A number of factors have convinced the British military that the time is ripe for recruitment there. Lt. Col. Rafferty told the BBC:

> "This is a generation who are less familiar with the British army supporting the policing operation of the north.
>
> "They are more familiar with the wider efforts of the British army in Iraq and Afghanistan. Where previously {the troubles in} Northern Ireland informed the mindsets of the last generation, that is less the case with this upcoming generation."

Another factor that he doesn't mention is the current vogue for celebrating past Irish participation in the British military, by, for example, claiming the first World War as *"our war"*. The British state sees the possibility of making Afghanistan and future British wars *"our wars"* too and of our helping to supply the cannon fodder, as we did in 1914-18. Happily, there is very little evidence of success to date.

David Morrison
18 December 2008
www.david-morrison.org.uk

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European Round-up

Lisbon—Mantras And Realities

All Heart And No Soul?

Micheál Martin has prepared a few favourite mantras for the upcoming campaign on Lisbon. A favourite one is that it is necessary to pass Lisbon for Ireland to be at the heart of Europe. A nice place to be if one was certain where it is. To develop the metaphor, the problem is that Europe had a heart transplant some time ago. It was founded and thrived on the integrative values of Christian Democracy, politically based on the Franco-German axis and the main instrument was a Commission to devise and implement a new European polity. That was the heart and soul of the project. That is the case no longer.

Outgoing President of Europe Sarkozy, in his end of term report to the European Parliament on 16th December, specifically ruled out more integration. For him it is a future of expansion, rather than integration by a collection of nation states, and that's the way it's going to stay. *"In conclusion, Mr. Sarkozy said Europe required an understanding between different nations, though he stressed he was not an integrationist but he was determined to preserve the nation state"* (EP Website). And he was cheered. His boasts of unity and unanimity achieved on this, that and the other during his Presidency was a case him protesting too much. Good old-fashioned window dressing.

The original European ideal is as dead as the Monty Python parrot. Passing Lisbon would the final funeral rites for it. That means there will continue to be at least 27 hearts in Europe. It will be an unending spectacle of some and the rest, with the odd one haggling and hustling in their own national interests and winning some and losing some—with great displays of unity at all costs. But it will be all synthetic unity. If real unity of purpose existed in Europe there would be no need to mention it, any more than anyone would go on about the great unity of the 26 Counties. The only sensible slogan is *'Europe was good for us—keep it that way—Vote No!'*

The Smoking Gun?

The relaunched *Village* magazine has initiated the latest piece in the 'Get Ganley' campaign in the hope that, if he is discredited, the Lisbon referendum will be passed next time. The logic of this new approach was explained by its author:

> "When we know who paid for the most expensive private political campaign in the history of State, we will know their motivation. And then the Irish people will know just who it is who is asking them to vote No, and maybe also, Why. The cemeteries of Europe prove it

matters" (Mr. Colm MacEochaidh, *Village*, 26 November)

So funding is the smoking gun that explains all. This is pathetic. It says more about MacEocdhaidh than about Ganley. It is a form of perverted Marxism gone crazy. That man is some kind of money and material driven automaton. If money explains why and how a case can be made successfully against Europe then it would follow that more money is the key to a successful campaign for Lisbon. And, whatever else the referendum proved, it proved that money and funding do not win arguments about Lisbon—even billions of it. Money can awe, intimidate, coax , bribe and frighten people but it cannot actually persuade them in the secrecy of a ballot box. Something more powerful does.

And, if money and funding is the crucial thing, then it should also follow that the European project itself must be based on such things as it has been successful so far. But Colm himself realises this is not the case. He begins with an attempt to explain the origins of the project.

> "In September this year I visited cemeteries along the route of the western front of the First World War, where Irish Soldiers lie among the fallen. The European powers and their acolytes killed millions of young men in the name of … well, not even historians agree on why they fought. The war to end all wars failed to live up to its billing. The European powers went back to the mass killing of soldiers and civilians two decades later. Conservative estimates place the number of dead at 70 million. It's easy to let those numbers slide by, misled by Stalin's cold remark that the death of one person is tragic but the death of a million is "a statistic"…".

It strikes me as very odd that he has not taken the trouble to arrive at some definite conclusion himself as to these why those 70 million died. If the historians don't agree, he seems quite capable of reaching his own conclusion. He certainly does not lack the brains to do so. His legal training should surely make him consider such evidence as looking at who actually declared the war on Germany which set the whole thing off. Then at who attacked Turkey to enlarge the war further. Then at who invaded Greece. Then at who got Italy to join in and who therefore got the War truly going on a world scale. He could rest his case on those facts alone.

There is of course no mystery about who and what the smoking gun was in that case, even if our forensic legal eagle chooses not to see it. No mystery whatever —it was Britain's plan to extend its Empire's power and influence and destroy anything it regarded as standing in its way.

I don't get the gratuitous dig at Stalin. Stalin did more than most to end the First World War—and did more than most to stop the second beginning. And he only got involved to defend his state when it was attacked. And I might add that the largest percentage of the dead of these wars were from Stalin's state. He is not responsible for a single one of those 70 million deaths. When it comes to trying to stop and avoid World Wars. Colm should propose a monument to Stalin in Brussels rather than making cheap jibes.

Colm is of course quite right to focus on the World Wars as the *raison d'etre* of the European project but he inevitably has a cock-eyed appreciation of what it really is all about if he cannot accept the actual cause of its creation—Britain's engineering of two world wars at the expense of nations of Europe. And now Britain is trying to replace the old, pacific motives for building up the Union with a new, militarist, perspective.

The original founding states eventually got together to to put an end to British playing off European powers against each other—and naturally enough did not invite the cause of their problems to be a part of the solution. And the cause of their problem most certainly did not want to be part of the solution. These are the basic facts that seem unknown to Colm and so many others these days.

This ignorance can have him say things like: *"The union of states expanded from a crude trading bloc into a true community"*. It has expanded in the very opposite way. It began as a true community with clearly shared values based on European Christian Democracy and is now a crude trading bloc with undefined borders and its aims have now developed into modernised versions of European imperialistic attitudes towards the rest of the world. It is now led by the state that knows best how to do this—the UK—led by the state whose imperialistic games were the original *raison d'etre* of the project!

This is why the EU is in crisis. That is why there is a growing gut distrust of it. That is why the Ganleys of this world can make a case to people against Lisbon. Anyone and everyone can also do so. It so easy to pick holes in the Union when its basic moral purpose is shattered. Up to now, people here and elsewhere in Europe did always give it the benefit of the doubt, but they are now saying enough is enough—and that will remain the case even if another referendum is won. People will hate themselves even if they vote for it as they know and everyone knows their heart will not be in it.

Making Another Pitch For Lisbon

Review: *"Ireland's future after Lisbon"* by the Institute of International and European Affairs (Dublin, Nov. 2008)

The document is very worthy and wordy in outlining various scenarios that might arise from the various possibilities as regards the future of the Lisbon Treaty. The IIEA is a body of the Great and the Good in Ireland under the patronage of the President herself, God bless her.

As the Lisbon Treaty is essentially a request for a vote of confidence in this very body and its European equivalent, one would expect this document to make a succinct and convincing case for a Yes vote—especially to people like me who have supported the European project for about 40 years.

The problem is that it begs so many questions which the authors seem to see no need to explain. There are the usual reasons given in favour of the Treaty that are assumed to be self-evidently good—such as that enlargement necessitates more streamlining etc. (para 42). But there has never been a convincing case made for this. The existing structures have facilitated enlargement and its functioning with no obvious problems for years.

The document does not consider the dynamic of never-ending expansion: after all, as more countries join, their relations with neighbouring states are disrupted, necessitating further enrolments, with the Union being diluted each time.

As the EU becomes more unwieldy, 'streamlining'—meaning less democratic procedures—becomes increasingly necessary. At the present time, the elimination of the rotating Presidency—to be replaced by a permanent President selected by the Council of Ministers—is the real and significant target of this streamlining. There is only one fleeting reference to this in the 157 page document, despite its huge significance. Again, no real argument is made against the existing system, despite the fact that the rotating Presidency is a real practical demonstration of equal treatment and equal responsibility among Member States. Where has it failed? (Compare it with the nonsense of the two site rotation for the European parliament which is a complete joke.) There is very productive competition among Member States to outshine each other at being better at running Europe. What could be more important for integration than this type of practical integration through the experience of having the responsibilities that go with the Presidency?

What could replace it is a real two tier Europe which the Lisbon supporters all claim to abhor—those who are deemed up to the job and those deemed not—a real first and second class divide. The new arrangement is bound to put more power into the hands of the big States.

The document does produce a new rationale for the Treaty which I have not seen emphasised before. It is at pains to point out that the whole process that led to the Treaty began with D'Estaing's Convention which was set up shortly after the 9/11 attack in New York because, inter alia, *"debate on the future of Europe took on a new and disturbing dimension, not*

least in terms of internal and international security" (para. 26).

But how exactly that event necessitated an EU Constitution is not explained. This is in effect a convoluted way of accepting the US interpretation of the current international situation. The suggestion is that the international security situation after 9/11 necessitated a new EU Treaty. What this has meant in practice is that the EU response has been to adopt the US view on this event and the responses to it by USUK.

The US would like the world to regard 9/11 as the year zero of modern times and as the cause of all that followed; it wants the world to believe that current US policy—with all its bloody consequences—is just a result of this. But this is a convenient way of transposing cause and effect. It is the Great Lie of the times. The world did not begin again on 9/11: that event was itself the effect of previous USUK policies and actions. This capitulation to the US view of things has prevented the EU from continuing to present what was one of its great attractions—an independent world view.

Consequently this document, like so much commentary on Lisbon and the EU at the present time, is so much reasoning in a completely flawed, closed context. Lisbon was misconceived at birth. Most people instinctively feel this is the case: they react as they have done on Lisbon, without necessarily being able to explain why. It is sheer word-mongering to try to make a case for the new quasi-Constitution on this view of the world. People quite understandably just switch off.

This interpretation of the EU's new world view is further confirmed when we are told that the argument for Lisbon has been *"strengthened by the conflict in the Caucuses and the resurgence of Russian nationalism"* (para 166) and that the "Russian/Georgian conflict has l*ed to a fundamental re-assessment of security policy"* (para 12). Is it not obvious that Georgian nationalism is what instigated the recent conflict in the Caucuses and yet there is no mention of that in the document? Cause and effect are again turned upside down and back to front. It is time to again 'get at Russia'.

Russia has gone through hell on earth to dispense with its international socialist/communist mission and is now reshaping itself as a fully functioning part of the capitalist world. While USUK has been invading and destroying states in recent years, Russia has been doing the very opposite, shedding states from its Federation that want to leave. But suddenly it's now alleged to be a new threat: for doing exactly what the West always said it should do! Nationalism oozes out of the USUK world, but a spark of Russian nationalism in response to a blatant assault on South Ossetia by Georgia is a threat that necessitates a new EU Treaty! It seems Russia cannot win with the West. Again, most people appreciate that Russia is not now any sort of threat and yet the EU slavishly follows the most aggressive notions about Russia that float around the USUK world..

We are then told that recent *"financial turmoil"* has *"strengthened the need for the reform contained in the Lisbon Treaty"* (para. 12). But how exactly? This is just an add-on claim that occurred to no one the first time round.

There should be one focus and one focus only for the EU in this crisis—which is not of the EU's making—and that is the survival and strengthening of the Euro. The single currency is the big success story of the Union but there is no reference to that in the Lisbon Treaty and it makes no practical proposals whatever.

That job of safeguarding the currency could begin immediately with the heads of the Euro zone actually meeting for once! That is what Mr. Sarkozy should do, rather than running around organising all sorts of other meetings and taking on a world responsibility for a role in the crisis that the EU has no need to take on, as it did not originate in the Euro zone. He should not be pulling other people's irons out of the fire they themselves have stoked up. I did not notice Brian Lenihan quoting the relevant part of the Treaty when he proposed his Bank Guarantee Scheme which, so far, has been the best policy produced by anyone. If such a thing existed I am sure Brian is clever enough to have spotted it. It was the national sphere of competence which enabled that policy to be introduced.

But maybe we can at least look to Europe for support in this Irish initiative. After all, when Cowen visited Sarkozy Lara Marlowe told us that—

> "Mr Sarkozy, acting president of the European Council, supports Ireland's bank guarantee plan, said Taoiseach Brian Cowen after meeting him at the Élysée Palace yesterday. "I think the president understands precisely the reasons why the Irish Government had to act and the circumstances in which we found ourselves"…" (Irish Times).

That's all right then, but then Sarkozy went as public as he could go with his real views:

> "Addressing the European Parliament in Strasbourg yesterday, Mr Sarkozy said the Irish bank guarantee had led to a situation where money was flowing in and out of countries, depending on which offered the best deal. He claimed the City of London had been left with no liquidity, as money there sought a better deal in guaranteed banks in Ireland. It was, he said, a very serious repercussion arising from Ireland's decision." (Irish Times 22.10.08).

Who is fooling who? Did Brian Cowen make a phone call for a clarification? Has Sarkozy become so Anglo-Saxon that he is as perfidious as Albion?

We have the absurd spectacle of the Council President criticising Ireland for causing problems for the City of London in attracting sterling into the Eurozone—it should not dare upset the poor dears in the City of London! If this is Lisbon's answer to Ireland's crisis then it's a case of God Save Ireland from this Treaty!

In conclusion, this document deals with all sorts of conjectures, speculations, scenarios, legalisms, etc. but the real world is spectacularly absent. Despite its elaborate presentation and its august sponsors, it has all the characteristics of a rather desperate snake oil salesman trying to make another pitch at selling a product that he could not sell at his first attempt. A script might go as follows:

A Miracle Cure!

"Roll up! Roll up!" says the salesman (bearing a striking resemblance to Micheál Martin)

"I have a wonderful product that cures all ills. It's called the Lisbon Treaty."

"You just changed the name?"

"Yes, the French and Dutch did not like it so we rebranded it; happens all the time. A simple marketing tool."

"But we did not buy the new brand either?"

"I know, I know but you did not fully understand it? Neither did I, to be honest. I'm not blaming you but this is a really new product because we have discovered it has all sorts of new cures for all sorts of problems, its better than even I ever claimed before."

"It's the very same thing."

"I know but now it solves problems that you did not even know you had last time?"

"What are you talking about?"

"Well, if you suffer from credit crunch, your bank going bust, a recession, losing your job—the solution is the Lisbon Treaty?"

"Eh?"

"And it will prevent the Russians marching in from South Ossetia to South Kerry."

"Eh?"

"And it will help change the climate from global warming to global cooling"

"Eh?"

"And it will make energy cheaper and more secure with water, wind, hot air, etc."

"How do I know it will work?"

"Trust me."

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Shorts

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Lenihan must try harder!

The Long Fellow learns from the *Financial Times,* the mouthpiece of British Finance Capitalism, that Brian Lenihan is the second worst Finance Minister. Apparently, it thinks that the honour of being the worst falls to the Portuguese Finance Minister.

The *Irish Political Review* believes that Lenihan must try harder. Second best is not good enough! In 2009 he must strive to exceed the heroic efforts of the Portuguese.

But How?

But how should Lenihan respond to the current crisis? The ICTU has advocated the nationalisation of the six Irish banks. But is that in the interests of the working class?

At one stage last year the Bank of Ireland's share price was €0.80. When speculation on nationalisation began, it immediately rose to €1.20. In whose interests will nationalisation be? It is certainly in the interests of the shareholders of ailing banks. And, once the State bails out the shareholders, what guarantee is there that it will not have to inject many more millions into the bank to prevent it going bust.

Fine Gael as usual is all over the place. It is advocating *"recapitalisation of the Irish banks"* (i.e. putting money into the banks), while at the same time urging the Government to charge a greater premium for the Bank guarantee scheme (taking money out of the banks).

This is not to say that there is no working class argument for a State bank. When a privately-owned bank makes exorbitant profits its shareholders keep them. On the other hand, when it makes losses it is presented as a problem for society and ultimately the taxpayer. Also, the banks are risk-averse, in that they favour giving loans for property rather than productive investment. This is not in the social interest.

What is to be done?

So much for the theory! What should Lenihan do now? Up until now he has done nothing wrong. He has held his powder dry and is perfectly right to do so. To indicate too early (or at all) a willingness to nationalise would artificially boost the share price of target banks. He has already committed himself to bail out depositors. Why should he bail out shareholders as well?

Secondly, he should place the onus on the solvent banks to sort out any banks on the verge of bankruptcy. After all, if a bank goes bust the remaining banks will be in a position to pick up new customers.

Thirdly, if it is decided that a bank is nationalised the State should be very clear as to what it wants to achieve by this.

Joseph E. Stiglitz

Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz has cast a cold eye on the American bail-out: a policy which has been advocated for this country. His main point is that, in order to arrive at a solution, it is essential to understand the problem. The problem is *deregulation*. Successive Presidents have removed checks on financial products, allowing the financial system to be debased with worthless 'assets', in the shape of loans which can never be repaid. Banks and other institutions don't know what their assets are worth.

Stiglitz believes that handing over taxpayers' money to the banks is like giving a blood transfusion to a bleeding patient. There is not much point if nothing is done to stop the bleeding. Stiglitz says that Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson allowed the banks to pour out money to their shareholders as taxpayers were pouring money into the banks.

The American State has spent billions in shoring up the speculative economy. At the time of writing it appears that there is no money left to support the real economy. The American automobile industry is on the verge of bankruptcy.

The Real Economy

And what about the real economy in this country! In 2001 there was a massive cull in manufacturing employment. However, the impact was not felt on employment because the boom in the building industry enabled the surplus labour to be absorbed. Those conditions no longer apply.

At the present time there are a lot of small to medium sized Irish-owned manufacturing companies that are on the verge of bankruptcy. And the reason has very little to do with the credit crunch directly. Most of these companies have their main export market in the UK. Also, it is often the case that their main competitors are UK based. As the UK remains out of the Euro zone the terms of trade have gone against Irish exporters.

Two years ago the exchange rate was €1.00 = £0.68. At the time of writing it is €1.00 = £0.89. So, two years ago an Irish exporter would have received €1.47 (ie. 1/0.68) for every £1.00 of sales in the UK. Now he receives €1.12. This is a 23% reduction in sales revenue. A UK exporter to the Euro zone (in particular Ireland) receives a 31% increase in his sales revenue. The Irish situation is particularly acute because the six counties are in the sterling zone and therefore retail sales are also affected.

In a somewhat similar situation a couple of decades ago, Taoiseach Haughey took direct action to inhibit shopping in the North. This was against European competition rules, but by the time a decision was handed down, things had settled down in Ireland. It should not be beyond the bounds of Lenihan's ingenuity to devise a scheme that would reduce shopping in the North.

The UK receives the benefit of free trade within the Euro zone, while retaining the advantage of its own currency. The Long Fellow is not aware of Ireland or any other Euro zone country complaining about the competitive advantage that the UK is receiving as a result of the fluctuation in the currency. And yet, when Ireland obtained a competitive advantage following the introduction of the Bank Guarantee scheme, the UK went ballistic. Even more extraordinary, the French President Nicholas Sarkozy complained about capital flows from the UK (a non-Euro zone) to Ireland (part of the Euro zone).

The Long Fellow is not suggesting that Ireland leave the Euro zone. She is a small open economy and it is not practical for her to have her own independent currency. But what he is suggesting is that Irish politicians take a more robust attitude to defending the national interest when it is under attack from Britain.

Interest Rate Policy

Britain does not feel any obligation to consult with Europe over its interest rate policy. And at present the policies of the British and European Central Banks are diverging. Britain is of the opinion that the economy needs to be stimulated by the private sector and therefore wants to reduce interest rates. Europe, on the other hand, feels that interest rates have reached a floor. There is a level below which interest rates should not go.

The Long Fellow thinks that Europe is right. Part of the reason for the current crisis is that low interest rates have stimulated a credit boom, which has proved to be unsustainable. As well as this, there has been very little incentive for owners of surplus cash to put their money on deposit in the bank with interest rates barely above the rate of inflation (and in some cases below that rate). Speculative bubbles have been created in property and shares because there is nowhere else that surplus cash can go.

The French believe that the private sector cannot be relied upon to resuscitate the economy. The State has therefore embarked on a policy of massive capital investment to improve the infrastructure and therefore labour productivity. This is an example, which Ireland should follow.

DECLAN GANLEY

Declan Ganley is an example which no one should follow. He appeared before the Oireachtas Committee with a number of his associates. Ganley is clearly a highly intelligent person with an impressive grasp of detail. Also, he vehemently denies being a *"Eurosceptic"*. But he does not appear to understand why he was on the victorious side at the last referendum.

He seemed incapable of dealing with a point raised by Beverly Cooper Flynn. Flynn claimed that the number of votes in Europe as a whole cast in favour of Lisbon was greater than the number of votes cast against. All Ganley could say was that the rules were that every European country had to pass the Lisbon Treaty. But he didn't seem to understand why.

The basic fact of the European Union is that it is not a single polity. It is a collection of nation states with national peculiarities. Greater integration can only proceed slowly and by taking into account that basic fact. It would be completely undemocratic to have a European-wide referendum on the Lisbon Treaty because the sentiment of the larger nations would override those of the smaller nations. For the same reason it would be completely undemocratic to have a directly-elected President or directly-elected Commissioners. Equal weight must be given to the constituent elements (i.e. individual nation states) of the European Union for the project to succeed.

EQUALITY AUTHORITY

All of this leads to the vexed question of Equality and what it means. The Equality Authority has its own ideas. In a recent case (*Irish Independent*, 18/11/08) it found in favour of a part-time waitress who refused to wear a skirt to work. She insisted on wearing trousers. The woman had only been working in the hotel for one month and complained to the Equality Authority. The Equality Tribunal found in her favour and awarded her €1,600 for gender discrimination and €6,500 for being victimised and dismissed. It would be interesting to know if the equality goes in the opposite direction. Can waiters insist on wearing skirts?

Last month the Government decided to cut funding to the Equality Authority by 43%. The Chief Executive Niall Crowley resigned in protest. The news received front page treatment in *The Irish Times* (12.12.08) as well as an opinion piece supportive of Crowley by Carol Coulter. The following day another Coulter report listed the messages of support for Crowley.

When the Long Fellow looks at some of the decisions of the Authority he is not surprised that its wings have been clipped.

NOTE: Since the above Column was written, the Government has announced a €10 billion re-capitalisation fund for the banks. The details are unclear as we go to press, but will be reviewed in the February issue.

The 21st Century Commission's False Premise And Flawed Conclusion

The final report of the Labour Party's 21st Century Commission is now scheduled for publication in January 2009: so the Party Conference in Kilkenny, 29-30th November, was told by Greg Sparks, the Chair of the Commission. The report is to be put to special Party Conference in Mullingar in March for approval.

The party leadership had originally planned that the report would be finalised in time to be presented to the Kilkenny Conference. But this proved to be impossible because of disagreements about the party's future relationship with the Trade Unions, which according to Greg Sparks are now close to be resolved.

Despite the fact that the Commission had yet to publish its report, the agenda for Kilkenny Conference included a session on it (entitled *Consultative Session on 21st Century Commission Report & Recommendations*). This was introduced by Greg Sparks and followed by questions to him from delegates. He said that, although the report had not been published, most people would be familiar with it since it had been leaked.

Questions from delegates indicated disquiet about several aspects of the leaked report, for example, the party's relationship with Trade Unions, the reduction of local autonomy in the choice of electoral candidates, and the proposal to have a much smaller executive committee (presumably to centralise control over the party).

Section 8 of the report, dealing with Northern Ireland, was also raised **[1]**. In this, the Commission concluded that the existing party organisation in Northern Ireland should be wound up in favour of the SDLP.

Organisation in Northern Ireland began in October 2004, with the launch of the Northern Ireland Labour Forum by party leader, Pat Rabbitte. The Forum was later upgraded by the party to the *Northern Ireland Constituency Council,* which, at last year's conference, sought permission to put up candidates in Local Government elections.

Eamon Gilmore, the new leader, publicly expressed his scepticism about this step, saying that *"his party would do nothing to undermine the position of the SDLP in Northern Ireland"* (Irish Times, 9 November 2007 **[2]**). However, at that time it looked as if Fianna Fail was going to organise in Northern Ireland, and perhaps swallow up the SDLP and its vote. So, the party leadership decided to establish a special Commission, ostensibly to consider what the Labour Party should do with regard to Northern Ireland, but in reality as a holding operation until such times as Fianna Fail's intentions became clearer. A degree of clarification occurred in July 2007, when the new Fianna Fail leader, Brian Cowen, poured cold water on his party going North, when he told the BBC:

> "I don't think that people should think that there's any imminent change about to take place." **[3]**

The way was then clear for Gilmore to clasp the SDLP to his bosom with renewed passion, even though the SDLP had shown signs of wanting to get into bed with Fianna Fail, if it moved North.

The 21st Century Commission was the instrument chosen to deliver the *coup de grâce* to the party's Northern Ireland members—and tell them to go and join the SDLP. It usurped the special Northern Ireland Commission because Gilmore believed it wasn't a suitable instrument to propose Party strategy towards Northern organisation, even though the matter was within its official remit. A Labour conference established it with the following terms of reference:

> "1. to invite and receive submissions on and to consider the future role and organisation of the Party in connection with Northern Ireland and its internal affairs, and for that purpose to meet with relevant parties, trade unions and other interest groups,
>
> "2. to explore the potential to participate in elections there"

Gilmore obviously thought wasn't suitable because it had two party members from Northern Ireland on it (Mark Langhammer and Mary McMahon), who would have objected strenuously to being told to go and join the SDLP.

By contrast, the 21st Century Commission wasn't encumbered with any party members from Northern Ireland. Nor was it burdened with much knowledge about Northern Ireland political institutions in the wake of the Good Friday Agreement. On the contrary, in reaching the conclusion that the party organisation should be wound up in favour of the SDLP, it demonstrated a breathtaking ignorance of the terms of the Agreement.

Believe or believe it not, the Commission's 'argument' for abandoning the Labour constituency in the North was based on the false premise that, under the Agreement, political parties have no option but to designate themselves as either *Unionist* or *Nationalist*. In fact, they have

another option: they can designate themselves as Other (as the Alliance and Green Parties do).

This abysmal ignorance on a basic political fact does not bode well for Labour as a future governing party.

References:-

[1] The text of Section 8 of the 21st Century Commission report can be found at southbelfastdiary.blogspot.com/2008/11/close-door-on-your-way-out.html

[2] www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2007/1109/1194549940620.html

[3] news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/7495294.stm

This leaflet was, pointing out theCommission's false premise and flawed conclusion:-

The 21st Century Commission

NORTHERN IRELAND

The 2**1st Century Commission's conclusions about Northern Ireland (Section 8) are based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the terms of the Good Friday Agreement.**

Contrary to what its report says, the Labour Party would NOT have to designate itself as either Unionist or Nationalist in order to organise and contest elections in Northern Ireland.

Organisation in Northern Ireland doesn't require designation at all, and neither does contesting Local Government elections. Designation would only become an issue for the Party if it were to contest elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly —since members elected to the Assembly have to designate themselves as either **Unionist**, **Nationalist** or **Other**, before taking their seats. This is a requirement of Clause 6 of Stand One of the Good Friday Agreement, which states:

> "At their first meeting, members of the Assembly will register a designation of identity—nationalist, unionist or other—for the purposes of measuring cross-community support in Assembly votes under the relevant provisions above."

It goes without saying that, if the Party were to stand in Assembly elections, it would opt for the **Other** designation, as Alliance and Green Party members of the Assembly do at the moment, and which would offer the best chance of the Party making an appeal across the traditional divide.

Unfortunately, the 21st Century Commission doesn't seem to be aware of the existence of the **Other** designation. Its report states:

> "... we are not at all convinced that parties based in either Dublin or London have any real or significant contribution to make to Northern Ireland politics by organising there—and adopting one or other of those labels for the purpose.
>
> "Effectively, this would require Labour to opt for adherence to—and seek votes exclusively from—just one of the two traditions, …"

Giv**en the existence of the Other designation, that passage is simply untrue. The Good Friday Agreement would NOT *"require Labour to opt for adherence to—and seek votes exclusively from—just one of the two traditions"*.**

Labour Party members in Northern Ireland are drawn from both traditions. We are utterly opposed to the Party seeking votes exclusively from just one of the two traditions and we wouldn't remain members if it did. Happily, the Good Friday Agreement doesn't require the Party to do so, if it were to put up candidates in either Local Government or Assembly elections.

STRENGTHENING LINKS WITH THE SDLP

The Commission recommends *"the strengthening of links"* between the Labour Party and the SDLP, rather than the Party organising and contesting elections in Northern Ireland in its own right.

Remember, the SDLP has always chosen to designate itself as **Nationalist** in the Assembly and to opt *"for adherence to—and seek votes exclusively from—just one of the two traditions"*, in the words of the Commission.

Under the Good Friday Agreement, it has always been open to the SDLP to designate itself as **Other**, and attempt to appeal across the traditional divide. It has never done so. Were it to do so, it would obviously risk losing a significant section of its vote to Sinn Fein—and it's therefore unlikely that it will ever do so.

If the Labour Party were to stand for elections in Northern Ireland, it would seek to appeal across the traditional divide. To that end, in Assembly elections the Labour Party would obviously designate itself as **Other** and, by so doing, avoid giving the appearance of appealing to just one tradition.

ARE WE TO BE INSTRUCTED TO JOIN THE SDLP?

A final point: the report poses the question *"should the Labour Party follow Fianna Fail and consider organising in the North"*.

We find it difficult to believe that the Commission is NOT aware that the Labour Party is already organised in Northern Ireland, and has been since 2004, when Pat Rabbitte launched the Northern Ireland Labour Forum (NILF) in Belfast. The NILF has since evolved into the Northern Ireland Constituency Council, as agreed by the Party's Organisation Committee and NEC. We proposed to the Labour Party conference last November that the Party contest Local Government elections in Northern Ireland. In response, the NEC set up *"a special commission, representative of the NILF, the PLP and the NEC"* to explore the issue, amongst others. Two Party members from Northern Ireland sit on the special commission, which has yet to report.

The 21st Century Commission has now apparently usurped the role of the special commission and concluded, on the basis of an imperfect knowledge of the Good Friday Agreement, that the Party should have no organisation in Northern Ireland, as the Party did in 1970 at the time of the SDLP's foundation. It follows logically from this that the existing organisation of the Party in Northern Ireland should be disbanded.

In 1970, as the Commission's report reminds us, the Party *"instructed all its members to join the new SDLP"*. Is that the Commission's recommendation in 2008? Are we going to be told to join a party which, in the words of the Commission, has chosen to opt *"for adherence to—and seek votes exclusively from—just one of the two traditions"*.

As members of the Party from Northern Ireland, we would like to know.

How Many Nations?

Apparently there are five nations in the United Kingdom (sorry… the British Isles). This is according to the (BBC) radio listings for Monday 5 to Friday 7 of October 2008. The Ulster Orchestra performed in a short series called *The Five Nations*. This is the Mandelson usage of the word 'nation'. 'Northern Ireland' is a 'nation'. And not a bit of a province. Local lads whose music was played include Steven Gardner (who lives in Wicklow). There's also Howard Ferguson (he taught in London, but did his composing in Belfast (and Mayo) during summer breaks); and Hamilton Harty of Hillsborough. One of the latter's works played is called *Orientale*. Not the most obviously 'Irish' or even 'Northern Irish' item.

There is the Coleraine-man Hay, with his *Breeze from Scotland*. There are no women, or persons from 'Wobland' (WOB—'west of the Bann'). There *is* AJ Potter, born in Belfast, brought up in Bromley, educated in Bristol, and spent the whole of his career in Dublin. The Dubliner Stanford is included, the Irish Rhapsody No. 4, *The Fisherman of Lough Neagh and What He Saw*. It is essentially a pæan of praise to the 1912 UVF.

He contributed two items to the 'Irish' programme, one was *Songs of the Sea*. This is a raucous item celebrating Drake, Raleigh (the latter chap ethnically-cleansed Rathlin Island—though that does not get a mention), and other True Brit pirates.

The Beatles had *Back in the USSR*; Beeb Radio 3 seems to have a policy of 'Back in the UK'.

Seán McGouran

Cathal Brugha's Oration at the unveiling in Cork of a statue commemorating General Tom Barry, Commandant of the West Cork Flying Column, 1920-1921

Remembering Tom Barry

A Uachtaráin, agus baill Coiste Chuimhneacháin Thomáis de Barra Ceann Catha, sibhse atá i láthair go raibh baint ag bhúr gaolta le Cogadh na Saoirse, go h-airithe Gerald Barry, Paddy O'Brien agus gaolta eile Thomáis de Barra, agus a cháirde Ghaeil atá bailithe inniu chun onóir a thabhairt don laoch, tuigim tabhacht an ocáid seo. Leanfaidh mé as Bearla ar eagla go bhfuil daoine ag éisteacht nach dtuigeann Ghaeluinn.

We are here today to celebrate and affirm the memory of a great Irish hero.

Tom Barry was born in Killorglin, Co. Kerry on 1st July 1897, the son of a former Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) officer. His family later moved to Bandon, County Cork, He was educated at Mungret College, in Limerick. In 1915, like many other young Irish men of that time who were looking for adventure, he enlisted in the British Army. It might seem strange today during this month of November when people are remembering the many who died in a different war, including 50,000 Irishmen, that, not only did Tom Barry fight in the British Army during World War I, but he fought in what is now Iraq. It was there he learned about the Easter Rising, seeing on a British Army bulletin board a summary of the events up to and including the executions of the 1916 leaders. The idea of Ireland as a separate nation came to him as a shock because, like everyone else, all his education had been British-orientated. This began a period of reflection for him about Britain's role in Ireland, and about the Irish claim to independence. On his return to Cork he became involved with ex-British Army servicemen's organisations.

The 1918 Election had seen a massive electoral victory for Sinn Féin, and their assertion of the Irish Republic in January 1919. A Government was formed, which set about cautiously training and equipping the Army while simultaneously building support for the Republic. The success of this led to hundreds of RIC resignations, Irish policemen voting with their feet to switch allegiance to the new Government.

In March 1920 the RIC assassinated Lord Mayor Tomás MacCurtain, and in August his successor Terence MacSwiney was arrested. MacSwiney proceeded to challenge the authority of the court and British occupation of Ireland. He died in Brixton Prison on October 25th after 74 days on hunger strike. Against this background, in June 1920 Tom Barry became active in the 3rd or West Cork Brigade of the Irish Republican Army. Because of his knowledge, experience and flair for military matters, he was appointed the Brigade's training officer.

As their grip over the Irish people began to diminish, the British Government introduced the Black & Tans and the Auxiliaries to frighten the Irish back into submission. This put pressure on the new Irish Government, whose policy had been to avoid open military engagements, while they were recruiting, training, and equipping the Army.

It became apparent that there was a need to stand up to the Auxiliaries who were upping the ante against the Irish by driving at top speed in lorries through the countryside bullying, terrorising, and shooting ordinary people.

Tom Barry's role at this point was crucial. He had helped to turn the West Cork Brigade into one of the most disciplined, efficient and brave units in the Irish Republican Army. Now his innovation, leadership, personal courage, and assertiveness led to his becoming the most outstanding battle-field commander of the War of Independence, and maybe in all Irish history.

Possibly the greatest single military event in the Anglo-Irish war was when, yesterday 88 years ago, on 28th November 1920, young Tom Barry stood out on the road at Kilmichael in an Irish officer's uniform as the first of two lorries containing Auxiliaries arrived, causing the driver to stop in surprise at the sight.

In the ensuing battle a column of Irish volunteer amateurs defeated the enemy of professionally-trained Auxiliary army officers, fighting at close range, because the Irish weapons of hand-guns and shot-guns were useless for long range-fighting. The main Irish losses were when several of the British officers changed their mind after surrendering and caught some of the inexperienced Irish off-guard.

The Kilmichael Ambush was a turning point in the war. Confidence and morale on the Irish side increased, and diminished amongst the Auxiliaries, the Black & Tans, and the other British forces. For the first time the British Army had to face the fact that they were fighting a real war.

From then on the British Government sent the bulk of their military reinforcements to County Cork; at one point these amounted to 12,500 troops. It is true, as the song goes, that *"the boys who beat the Black and Tans were the boys from the County Cork"*.

As the Irish grew in confidence, they began to challenge the British forces in Cork City. This led to the burning of Cork on the night of December 11th and the final collapse of the moral authority of British rule in Ireland.

Emboldened by Kilmichael, in March 1921 Tom Barry and the West Cork Brigade decided to carry out a similar ambush at Crossbarry. The British got wind of their presence through a spy, and organised a 1,200 strong force of soldiers and auxiliaries to encircle the Flying Column of 104 officers and men. Barry divided these into seven sections, and succeeded in breaking out of the encirclement, while inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. This was one of the greatest ever field-battle defeats of British occupation forces in Ireland.

Negotiations followed, and the Anglo-Irish Treaty was adopted, which Tom Barry opposed.

Barry was arrested and imprisoned, and later escaped, travelled south, took command of the anti-Treaty IRA Second Southern Division, captured several towns, but then concluded that the civil war should be brought to an end, as there was no hope of victory.

Subsequently he helped the Free State Army to strengthen the defences of Cork Harbour against any would-be-invader, British or German, and was appointed General Superintendent of Cork Harbour Commission from 1927 to 1965.

In the mid-thirties he re-joined the IRA, and was appointed Chief of Staff in 1937, but resigned shortly afterwards because he opposed both the 1930s bombing campaign in England and IRA contacts with Nazi Germany. From 1940 until the end of World War II he held responsibility for Intelligence in the Irish Army's Southern Command.

In later years he supported the Provisional IRA campaign in Northern Ireland, while expressing reservations about many of their tactics, in particular the killing of civilians in England.

Now that the IRA campaign has finally ended it is easier for us to give Tom Barry the recognition that he always deserved. We are not making a political statement today.

Tom Barry was a military man who planned operations with great precision. He was exceedingly careful about not endangering the men he led, and he was conservative with the very limited resources at his disposal.

But he was not a political man. In 1925, when he proposed that the IRA surrender their arms and ammunition to the Free State, the IRA expelled him, and in 1941 they denounced him for writing for the Irish Army's journal. In his one attempt at entering politics, he polled very poorly in a Cork Borough by-election in 1946.

Our role here today is neither military nor political, but to consider the testament of the man to the nation. It is about judgement, about establishing truth, about Tom Barry's legacy to history, about the patrimony of the man.

Tom Barry was passionate about the truth, and had a military accuracy about the details of every event. In 1949, he published his memoirs *Guerilla Days In Ireland* to correct the accounts given by others who fought alongside him in the War of Independence. He doubted the possibility that a true account could ever be assembled from all the contradictory versions that people gave and were putting into the military archives.

Nevertheless, the duty falls to us to take on this task and help to establish the truth in the next decade before a century has passed since these events, and the memories inherited in the families here today have faded.

Truth does not come without renewing trust, without reconciliation, without honest admission that some of our relations, may have said or did things which we regret.

With reconciliation comes understanding. Collins, Brugha and Barry were comrades who shared the unequal task of freeing Ireland from the British Empire. In the difficult transition from a military to a political campaign they differed on strategy and tactics.

All three tried to resolve the split in the Army caused by the Treaty, but in different ways. Tom Barry tried to reunite the army by proposing a new confrontation with the British. He and others occupied the Four Courts, which was then bombed by Free State forces. When Brugha failed to convince those in the Four Courts to leave, he and others initiated a diversionary operation in O'Connell Street, hoping also that this would rally support to a third middle ground. He was shot as he organised the final evacuation of this operation.

When Collins was shot the following month he had been on a mission to meet up with Tom Barry along with Tom Hales to persuade them to help reconcile both sides. Tom Hales' son Sean is with us here today.

These men differed, but were never enemies. Indeed it was Tom Barry who unveiled the memorial to Michael Collins at his family birth-place in Sam's Cross in 1966. It is fitting that these two great Cork men should now be remembered together here in Fitzgerald's Park.

Tom Barry often spoke using the philosophy enunciated by Terence MacSwiney in the first chapter of *Principles Of Freedom*:

> "In the destruction of spirit entailed lies the deeper significance of our claim to freedom… It is a spiritual appeal, then, that primarily moves us. We are urged to action by a beautiful ideal. The motive force must be likewise true and beautiful. It is love of country that inspires us; not hate of the enemy and desire for full satisfaction for the past".

The War of Independence was about freedom from British rule, and was not in any way sectarian. Tom Barry was scrupulous in this regard. Now that this is being questioned by historians who are ignoring the established truth, we have an urgent duty to tell the full story, even if it is uncomfortable. The trust of future generations expects that the testimony of these events be true.

Central to Tom Barry was that he was a fighter, not a fighter against people but for people. In his latter years he fought to support the poor, often giving generously to the less well-off, especially former comrades. His wife was the famous Leslie Bean de Barra, who had been director of organization for Cumann na mBan, and was for many years President of the Irish Red Cross Society. In this role in 1961, she set up Gorta, the Irish branch of the World Freedom from Hunger Campaign.

There is nobody more suited to have sculpted the bust of General Tom Barry that we are unveiling today than the great Séamas Murphy RHA, whom I remember with fondness and whose works adorn this park, including the bust of Michael Collins that faces this one of Tom Barry. Barry sat for Séamas Murphy during the 1940s. I commend the Committee who collected the fund to recast this bust to perpetuate his memory.

When I think of the importance of establishing Tom Barry's memory I think of an old Irish saying: *Is beó duine d'éis a anma, ach ní beó d'éis a einigh*. Noble heroes such as Tom Barry will live in the memory of the nation forever.

From Australia

Fergus O'Raghallaigh (*Irish Political Review*, September and October 2008) appears to have a good grasp of economics, but I can't agree with him about Ben Chiffley and the legend of "The Light on the Hill". The real Labour Hero was Chiffley's predecessor, John Curtin, the son of Irish immigrants from Co. Cork, who was the only true socialist in the Labour wartime administration. Curtin's father was jailed for supporting the Irish people in their War of Independence against Britain. Curtin died in 1945 and was replaced by Chiffley towards the end of the war. He lost the 1949 general election to Bob Menzies. One of the factors leading to his defeat was his earlier war on the Miners. I will do an article on Curtin and Chiffley.

Surprise! Surprise! I turned on Radio National to listen to our "Decayed Leninist", Philip Adams, who likes to boast about the fact that at one time he was a member of the CPA, and guess whom he was interviewing? none other than our very own revisionist-in-chief, Roy Foster. Foster is out here flogging his latest book, which is published by Penguin.

Adams, who is not antagonistic to the Irish, conducted a monologue about how Ireland had changed for the better in later years. And reminded us of the struggles over contraceptives and divorce. Foster "revealed" that the Dublin government no longer wanted a united Ireland and pointed out that Westminster now appeared to have become aware of this "change." Obviously he has never read Joe Keenan in the *Irish Political Review*. All in all it was a mild sort of discussion, which appeared to show Foster as a genial character, who would never dish out the dirt about the Irish that he usually does. Obviously Foster was posing as a friend of the Irish to sell his book, but on the other hand it may be that what happened to himself and Peter Hart may have caused both to think twice before making false claims about what happened in Irish history. At least they know that they can no longer get away with their creepy imperialist propaganda with impunity. To listen to Foster on the ABC you would never suspect that he likes to dish out his vicious, anti-Irish dirt most of the time.

I still think it is necessary to continue to expose the *Irish Times*, RTE and the universities whenever possible. There can be no question about the fact that the British Liberals waged the bloodiest, most stupid war in human history, or that they have slaughtered more innocent people than any other nation on earth, for purely commercial gain. WWI far outstrips the Rwandan massacre, Auschwitz and Buchenwald, the 600,000 civilian casualties in Iraq, or the mass murders at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These facts should be exposed, if only to prevent a repeat performance. I shall do a proper article on Curtin and Chiffley.

Patrick O'Beirne

Commdt. General Tom Barry Committee:

Some Remarks

The Committee was set up two years ago to erect a Monument in Cork city to the memory of Commandant General Tom Barry, a great Irish soldier in the Army of the First Dail Eireann set up as a result of the democratic General Election of 1918. That 1918 General Election was organised, held and supervised under the British Government but, when the results were seen as a total vindication of Sinn Fein, the British did as they usually do in the

circumstances; they refused to accept them and set about destroying the fledgling democracy by military rule. Never-theless it was a fact that those public representatives who were not already locked up by the British, met in Dublin as Dail Eireann and the Irish Government was formed.

'British democracy' was exemplified by the British forces arresting as many members of the Irish Government as they could find on the first Armistice Remembrance day, 11th November 1919. They were unceremoniously loaded into the back of a British Army lorry and imprisoned. The British refused to withdraw their Army which they reinforced with the terrorist Black & Tans and they attacked the people of Ireland—burning towns, looting and executing ordinary people throughout the country including Cork city and county.

It was the great work done by Tom Barry, Liam Deasy, Sean O'Hegarty, Liam Lynch, Dan Breen and others which defeated the British Army in Ireland and led to the British Government calling for a truce, leading to the Treaty under which the British withdrew from the twenty-six Counties which they could not continue to govern. Unfortunately, the Irish Government did not have the resources to compel the British to withdraw from the Northern six counties which the British held and still hold by force of arms. Hopefully, the Agreements in recent years which recognise the Irish Government as having a function in dealing with the six north-eastern Counties. will be used and worked by Unionists and Sinn Fein towards a united Ireland at peace.

It was perhaps because of the fracturing of Ireland that many of our great patriots since 1916 onwards remain without physical memorials. Perhaps also because people like Tom Barry felt they were part of an Army which was a team. They felt they were one amongst many who fought and suffered. Men who had no barracks so they had to live rough and sleep in a different place every night. The women who provided food and shelter at the risk of their lives and homes and who stored and transported guns and ammunition for the continually on-the-run soldiers and took messages from one Flying Column to another also deserve their own recognition.

This memorial, now in Fitzgerald's Park, Cork, will go some way to help remember all those who with Tom Barry fought for Irish freedom. The memorial itself consists of a bronze bust of Tom Barry done by the great Cork sculptor Seamus Murphy RHA when Tom Barry was forty-two years of age. It is mounted on a handsome limestone plinth and it is situated in a part of the lawn, facing west, near the Museum. It looks across the lawn towards a bust of Michael Collins also done by Seamus Murphy.

For the record, the Committee consisted of Uachtarain, Sean O Ceileachair, Leas Uachtarain Peadar O Riada, Cathaoirleach Noel Kenneally, Runai Con O Farrell-Kingsway, Committee members Diarmuid O Tuama, Angela Davern, Michael Fitz gerald, Aongus MacDonald, Jake Mac Siacais, Ray Lloyd, Seamus Lantry, Michael Baylor and Tom Keane.

Funding came in amounts, mostly small, from all over Ireland from Belfast to Cork. Regrettably, and widely noticed, no funding was contributed by Cork City Council nor Cork County Council. All the funds were contributed by private persons.

Seamus Lantry

PS A longer article by me was asked for by the features Editor of the *Evening Echo* John Dolan. It never appeared due to censorship.

ES AHORA *

As our nation continues to dance to the foreign tune of Britishness, it is interesting nevertheless to state that there are **events** that attract bigger and bigger followings, while managing to be censored totally by the national media and our tax-paid RTE broadcasters.

At the end of my article last month, I mentioned two particular events that I attended and was rather astonished at the huge attendance. The first was at Tullamore for the launch of the book *Coolacrease: The true story of the Pearson executions—an incident in the Irish War of Independence* by a number of authors who have already been written about in the last *Irish Political Review*.

Going from Belfast and then Dublin to the small town of Tullamore, I was amazed at the seemingly thriving local economy and, besides knowing that it was the home-town of the Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD, wondered if there were factories in the vicinity. When I enquired, I was told there was mainly farming, and some small local trades which probably did well from the construction industry.

But back to the book launch: the room was packed with an overspill into another one. All the authors spoke and afterwards there was a Q & A session which was equally robust for want of a better word. It was the *engagement* of a community about an incident that had been made into a biased RTE documentary, that had caused bad feeling as some of the work—a word I use advisedly here—was totally wrong and misrepresented what had actually happened. When people asked the regulatory body, the BCC, to ask RTE for an apology and a corrective statement, they were eventually told to basically hump off. So far, so typical. But what RTE couldn't have known was that the 'little people' wouldn't slink off as they were told by their so-called betters in Dublin 4; but would *respond* by doing all the scholarly research themselves and produce an outstanding book which is now leaching into the mainstream and calling forth reviews from what we laughingly call 'our intelligentsia' who so far have only tried to blacken the people involved again but cannot interact with the scholarly arguments in the book. The book is flying off the shelves; the academics are now busily trying to ignore the phenomenon and … oh yes the Baltimore Village Eejit is at it again in the *Sunday Independent*.

This month's *Irish Political Review* reports the unveiling of the Seamus Murphy bust of General Tom Barry in Fitzgerald's Park on the 29th November 2008. As the Cork-born and much-loved Murphy was one of the great Irish sculptors of the last century, it was fitting that it was his work that should be displayed in what Cork locals call 'the Park'. Almost straight across at an angle was his other great bust —Mick Collins. The whole project was done by 'people power', with no monetary input from the Corpo who have spent so lavishly on the British Legion monument in the South Mall.

The former plastic-poppy-wearing Mayor, Cllr. Donal Counihan (Fianna Fail, South East electoral ward), was first off the block to give generously to the British Legion and the present plastic-poppy-wearing Lord Mayor, Cllr. Brian Birmingham (Fine Gael, South West electoral ward) is continuing the trend. But there is more to the fine British Legion monument and I can't believe the anti-war crowd just left it lie—what was once a very fine monument to the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear holocaust bombings is now buried **into** the ground and one literally would have to look to try and find it in the growing grass. Meanwhile all around the British monument lies beautiful landscaped grass inlaid with lovely granite slabs of stone which form a surround to the monument itself.

Of course 'our' national monument in the Grand Parade has fallen into disrepair with bottles and cans of lager trash inside the railing and one of the arms broken off the statue of one of our patriots. The Corpo, through the office of the Lord Mayor, was asked to just clean the surround of trash of the National monument for the reception of the unveiling of the Tom Barry statue, as there would be crowds around and it would seem so disrespectful otherwise. And that was the extent of the effort made by our civic authorities for this most important event.

But the majesty of the event was still stunning in its moving simplicity. The Tom Barry National Committee gathered outside the gates of Fitzgerald Park in a bitterly cold November afternoon. The piper, playing a slow march, was followed by the national flag borne by Ray Lloyd. Behind came Committee President Sean Kelleher and members of the committee and others. What was stunning was the huge crowds waiting for this most solemn of events, with the unveiling done by the invited special guest Cathal Brugha MacSwiney whose speech drew thunderous applause.

The statue was then Solemnly Blessed with Holy Water by Monsignor Caoimhim O'Ceallachain who gave out the prayers to the uncapped crowd. Then a beautiful air by the master himself was played. Peadar O Riada. The great Cork singer Sean O Se sang out in the growing darkness a full throated *A Nation Once Again*, and following that our National Anthem, *Amhrán na bhFiann*. The people were in full throat and fine voice too. The evening was rounded off by a lovely dinner in one of Cork's many fine restaurants 'Jacques'.

It was noticed with some derision (by a *few* of our more disaffected scholars) that a nest of historians stole by us to another table towards the back of the restaurant. After dinner some of our people went down and spoke to them while the rest of us went off to the more comfortable surrounds of Canty's Bar.

Last month I spoke about my trip to Belfast and one of Northern members of the Tom Barry National Committee came over to me and asked if I was the one who didn't leave our hotel and rather mortifyingly I had to admit it was. He asked me to tell him why and then asked me to come over to the rest of his group and retell them my story. I did as told and when I finished telling them about the state of repressive CCTV, the march *et cetera*, they all burst out laughing and said something to the effect if I had known what it was like when it was *"really bad"*, then would I have something to complain about. But fair's due in the bar we all had a great sing-song and I promised them that I would give their city another try-out some time soon.

Even with all the propaganda of State and media, there was one person who, while trying to ride this comparatively new idealisation of what some are beginning to call 'The *Great* War' (*really?*), got it rather spectacularly wrong. Reading *An Cosantoir, The Defence Forces Magazine* (May 2008), Armn. Michael Whelan, MA (Curator of the Air Corps Museum & Heritage Project) wrote about his grand uncle, Sean—or John as Michael called him—who left the Irish Army in 1940 and went over to Southampton and joined the British Army —the Royal Warwick's and was posted overseas to Sierra Leone as part of *"the famous British Eighth Army"*. Obviously intended to be a piece of propaganda, Michael rather ruined the story by telling us that before his death, his grand-uncle haplessly abjuring the role of noble hero, confessed that his British Army period happened because he was *"merely an opportunist"*. He is buried in a small Yorkshire cemetery.

The *Phoenix* (12th December 2008, Vol. 26. No. 24) had a rare go at the *Irish Times* and especially its Editor, Geraldine Kennedy, *"for its recent recruitment drive on behalf of the British Army"* who as the writer acknowledged were *"currently struggling with a personnel crisis"*. The *Phoenix* lambasted some *"ludicrous editorial decisions"* that *"Douglas Gageby would never have tolerated"*. What really enraged the *Phoenix* was the large front-page photograph of the British Army bugler at the Westport funeral of local man Robert McKibben, *"who was killed on active service with the British Royal Marine Commandos in Afghanistan"*. Besides *"extolling the activities of McKibben"*, the paper went on to conclude *"inexplicably, that he had not died "fighting for a foreign army in a foreign land"*.

The 32 year old had Special Forces training and at the funeral were *"60 marines from the Royal Marine Brigade Reconnaissance Unit, mostly in plain clothes as befits an underground, Special Forces outfit, one of the deadliest fighting units in the British Army which produces personnel for both the SAS and SBS (Special Boat Squad)"*. If Kennedy has a *"hidden marketing hand in the British Army's recruiting department"* in-house, she couldn't be a more enthusiastic recruiting agent for young Irish men and who knows how many more will follow in McKibben's path.

The *Phoenix* also compared the way her paper treated the 50th anniversary of the peace-keeping operations of The Defence Forces on behalf of the UN a few days later. While *"the* Irish Independent *marked the occasion with an article on the commemoration illustrated with photographs"*, the *Irish Times* ***"failed to even mention the event"***.

But the *Phoenix* isn't the only one to find the *Irish Times* in a strange position these days. Every day, it in particular, carries copious inserts which by now have probably finished off the Amazon Rainforests. And yet … the oh so correct view on the environment and climate change. What startling hypocrisy. Under the *Irish Times* heading there is a 'reader offer' magazine with some pretty bizarre items for sale. But of all the most useless things, my favourite has to be *"an extending sofa for my dog to curl up"* with a very fetching accompanying photo of a dog on a tweed sofa which was €59.95 but now in these more straitened times can be bought for €29.95. Or for €19.95 I could buy a pair of *"feather and down-filled slippers"* which *"could act like mini-duvets for my feet"*.

Yet even the *Phoenix* falls into the error —while coruscating the *Irish Times* for its gung-ho Brits patriotism, for that is what it is—of still calling i*t "the paper of record"*. I have heard both that other eejit and bully, Fintan O'Toole (of An Taisce as Michael Stack revealed in another *Irish Political Review*) as well as Caroline Walshe revealing publicly their longing to be an Irish *Guardian*. Listen up guys—Alan Rusbridger, the Editor of the *Guardian* wouldn't even employ either of you as journalists, quite simply because you are not, and neither is your Editor. I well remember O'Toole being outed by the New York *Review of Books* by a reviewer as a plagiarist and his wimpish plea that, as he wrote a populist book, he didn't have to source all his references. Did the *Irish Times* dare write about that or did they choose instead some hapless politician or whoever for their vitriolic attacks? Did they what?

In 2005, the *Guardian* broke the story of Abu Ghraib by having that great American journalist Seymour Hersh write it up as an extract from his then upcoming book *The Chain Of Command*. The *Independent on Sunday*, 19th October 2008, broke a story about the British Army's finance, showing the appalling money lavished on the officers and their lifestyles while ordinary soldiers were dying in the field of battle because *"of a lack of equipment"*. This is how a real paper wrote about the way the British fight a war:

> "Britain's military top brass receive nearly £100m a year in special allowances and benefits, with almost £87m of that spent on paying for private school fees for their children."

Read the rest of the piece and weep. There in the article was the story of a young soldier who died in Iraq simply because he or his unit didn't have the basics of a satellite phone or even a distress flare which would have cost a couple of quid and almost certainly would have saved his life by calling in reserves to relieve them. The story is headed *Officers get chauffeurs, chefs and private school fees, while troops die for lack of equipment.* I suggest the next time the *Irish Times* places what amounts to a recruitment advertisement, they also might include some articles on the realities of war. Or is that too much to ask for from the so-called paper of record?

On a somewhat lighter note, last month was the 60th birthday of the English Prince Charles, King-in-Waiting and there was the usual hullabaloo in certain quarters. *Hello* is magazine-in-chief to the celebrity

culture of which the Royal Family (the *Irish Times* keeps the capital letters) is now part and parcel of, so there was a multi-page tribute with lots of quotes from the elderly prince about the main events of his life. One of these happened in 1979:

> "Murder Of A Mentor, Lord Mountbatten. “I adored him—and miss him dreadfully now. It is a cruel and bitter irony that he should have survived two World Wars and then be blown to bits by sub-human extremists…“"

The *Daily Express* on 26th November 2008 ran a piece *Tarnishing Of A True Hero*—meaning Mountbatten. There is a way that the English tabloids write up a story that is so particularly English that one has to admire their murky morals somewhat. By pretending to expose and decry the horrors of some iffy revelations and revelling in outrage, they bring out all the stuff that is not in the public domain and give their readers their dose of *'sex among the toffs'*—always a huge money spinner.

Mountbatten stood accused of using *"rent boys"* and other allegations of a similar nature and we were told: *"Don't forget, at that time homosexuality was still illegal and he was the First Sea Lord and in charge of unifying all the armed forces"*. The subliminal message here was that he had plenty of chicks from which to pluck, but the paper then used a former valet to kind of rubbish the claims but here is the kick. The poor over-worked valet, after ten unstinting years of facilitating the Lord, had a nervous breakdown. When he went to Mountbatten to resign, the Sea Lord *"told him to look after himself and said goodbye"*. There was no severance pay or pension, let alone any suggestion he should have a rest and see a doctor. The poor former valet went on to claim that Lord Louis *"always said I'd be looked after but of course I never had anything in writing. You don't ask those sorts of people to put things in writing."* Then there was this strange admission: *"Coincidentally, he (the valet) was in Ireland when Mountbatten was murdered by the IRA in 1979"*. One hopes that the Prince when denigrating those who killed his uncle realises that they were his own people.

Julianne Herlihy

Irish Wartime Officers, Potential Invaders, And Trinity College Draft Dodgers

In the *Irish Political Review* of February 2007, in an article entitled *"A Patriotic Freemason at the* Irish Times*"*, I quoted from an interview that George Hetherington had given to Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon for the latter's 2004 book, *The Irish Experience During The Second World War—An Oral History*. It is worth now also quoting from that book a portion of the interviews which the author had conducted in January 2001 with five retired Irish Army officers—Brigadier General Patrick Hogan, Brigadier General Patrick Daly, Lt. Col. James Coyle, Lt. Col. John P. Duggan and Commandant Owen Quinn.

Hogan recalled:

> "The army in different parts of the country had a slightly different view and a slightly different mission. Here in Leinster our eyes were all the time turned towards the border. Our exercises, our manoeuvres, were all exercises aimed at the defence of the country against an attack from the north, an attack from the British. And that was our interpretation of how the war might turn out. Ourselves ... and our 4th Brigade had the western part of the border, and all those exercises combined were aimed at protecting the country from an attack from the north. Fortifying them, and becoming used to the countryside, on the lines of the rivers and lakes, defending the northern part of the country. Such hills as there were, we became familiar with them due to exercises week after week after week. My battalion... were familiar with every field along the Boyne, which was our defensive line. We exercised there, up and down the Boyne, for years. Pat Daly would have an entirely different point of view."

Daly proceeded to elaborate:

> "And the idea was that the Southern Command—and remember that General Hogan's unit was facing the north—we were facing the south, the south coast. And all our defences were based on the defence of the south coast, stretching right along from Waterford over to Kerry."
>
> Q: "Which threat did you perceive would come from the south coast, British or German?"
>
> Daly: "Oh, German invasion—at that time... Christmas 1940.

Here, however, I should point out that Christmas 1940 was the exception that proved the rule. General M.J. Costello, Assistant Chief-of-Staff and O/C of the Southern Command throughout the Second World War, specifically emphasised: *"The only serious threat during the War was from the British"* (*Irish Times*, 3 November 1984).

Quinn recalled:

> "I was attached to the staff at the Military College at precisely the time Pat has just referred to, and I distinctly remember we were keenly aware of our neutrality and the fact that we were under immediate threat from both sides. Whichever, technically—or theoretically—whichever of them hit first, would be the enemy, and the others would come in in our support. Now there was a meeting called of all officers in the Military College. I being the junior member, I just sat there and listened. But the College commandant had been up to a special meeting of the army headquarters in Dublin. He explained to us what the situation was, you see, that there could be an airborne invasion by the Germans and this would be resisted by the British, so that you could have them coming down and coming in. Coming down from anywhere, and coming in from the north. And somebody asked, 'What happens if we're engaged with both of them?' And he said, 'We just have to sort that out. The army headquarters will have to sort that one out for us.' But by eleven o'clock the following morning that threat had passed. Now, we discovered much, much later—in fact, post-war—that the Germans just hadn't the capacity to have brought about the airborne invasion, and we were too well-spread on the ground for it to have any immediate effect. By that time the British would have been across the border, with our consent, an the whole situation would have changed."

Quinn further stated:

> "Another point was the British estimate of what it would have taken to invade us and control us—they'd need at least two divisions. The Americans decided that it would take ten divisions. I don't know whether this was ever verified or not, but it will give you an idea as to what the thinking was. At the peak, I think our regular army at around about 1943 would have been about 50,000, but these 50,000 spread around with a few machine guns and some rifles and things like that. Another thing is that the whole population would have been against the invader, whoever came first."

Daly later introduced the subject-matter of wartime internment: *"One thing we haven't mentioned yet is that we had internment camps here, for British airmen and German airmen."*

Duggan responded:

> "Not only that, we also had an internment camp for the IRA. And don't forget throughout the war, de Valera executed six IRA men, and had to do it. I remember them as a soldier in 1940-41 and they were a terrible crowd of bastards. Down in Tintown (the Curragh internment camp) they would be shouting insults up at you, as if you were a second class Irishman."
>
> Daly: "I was at the camp when the IRA burnt the whole place down to the ground."
>
> Duggan: "They were very dangerous, I must say."
>
> Daly: "We didn't know what to do with them."

Quinn later added on his Curragh camp recollections:

"Another feature of the internment was a very large number of submariners. There must have been a hundred or more of young German naval staff."

Hogan: "They were not submariners. They were all from the squadron that was intercepted. A Japanese ship was coming back from the East Indies, loaded to the gunnels with immensely important war industries metals. And the British had them tracked, of course, and they sent a squadron out, which intercepted them in the Bay of Biscay. They sank the escort, which was provided by the German navy, and I'm not sure if they sank the ship itself or captured it. But into the middle of this naval battle in the middle of the night came a little ship of ours, a civilian ship, on its way home to Wexford, bringing bananas to Ireland, and things like that. And in she sailed into the middle of this, and there were German sailors in the water, and she picked them up until her gunnels were down to the water. She was called upon by the {British} Fleet Commander to hand them over, but she refused and sailed for Cork, and just got into Cork before she could be intercepted."

Duggan: "I can remember it so well. The British kicked up a terrible racket about that. I was in the cadet school at the time, cleaning a window, and here come the German 'master-race', marching back into the Curragh, these little, small, miserable, German sailors. They marched up past Pearse Barracks there and into the internment camp. But it was fair play to the Irish who took all these to the gunnels and gave the two fingers to the British. So, we were neutral, make no mistake about that. We weren't going to be pushed around by anyone."

The author went on to pose a question which results in the shedding of further light on the subject-matter of my *"Haughey And The Nazi Flags"* article for the August 2008 issue of *Irish Political Review*: *"VE Day. What were your feelings when you found out the war in Europe was over?"*

Duggan: "The general feeling at that time was one of relief. But at the same time, a great annoyance at Britain. You see, so many people from this island had fought and died in the war, and you had these pricks in Trinity College who had dodged the war and nevertheless went up on top of Trinity College and burned the Tricolour, which infuriated a number of us. Like Charlie Haughey was down there in UCD and set fire to a British flag."

Hogan: "I was down there that night."

Duggan: "I was on the verge of getting on a jeep myself and going up there and petrol-bombing them. Thanks to be Jesus that I didn't."

Hogan: "Well, I was down on the streets that night, down outside of Trinity College. I saw it all. Well, there were several baton charges by the silly Guards. I was up against Trinity railings and a baton charge went by me. You see, these were English blokes who had come over to study in Trinity."

Duggan: "They dodged the bloody draft."

Hogan: "And Northern Ireland blokes. And Anglo-Irish folk from the Republic. And they went up on top of the pediment in Trinity and burned the Tricolour."

Duggan: "It was mostly Northern Ireland people. Draft-dodgers. It's hard to explain the feeling at that time. But, it was encapsulated in Churchill's talk about, 'We were forced to come to close quarters with Éire.' And everybody was aghast and there was great national euphoria over Dev's reply."

Hogan: "A masterly reply. Even Dev's enemies, of whom they were many in the country, said that his reply to Churchill was remarkable."

These retired Irish Army officers all made a point of emphasising how the resolute national commitment to the defence of Irish wartime neutrality against all threats—whether British, German or IRA—had also played a decisive role in helping overcome the divisions of Ireland's own Civil War.

Hogan: "First of all, the army had been representative of only one side of the civil war. The Civil war was over fifteen or sixteen years before I joined, but still the leaders of the army and everyone above the rank of lieutenant in it had fought in the civil war, and on one side in the civil war. So, there was that which made it a little tighter than if it had been representative of the whole country. At that stage it was not representative at all. It became so as soon as the war broke out. Very quickly it became representative of the whole country, entered into the social stream, and was very much part of the life. The people of the country became very conscious of the army immediately."

Quinn concurred: "I think there's one thing that can be brought up for our own personal point of view, from the end of our own civil war of 1922-23, when we saw these old-timers united at last, this is what has enabled us to survive the situation that we're in at the moment."

While Duggan concluded, in agreement:

"Very important. I would say that coming together was the first thawing of the civil war bitterness. Coming into the army in the Emergency, together, in 1940, was the first time they were united. Because, as you know, before that you had the 26th 'Old IRA Battalion, and the 12th Murder Battalion, but now there was that coming together and it was the thawing of the civil war."

This valuable set of interviews does indeed shatter many of today's myths about Irish wartime neutrality.

Manus O'Riordan

Part 3. Witness Statement No. 637

Muriel MacSwiney's Memoir of the War of Independence

We returned to Cork and had a small house in the Douglas Road. Seán O' Hegarty and Mid lived not very far from us. I also then met for the first time P. H. and Mina O'Hegarty with Seán Óg, a most beautiful baby in a pram. The O'Hegartys, Terry, Fred Cronin and a few others had formed the Cork Literary Society very many years before – a little group of pioneers.

Terry was arrested and was for a few weeks in Cork Jail in October 1917. It was on the day of his arrest that I knew that I was pregnant. There was a short hunger strike of a few days when the prisoners were released. Bob and Mrs. Una Brennan who had done such wonders in Wexford for the cause, and another prisoner whose name I think was Synott stayed a few days with us. After this Terry was out every night and all Sunday, drilling Volunteers. It was during this time that the memoirs of Seandún, an old Cork Fenian were written down at the dictation of the old man, by Terry and Diarmuid Ó Murchadha, his son-in-law, and published with the help of Seán Ó Cuív. Terry also published a small volume of his poems where I was some use in reading proofs. Terry did not enjoy drilling Volunteers; he hated militarism and political work. If Ireland had been free and the condition of everyone satisfactory, he would have written principally poetry, and he would like to have been a librarian. He told me this often.

At this time Terry went every month to Dublin to the Coiste Gnotha and at the same time privately to the meetings of the Volunteers. I am, I am glad to say no judge of military matters, but it was said by those who are, that it was the munitions Terry brought every month from Dublin that made the war in the South possible, unlike the '16 Rising when they had nothing.

We had a children's party at Christmas with a tree. In March, Terry was re-arrested under the 'cat-and-mouse' Act. I never went with him to Dublin on his monthly trips; this was to save expenses, but I did by great luck go this once. I think it was principally because I wanted to get the clothes for my baby in Dublin. We were having tea in the Clarence Hotel on the Quays when the porter arrived and said to Terry that two gentlemen wanted to see him "officially" he added. He was no doubt what was then called a sympathiser, it is now fellow traveller. Terry told me to come up to our room at once and emptied his pockets. He also gave me a verbal message for Seán O'Hegarty and Fred Murray. Then he went down and the

detectives took him. Seán Ó Cuív came soon after to see Terry by appointment. He found out for me where they had taken Terry and also advised me kindly to give him a rug and pillow. I crossed the river to the Bridewell. I saw Terry who asked me to find out where they were going to take him. He said I had to ask the Lord Mayor, which I did not want to do as we thought him too pro-British. However, of course, I did. I don't remember what he said. I don't think I got any information. Seán Ó Cuív, who knew the detectives personally, found out they were sending Terry to Belfast. I then went immediately to Cork with a very heavy suitcase, full of arms. I had telephoned on the night of Terry's arrest. When I arrived at St. Ita's, Seán O'Hegarty was there to meet me and all were well. I next carried a cardboard box to the Nursing Home, Mrs. Blundell's, where I was going to have the baby. All the way I was followed by a policeman. I was terribly sorry that he did not ask me to open my parcel. I went the next day to Belfast and visited Terry daily in the prison. It was difficult at first to get in – one had to have permission from a magistrate. I stayed with a Mrs. McNamee. Joe Connolly and Denny McCullough were very kind. Then Terry was moved to Dundalk. Here everything was easier. I lived with a Volunteer family near the jail, railway people – Kieran. I went to Cork for the birth of my daughter (taken from me aged 14 by the Dublin so-called Courts of Justice). Terry wished the child to be born in Cork. He was in Belfast Jail again when I took her to see him, aged six weeks. Annie MacSwiney went with me, and Dick Mulcahy met us at Kingsbridge and took us across Dublin to Amiens Street, looking after everything.

In August, 1918, Terry was released and re-arrested on the doorway of the prison, then taken to Lincoln prison. He was there when De Valera escaped and knew how it had been done. He naturally refused to tell. I was the only person in Cork who did not ask him. I never asked these kinds of questions. He was released in March 1919. Then in the General Election of 1918 elected as Teachta Dàla. He did not want this; he did not like politics although in those days the Sinn Féin politics were clean.

After Terry's release I went to live in Ballingeary. Terry was only able to be there for part of each week as his duties kept him in Cork. My daughter Máire was nine months old and we both wanted her to speak our own language from the first. Terry, of course, spoke Gaoluinne fluently, and had even studied the highly difficult rules for writing poetry, in prison; he had no time outside.

We were there until the following winter. I was soon a fluent speaker, and then went round with the pram (sometimes down precipices) to all the old Irish speakers who knew no English. It was then I got the Fáinne. Terry, of course, had it already.

Here, I am afraid is a blank in my memory. Except that I was ill. (I had been before and only found out about ten years later that it was caused by food poisoning. I used to be quite incapacitated). During my well times I was active naturally in the movement and the language. I spoke nothing but Irish for two years.

All this time people were being arrested; homes were being raided. The Bishops were fulminating against the Volunteers, excommunicating people and refusing absolution and the sacraments to men and women in the movement. But no one gave in. Terry was an extremely orthodox Roman Catholic, and in religious matters he would have obeyed the Pope without questioning but not in lay matters.

In January, 1920, (I may have the exact date wrong) Terry said to me that as there was to be a new Mayor elected did I not think Tomás MacCurtain would be the best person? He did, I too. After he had been a short time in office the Black and Tans came and knocked at his house at 4 a.m. and murdered him in the presence of his wife and children. Mrs. MacCurtain was pregnant. This killed the babies (twins, and she had always wished for twins); the birth came much later fortunately in a good Nursing Home or she would have died.

All the details of this are well known. We Irish had at that time a civil Government, Irish Mayors and Corporations, Irish Courts of Justice, even police to keep order. This worried the British Government more than the war I think because they could not say it was murder. After Tomás' murder Terry thought he should take his place. It meant, of course, the end of his life. He was arrested in August 1920, at a session of the Corporation in the Town Hall, the T. C. s being present.

I and my little daughter were at a tiny little place on the seacoast near Youghal when this happened. Terry had been going to stay with me on the day he was arrested. He said to me when we were leaving, *"I don't see why I should not have a holiday, Dick Mulcahy is having one. Shall I come to you or not?*". I said *"You may as well"*. Usually at this time we were not openly together because I was a mark by which the English Imperialists and their allied Irish Imperialists and Redmondites would find Terry and kill him but at this juncture they knew all the hiding places so that he was not much worse off with us.

I went to the court-martial in Cork Barracks. Mary MacSwiney came to the little place we were at and took charge of the baby during this time. At this date the Volunteers did not recognise the British alien courts, whether military or lay, but Terry said he would defend himself because he was Mayor of Cork elected by the will of the people and therefore representing them. There were three indictments. Having a police code was one, being able to use it was another. I forget the third. Terry said that of course he had the code and was able to use it, but that he was the only person in Cork entitled to both these things, or somebody authorised by him, which the British were not.

He had already at this time been on hunger strike several days. He was taken to England in a submarine and brought to London, arriving at two in the morning, for fear of demonstrations. In Brixton Prison the Misses MacSwineys and I took it in turns to be with him all the time during the day, his two brothers at night, and his great friend, Fred Cronin, a married man with a big family who left everything to do this, one of the greatest workers in the cause of Irish Independence who never wanted any limelight.

Whilst Terry was there the assistant doctor in the prison asked me to ask my husband to take food. I did not resent this. I understood. He said, *"He might be released permanently injured, you might have more children and this might affect them"*. I said I had been thinking this for the past two years but I never interfered with my husband in a matter of conscience. "*I wish my wife was like you",* said the doctor, and never asked me again. I naturally tried to save Terry's life. On arrival in London I asked Art O'Brien if the British Government intended to release him. We, of course, had our own secret service who told us these things. Art said, "*Not at present. Of course, they may change"*. I therefore sent a letter to the heads of the Volunteers – Dick Mulcahy, Cathal Brugha and I forget the third. (I said it did not matter which one of them the letter reached) saying that Terry, in my opinion, was more valuable to Ireland alive than dead (naturally I could not give expression to my personal wishes) and would they think of giving him an order to give up the hunger strike. Then something very unpleasant happened. The Irish Government did not do this. It was not until after Terry's death and that of two of his comrades in Cork Prison that that they called off the strikes. Terry became delirious during the last few days of his life and had to be given morphia. He died as all the world knows, on October 25th. Until these last few days he was perfectly clear. In fact, some of his best friends said more so than in ordinary life. He said to me once that he has often suffered from the fact that Volunteers objected to his going into action in ambushes, etc. because they considered him too valuable, but he said to me "*I feel this is as dangerous and more so"*.

During the time in Brixton we also learned that the Roman Catholic Church

wanted to excommunicate Terry on the grounds that he was committing suicide. They only desisted from doing this because Terry's hunger strike and Ireland's cause were so well put before the whole world, and everybody knew that he only desired to be released from prison, so that this would have made them ridiculous.

Fortunately there are others like Terry in different parts of the world. If it were not so our life would be utterly abominable. Nevertheless it is hard to do him justice. He was of middle height, strong, neither very thin or the opposite. He had raven black hair and an olive complexion. I think his eyes were his most remarkable feature, rather light blue, they had an expression of idealism I could never describe. None of his photos are like him. I think what resembles him most is the portrait of John Mitchell, young (whom Terry had a very great admiration for). That is almost exactly like Terry except that the lower part of the face is a bit thicker or larger in Mitchell's portrait. There is a description by Chief Justice Russell of his seeing Mitchell on the coach going from Newry to Drogheda. Russell was, of course a little boy. His description of Mitchell's appearance is exactly like Terry. But apart from appearance. He was of course for absolute separation from England – everyone knows this. But with him it did not end there. Nor was an Irish-speaking Ireland enough. He wanted justice. I am certain that if he were alive today he would not turn his back on the first Irish Constitution to which he had sworn allegiance. He would "cherish all the children of the nation". He would have been horrified at the rich people, lay and clerical, in a country governed by an Irish Dáil, and equally horrified at the lack of education and welfare.

He was absolutely straight and self-sacrificing, and I remembers how terribly the state of corruption in the Workhouse and the Asylum worried him when he was Mayor. He said to me once that if only that was clean it would be a greater load off his mind than anything else. But at that time it was the Redmondites who were corrupt, not us.

Terry was not always serious. He liked a good joke and fun. I remember him dressing up to play charades at Mrs. O'Riordan's in Cork at Christmas. Terry was eminently reasonable. Also he could speck quietly to his greatest opponents. He had been years working in the wholesale department office of Dwyer's where by the way they had to stand. He had a man at each side of him abusing all his ideals the whole day. He said this taught patience. I believe I only saw him lose his temper once. This was when the police asked me to sign a form in Bromyard. Part of this was the law as the war was on, but they asked me to continue to fill out the part that only concerned aliens. Terry flew at them.

Years before I knew him he studied for his degree in philosophy. He told me this himself. He was hard at work all day and studied in the evenings. He got serious headaches and was advised by a doctor not to work late at nights. He then took to going to bed at 8 o'clock after his tea, and getting up at two. First of all he had a good fire; he thought this made him go to sleep so he studied without in the freezing cold.

I was invited to Washington D. C. by the Editors of the "New York Nation". I did not want to go to America at all, and naturally not at such a time. However, various Irish people in London said I ought to go, so I wrote to Arthur Griffith (Leas Uachtarán) and he sent me a wire "*Urge you to go".* This was a polite command. I thought that I had better choose my sister-in-law, M. MacSwiney as my companion. It was usual to go in pairs. I did not blame her but she had been very difficult in London (not with me but with the Irish organisations there). I therefore made an appointment with Arthur Griffith who was practical and kind. It was my one meeting with him. He understood the situation and asked me if I knew Harry Boland. I said I did. "*Well",* Arthur Griffith said, *"he is in the U.S.A. and will see to that".*

We went from Cobh. I was terribly ill all the way over. On arriving in New York we were besieged by journalists before landing. Fortunately A. O'Brien had taught me interviewing in London but I had not yet had to interview twenty altogether. Fausset, who was our Consul in New York, also came on to the boat. On landing, Harry Boland and many other Irish were there to greet us officially, and important Americans. We would have been killed several times over by kindness. We were taken to the St. Regis Hotel and millions of people wanted to see us. Jane Adams, Doctor Gertrude Kelly, and of course, out hosts, the Villards; Mrs. Frances Villard, widow of the founder of the "New York Nation", and daughter of Garrison who was tarred and feathered for protecting the Negroes. I stayed the night with her on my subsequent visit in 1923 and joined the Women's League for Peace and freedom, founded by her and others during the 1914 War. I am still a strong pacifist.

After a few days we went to Washington with Harry Boland and other. When there we stayed with Mr. and Mrs. P. Drury mad met Senator Davis L. Walsh, Senator Borah and several other important people. Doctor McCartan, who was our official representative, took me round Washington to show me that beautiful city. Dr. McCartan did wonderful work during those years, so did De Valera. While in the U.S.A., Harry Boland showed me the famous Russian Jewels, rubies and sapphires to the best of my recollection. They had been given by their owners, the Soviet Government, to the Irish Republican Government as security for a loan made by the Irish Republican Government to the Soviet Government. It was shortly after this that Dr. McCartan visited Soviet Russia officially.

We received wonderful kindness from all Americans who were very pacifist and idealist in those days. One hopes this will return. We testified before the Commission in Washington constituted to enquire into the atrocities perpetrated by the British Government in Ireland.

We were at a friendly evening party at the Villards with a German Christmas Tree. Mrs. Henry Villard's daughter, a very clever child, spoke some words of Irish in our honour. I was given the freedom of the city of New York, not of course for myself, but to honour and in recognition of Terry's heroic fight.

Back in Dublin, January/February 1921, the war was raging, people being raided, taken out and shot, curfew. My daughter had been staying with my mother in Cork. She was now of course with me in Dublin. In the summer of 1921 was the Truce. De Valera, Bob Barton (who had been in penal servitude) and others went to London. De Valera negotiated with Lloyd George. I met them all in London; I was on my way to Germany where I was going for the first time. I and my German girlfriend followed the Treaty negotiations at fever point. I was not in Wiesbaden for political work but for medical treatment. It was the time of the Allies' occupation of the Rhineland. Wiesbaden was occupied by the French troops and a lot of civilian French were there. I did a lot of work for the Irish Republic amongst both French and Germans. I wrote to Seán T. O'Kelly who was our diplomatic representative in Paris (an honourable post in those days) and he sent me propaganda in French at my request. There was nothing in German, When the Treaty was signed with England it was the greatest, even personal tragedy that had befallen me up to that time. I little dreamt of what was to come later.

I was alone a far as anybody was concerned who understood the Irish situation. I wrote a letter-card to Seán T. O'Kelly saying that if the Treaty was accepted it would be the worst calamity that ever had happened to Ireland. This was read in the Dáil subsequently at the Treaty Debates.

Conditions, if any, Stipulated by Witness: Nil

Signed: MUIRGHÉAL, BEAN MHIC SUIBHNE
Paris, December 1951.

MRS. MURIEL MACSWINEY,
C/O NATIONAL CITY BANK, COLLEGE GREEN, DUBLIN.
AND: 78 RUE BLOMET, PARIS XVieme.

Part 1: **Has The General A Point?**

On 6th December 1941 the Japanese Navy attacked the US Pacific Fleet docked in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. It has gone down in World War Two mythology under Roosevelt's term, the "Day of Infamy", comparing only to the Al-Quaida assault on the New York Financial Services Centre in 2001.

The General's essay

Recently the Chief of Staff of the Japanese Air Force wrote an essay. Amongst other things he stated that America had been covertly at war with Japan throughout the 1930s, supplying the Chinese Kuomintang and urging it on to ever more aggressive assaults on the Japanese presence in northern China. These assaults ultimately led to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1936. Most unforgivably, he also stated that America instigated the battle that ignited the Second World War in East Asia:

> "Roosevelt had become president on his public pledge not to go to war, so in order to start a war between the United States and Japan it had to appear that Japan took the first shot. Japan was caught in Roosevelt's trap and carried out the attack on Pearl Harbor" (Tamogami Toshio, *Was Japan An Aggressor Nation?*).

A few weeks ago, General Toshio was sacked.

In Britain the history of the Second World War in Asia is little known about. What is written or—more often—portrayed on film about it centres mostly on the plight of British prisoners of the Japanese, and involves a generalised view of the Japanese war as a continuum with the Nazi war in Europe. Mindless portrayal of 'camps' is used to imply an identity of conditions and purpose between Auschwitz and Japanese detention camps in Asia. The War throughout the globe by the gallant 'Allies' is presented as a fight for democracy and freedom against the unspeakable barbarism and pure evil of an 'Axis' alliance bent on *"world domination"*.

World domination

But no evidence exists for the view of a common Axis war effort for world domination. Germany, Japan and Italy had agreed a so-called *"Anti-Comintern Pact"* in 1936, but this declaratory anti-Communist stance was a propaganda event with little practical meaning, organised in response to the Popular Front campaign of the Comintern. At that time Britain and America were also arrayed against the *"communist threat"* of Soviet Russia. Following the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935, Britain in fact was the effective military ally of Nazi Germany. The War in Europe got under way in 1939 as a conflict launched by Britain and France against Germany and Russia. Germany sought to keep Italy neutral so as to prevent an escalation of the war in the West, while France and Britain, instead of attacking Germany on the basis of their paper *"guarantee"* to Poland, set about military operations against Russia through Finland.

By 1941, the only side which developed ambitions to a global war and a global victory were the Allied Powers, and especially the British-US alliance created in early 1941, when the US was technically still as neutral as Ireland, Sweden or Switzerland. After Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union in June of that year, Stalin went along with the common cause declared by the Atlantic Allies for the sake of a common front in Europe. As has been demonstrated by Brendan Clifford in his "Afterword" to the 2nd edition of Elizabeth Bowen: *Notes On Eire: Espionage Reports To Winston Churchill 1940-2* (Aubane Historical Society, 2008), the Japanese and Germans undertook no joint planning and Hitler himself was hopeful for a restoration of the British Empire in Asia with which he could do business.

The Japanese concluded a Non-Aggression Pact with the Soviet Union in April 1941, thus allowing the Soviets to concentrate forces against the coming German attack in the West and allowing Japan to concentrate its forces in southern Asia where it saw itself being forced into a showdown with the US. Critical Intelligence confirming the absence of a common German-Japanese design came from the communist spy in the German Embassy in Tokyo—Richard Sorge—and this enabled the Soviet Union to move its Siberian Army west and mount the credible resistance which brought Hitler's invasion to a standstill at the gates of Moscow. The Soviet-Japanese Agreement came just two months before the German attack on Russia. It dispels any notion of a Berlin-Tokyo *"Axis"* let alone a joint plan for *"world domination"*.

US expansion in Asia

US eastern expansion in the hundred years prior to Pearl Harbor needs some explanation. Driven by Protestant zeal (*"Manifest Destiny"*) and Free Trade doctrine (the *"Open Door"*), the US had been storming across the Pacific, 'penetrating' China in an openly imperial venture, and arranging naval stand-offs with their rival Japan. The methods of American expansionism differed in no way from those of other Western empire builders.

Hawaii—the later site of the US Pacific Fleet—had been a timeless Pacific Island Kingdom until 1893, when a group of American businessmen operating there organised as a "Committee of Safety" and proceeded to overthrow Queen Liliuokalami. In 1894 the US Congress formally annexed Hawaii to the US. (The Clinton Presidency "apologised" for this coup a century later.) Other island kingdoms with no quarrel with the US were overthrown in a similar manner and their territory and resources seized.

The Philippines proved a lot trickier. America's war against Spain—aimed at seizing Spain's remaining colonial possessions anywhere within a few thousand miles of the US—ended in 1898 with a Treaty "ceding" Cuba, Guam, the Philippines and Puerto Rico to the USA. But national resistance movements in all of these were to delay American efforts at securing their new *'possessions'*. In the case of the Philippines, a peasant-based resistance, which had developed there against the Spanish in the 1850s, led to the establishment of an Independent Republic in 1898 on the defeat of the Spanish. But the US was having none of it and invaded. A bitter war was fought and although this formally ended in 1901 with the overthrow of the national government, resistance to American domination continued until 1913. Suppression of the resistance cost over a million Philippinos their lives in a genocidal campaign waged by the US Army:

> "The Americans… exceeded even the cruellest Spanish precedents in manipulating disease and hunger as weapons against an insurgent but weakened population. Beginning with the outbreak of war in February 1899, military authorities closed all the ports, disrupting the vital inter-island trade in foodstuffs and preventing the migration of hungry laborers to food-surplus areas. Then, as drought began to turn into famine in 1900, they authorized the systematic destruction of rice stores and livestock in areas that continued to support the guerrilla resistance… An ensuing campaign of terror against the rural population, backed up by a pass system and population "reconcentration", prefigured US strategy in Vietnam during the 1960s. "All palay, rice, and storehouses clearly for use by enemy soldiers", writes [the historian] De Bevoise, "were to be destroyed… The food denial programme got out of hand. Increasingly unsure who was enemy and who was friend, American soldiers on patrol did not agonize over such distinctions. They shot and burned indiscriminately, engaging in an orgy of destruction throughout the Philippines." As one soldier wrote back home to Michigan: "We burned every house, destroyed every carabao and other animals,

all rice and other foods." …

"As peasants began to die of hunger in the fall of 1900, American officers openly acknowledged in correspondence that starvation had become official military strategy. "The result is inevitable", wrote Colonel Dickman from Panay, "many people will starve to death before the end of six months". On Samar, Brigadier General Jacob Smith ordered his men to turn the interior into a "howling wilderness". … De Bevoise concludes: "The American war contributed directly and indirectly to the loss of more than a million persons from a base population of about seven million". In comparative terms, this was comparable to mortality during the Irish famine of the 1840s." (Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts,* London, 2002, p198-9.)

China—Even before its brutal colonisation of the Philippines the US had been pushing its *"Open Door"* policy in China. Following Britain's "Opium Wars" of the 1840s, much of China became occupied as Western states seized territory and resources. In 1901 following the defeat of the Chinese nationalist uprising—known in the West as the "Boxer Rebellion"—this occupation was formalised and "legitimised" by a Treaty with the Qing Dynasty which the latter had little choice but to accept. The eleven Western powers thus legitimised in their Imperial occupation of China included the US, Britain and Britain's ally at the time, Japan.

Japanese General's response

The now ex-General Toshio writes of these events from a Japanese perspective:

"If you say that Japan was the aggressor nation {in relation to China—PO'C}, then I would like to ask what country among the great powers of that time was not an aggressor. That is not to say that because other countries were doing so it was all right for Japan to do so as well, but rather that there is no reason to single out Japan as an aggressor nation…

"Going back … to 1901, in the aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion, the Qing Empire signed the Boxer Protocol in 1901 with eleven countries including Japan. As a result, our country gained a right to station troops in Qing China. Also, in 1915, following four months of negotiations with the government of Yuan Shikai, and incorporating China's points as well, agreement was reached on Japan's so-called 21 Demands towards China. Some people say that this was the start of Japan's invasion of China, but if you compare these demands to the general international norms of colonial administration by the great powers at the time, there was nothing terribly unusual about it. China too accepted the demands at one point and ratified them" (*Was Japan an Aggressor Nation?*).

But there was a problem. Japan was the sole remaining sovereign Asian state and —more particularly—a coming industrial power. Even prior to the First World War it was widely written about in the US as a serious challenge to American ambitions in China and the Pacific that would have to be dealt with. During the 'Great War' Japan was a British ally and used its forces to protect the British Empire in Asia. At the end of that War, the US moved to begin isolating Japan. As Toshio writes:

"However, four years later, in 1919, when China was allowed to attend the Paris Peace Conference, it began complaining about the 21 Demands with America's backing. Even then, England and France supported Japan's position. Moreover, Japan never advanced its Army without the agreement of Chiang Kai-shek's KMT. "

By the 1920s, most of East Asia was securely in Western hands. India, Burma, Singapore, Malaya, Hong Kong and numerous Pacific Island were 'British', the French 'owned' most of Indo-China, China itself was in the hands of various Western powers and its weak central government was increasingly a creature of the United States. Holland controlled the East Indies (later Indonesia) and was merrily pumping oil, rubber and numerous other minerals out of it, and the United States controlled the Philippines and had effective hegemony over much of the Pacific. Pacific islands which were not outright Western colonies were held as League of Nations 'mandate territories' by Western powers, Australia or New Zealand. But Britain's freedom of action in the world had been ended by the war bankrupting it, and—after briefly contemplating and rejecting with a shudder the prospect of war with the US—Britain recognised that its future imperial role would best be served as a junior partner in an Anglo-US Alliance. The British reluctantly abandoned their Japanese ally in 1921 on US insistence and joined in the American strategy of isolation and economic strangulation of Japan.

Japan had gained control of Korea and Manchuria in the joint imperial carve up of China after 1901, and had done so as an ally of Britain. Toshio argues that Japanese occupation of these territories was both of a type with, but also more benign than, Western imperialist norms:

"By contrast {with Western empires—PO'C}, … Japan had been calling for harmony between the five tribes, laying out a vision for the tribes—the Yamato (Japanese), Koreans, Chinese, Manchurians and Mongols—to intermix and live peacefully together. At a time when racial discrimination was considered natural, this was a groundbreaking proposal. At the Paris Peace Conference at the end of World War I, when Japan urged that the abolition of racial discrimination be included in the Treaty, England and America laughed it off. But if you look at the world today, it has become the kind of world that Japan was urging at the time. "

On the annexation of Korea that followed the Sino-Japanese in which Britain backed Japan, Toshio says *"Japan tried to develop Manchuria, the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan in the same way it was developing the Japanese mainland."* In contrast to Western empires, it sought to incorporate its colonies *"within the nation itself"*. Under a *"very moderate"* colonial regime, the plains of Manchuria were transformed from an agricultural economy to an industrial one, and in all three territories mass education was introduced for the *"native peoples"*, modern road, power and water infrastructures were installed and universities established. The Army was opened up to these populations and men of Chinese, Taiwanese and Korean background were to achieve the highest ranks in the Imperial Japanese Army of the Second World War. (Shiang Kai-shek and several of his Generals were themselves also graduates of Japanese military academies.) The imperial households of China and Japan intermarried. Most of all, while populations were falling elsewhere, in the Japanese-occupied regions it doubled between 1920 and 1940.

Toshio claims that the Sino-Japanese War of 1936 was started by a large scale offensive by Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang (KMT) against the Japanese presence (military and civilian), and that this offensive was instigated by the US KMT forces were massively supported by the US, and Chinese strategy was also being manipulated from Moscow following the creation of the Popular Front with Mao's Communists. He provides convincing evidence from recently available US and Soviet sources that this was in fact so. The war thus cooked up went badly for the disunited Chinese forces, however, and led to partial Japanese victories and the extension of Japanese power in China in the late 1930s. Toshio admits that Japanese atrocities occurred, but dismisses these as individual acts of delinquency not unusual in the context of colonial wars of the time and also refers to Chinese atrocities against Japanese military and civilians.

Roosevelt's trap

Japanese actions between 1920 and 1944 were determined by what the West was doing in Asia. The 'Allied' economic isolation of Japan led to the Japanese responding with a desperate strategy. If it did nothing, its industrial base would collapse, as Japan itself had no resources of oil, rubber or copper. It had adopted a Western practice—secure itself as an industrialised military power by controlling the sources of raw materials it needed. These resources were located in the

Western colonies of Indochina, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. It sought repeatedly to negotiate with the US for peaceful access to these areas through trade, but the US blockade, supported by the European colonial powers, ruled this out. Japan extended its slice of China in the 1930s and, following the German defeat of France and Holland in 1940, it advanced on their now adrift colonies in Indo-China in 1941. Its aims were limited —establish a Japanese sphere in the Western sense as a secure basis for its own industrial development. Brendan Clifford describes it as follows:

> "{Japan} became an imperialist predator when the alternative was to become the prey of capitalist imperialism, as China was. The Japanese islands lacked the material resources necessary for capitalist industrialisation. Japan was not self-sufficient in these things as America was, and as England had been until it chose to become a world Imperialist power for other reasons…. In 1939 America revoked its commercial agreement with Japan and in 1940-41 it stopped the export of oil, rubber and other commodities, and froze Japanese assets in America and demanded that Japan withdraw from its empire. This was while the two countries were at peace… American policy towards Japan was such that there were only two possible outcomes: war, or Japanese surrender without war. The current edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* puts it this way: The Japanese "faced the alternative of either withdrawing from Indochina and possibly China or seizing the sources of oil production in the Netherlands East Indies"... The Japanese Government spent the Summer and Fall of 1941 trying to negotiate a compromise with the USA which would remove the stark choice between economic collapse and war. In July 1941 it established a joint Protectorate with Vichy France over Indochina… and it made preparations to move into the Dutch East Indies to gain oil supplies… At the same time it sought to make an agreement with the USA for gaining a supply of raw materials by trade if it dismantled its Empire. But the US insisted that its ultimatum be complied with unconditionally before any other agreement could be made.…" ('Afterword' to *Elizabeth Bowen,* p187)

The American ultimatum took the form of the *"Hull Note"*. Cordell Hull was US Secretary of State and a leading advocate—along with Henry Morgenthau, Secretary of the Treasury—of expansion in Asia and war with Japan. War was unpopular with the American public and, though he had been elected on a programme of keeping America out of war, Roosevelt and his inner circle were intent on joining the War in Europe and provoking one in Asia. America was both overtly and covertly subsidising the war efforts of both China and Britain. In October 1941, the US 'Flying Tigers' based with the KMT began direct covert air attacks on Japanese positions in China. The Notes to Japan were meant to instigate hostilities and on 25th November 1941 the US Cabinet decided to act. As Secretary of State Stimson noted in his diary:

> "The question was how we should manoeuvre them into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves. It was a difficult proposition. Hull laid out his general broad propositions on which the thing should be rested—the freedom of the seas and the fact that Japan was in alliance with Hitler and was carrying out his policy of world aggression. The others brought out the fact that that any such expedition to the south as the Japanese were likely to take would be an encirclement of our interests in the Philippines and cutting into our vital supply of rubber from Malayia. I pointed out to the President that he had already taken the first steps towards an ultimatum in notifying Japan way back last summer that if she crossed the border into Thailand she was violating our safety and that therefore he had only to point out that to follow any such expedition was a violation of a warning we had already given" (quoted in ibid., p188).

The US issued its ultimatum and the Japanese found themselves in a *"trap"*. As Toshio writes:

> "Roosevelt had become president on his public pledge not to go to war, so in order to start a war between the United States and Japan it had to appear that Japan took the first shot. Japan was caught in Roosevelt's trap and carried out the attack on Pearl Harbor.
>
> "Could the war have been avoided? If Japan had accepted the conditions laid out in the Hull note, perhaps the war could have been temporarily avoided. But even if the war had been avoided temporarily, when you consider the survival of the fittest mentality that dominated international relations at the time, you can easily imagine that the United States would have issued a second and a third set of demands. As a result, those of us living today could very well have been living in a Japan that was a white man's colony" (*Was Japan an Aggressor Nation?*).

In that dog-eat-dog world, the Japanese leadership regarded their war with the US as a desperate gamble which it had only an odds-on chance of carrying off. As Toshio points out, the Japanese leadership was *"not stupid"*. It was a conflict it believed it had no option of avoiding.

From other sources it emerges that in September 1940, Admiral Isoruku Yamamoto, the Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Navy, told Prince Konoye his view of the prospects of a war with the United States. He believed they had six months to achieve their objectives, or at most a year, *"but I have absolutely no confidence for the second and third years"*. In July 1941, as American pressure grew, the Japanese Naval Chief of Staff, Admiral Osami Nagano, told the Cabinet:

> "As for war with the United States, although there is now a chance of achieving victory, the chances will diminish as time goes on. By the latter half of next year it will already be difficult for us to cope with the United States; after that the situation will become increasingly worse… If we conclude that conflict cannot ultimately be avoided, then I would like you to understand that as time goes by we will be in a disadvantageous position."

In September 1941 Nagano told the Government that a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor gave Japan *"a chance to win the war"*, by temporarily disabling the US Pacific Fleet, but otherwise he believed Japan was getting weaker while the US grew stronger (John Ellis *Brute Force: Allied Strategy and Tactics in the Second World War*, London, 1990, p443-4.).

So what did the Japanese mean by *"achieving victory"* and *"a chance to win the war"* following the impossible ultimatum of the Hull Note? They believed a short war launched by a surprise attack could bring about the temporary breaking of American naval power in the Pacific, which would open an opportunity for a new agreement with the United States providing for Japan's right to control 'its' sphere in Asia. As Ellis writes, their bid was to try to assert *"a Japanese equivalent of the Monroe Doctrine"* in the Pacific, though even this is probably overstating it: In 1946 the United States Strategic Bombing Survey concluded: *"There is no evidence in the Japanese plans of an intention to defeat the United States. Japan planned to fight a war of limited objectives and, having gained what it wanted, expected to negotiate for a favourable peace"* (quoted in Ellis, *Brute Force,* p445).

Japanese expansion through south-east Asia during 1941 was based on what Ellis describes as a *"strategic concept"* that was *"essentially defensive"*. The East Indies were the prime source of oil and the other raw materials it sought, and peaceful access to which it had been denied by the US and British Blockade supported by the other Western colonial powers in the region. Seizing these and temporarily disabling the US Pacific Fleet, according to Ellis, were—

> "not seen as part of a remorseless advance towards mainland America, but as the establishment of a *ne plus ultra* line that would deny potential air and naval bases to the enemy. When the Japanese commanders sanctioned their amphibious blitzkrieg it was on the clear understanding that the initial conquests were to be the only conquests, and that there was to be no thought of fighting a

protracted war to the death with the Western powers in the Pacific" (p446).

Wars do not follow pre-ordained patterns, and once the conflict began, so the Greater East Asian War—as Toshio calls it—took its course. When Japan did attack Pearl Harbor, they sunk a range of aging battleships—the modern aircraft carriers were conveniently absent. Roosevelt had his War.

Philip O'Connor

Next month: Anti-Fascist War or Asia for the Asians?

Afghanistan

1

AZIZABAD

The United States again sends its regrets:
Taliban Mullah Siddiq—Yeah, sad,
seen in the village of Azizabad
A ground attack with missile-firing jets,
but first, the screaming cannon-fire of hate.
Ninety-three dead, including sixty kids.
NATO says most civilian deaths are fibs.
Remember August 22 '08
Guernica 1937
Lidice, June 10, 1942
Deir Yassin, '48, all in Heaven
via the gates of Hell, long grows the queue.
Now, listen to the killer's moral tones
while standing on a mound of human bones.

2

MARRIED TO DEATH

Here comes the peace-keepers, filler of graves:
Kerosene vapour streaks the mountain air,
burners glow white-hot, sending out shockwaves.
Down in the valley is the suspect's lair?
Deflecting flares sprout, sizzle and cackle.
Bride and bridegroom and village stop to stare;
mud huts, dusty street, the geese cackle.
He dropped democracy so do take care.
'If I hurt you like that then I'm sorry',
says the soldier on the satellite phone,
'Yes, still love you, Beth, and little Harry.
What about getting hitched when I get home?
The ring is Afghan gold, a wedding band—
I didn't find it! It's not second-hand.'

Wilson John Haire.
5th December, 2008

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Report of letter sent to the Right Reverend Paul Colton, Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross on 18th December

Church Of Ireland v. Aubane Historical Society?

Dear Bishop,

I refer you to an article in the *Sunday Independent* of December 14, 2008, in which Eoghan Harris referred to our society. He was commenting on a seminar organised by the Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocese of the Church of Ireland on 8th December last.

It has been reported to us that Senator Eoghan Harris "declared war" on our Society at the seminar and that he also said we were "mentally deficient". We have confirmed this detail and the information below, since publication of the article, with a number of speakers at the seminar, and with some of those who attended.

Senator Harris's were unusual sentiments, to put it mildly, expressed at an event organised by a Christian Diocesan authority.

We understand also, that a security firm patrolled the venue all day. Their representative explained that they were doing so to prevent a plan on our part to "storm and disrupt" the event.

Please rest assured that we had no intention of doing any such thing at the seminar or indeed at any other event. We publish, write, discuss and debate. Anyone who may have reported otherwise to you was bearing false witness. We would have been more than delighted to have been invited, however.

We understand that one of our published authors, the Oxford educated historian, Dr Brian Murphy of Glenstal Abbey, Co Limerick, was referred to by Senator Harris in somewhat disparaging terms. These terms referred to Dr Murphy's capacity as a Roman Catholic priest. The term "meddlesome priest" and the suggestion that priests should not "dabble in history", were, it has been reported to us, part of Senator Harris's presentation. On the other hand, Protestant clergy were encouraged to keep "their heads up" by Senator Harris.

We also wonder at the appropriateness of Senator Harris referring to a Minister of State, Dr Martin Mansergh TD, in his capacity as a member of the Church of Ireland, as a "lie down and die Protestant". This was at an event organised by your diocese as part of the Hard Gospel Project, which has the subtitle, "love your neighbour".

We find it particularly disturbing that the diocese might be seen to condone remarks that may have bordered on the sectarian. This would be unfortunate, considering the reason for setting up the Hard Gospel project was to distance the Church of Ireland from inadvertent association with the activities of the Orange Order at Drumcree Church of Ireland Parish Church. We commend generally the Hard Gospel Project's work, especially the way in which concern with sectarianism associated, however inadvertently, with the Church has been combined with a desire to oppose the twin evil of racism.

We are very interested in the subject matter of the Seminar, "Understanding our history—Protestants, the War of Independence and Civil War in County Cork" and we have published relevant material. I enclose some for your consideration.

We would welcome an opportunity to discuss the topic of the seminar with the Hard Gospel Project—under whose auspices the Seminar was held—and to explore the issues involved in this topic and to provide a basis for our mutual understanding.

We desire, at the earliest opportunity, to correct the record for all who were present at the seminar. We would like the opportunity to demonstrate that we are decent, polite and respectful individuals. Normally, we would assume that others might assume it of us. In this case, I think you will agree that those who heard otherwise will need to see the evidence for themselves.

I am sure you will agree that there is nothing to be gained from making and/or condoning outrageous allegations about people in their absence and that everything is to be gained from dialogue, respectful discussion and reflection.

I very much look forward to hearing from you and hope you are in a position to arrange a meeting at the earliest opportunity.

We are copying this letter to the academic speakers and to representatives of the Hard Gospel Project.

Yours sincerely,
Jack Lane
PRO. The Aubane Historical Society

NOTE: A report of the Church of Ireland Seminar, along with other relevant material, appears in *Church & State* for the first quarter of 2009.

C'était Francois Mitterrand by Jacques Attali

This is a remarkable biography of a remarkable man.

Jacques Attali, as a student in the elite ENA, first met Francois Mitterrand in 1966 in Paris. Mitterrand had just been defeated by General Charles de Gaulle in that year's Presidential race. Attali must have been impressed by the Socialist candidate because he approached the latter as he was leaving a restaurant and offered his political services. This was to be the start of a close political friendship that was to last for almost 30 years.

Since Mitterrand was the most important political figure of that period, a biography of Mitterrand cannot avoid being also a history of modern France. The book is also, in part, about Attali himself.

Attali is a Jew who was brought up in Algeria. Back in 1966 when he met Mitterrand he thought of himself as an intellectual *engagé*. His early heroes were Albert Camus and Jean Paul Sartre. But he became disillusioned with Sartre for his uncritical stance in relation to the Soviet Union. The intellectual Attali most admired was Raymond Aron. As a non-Marxist Socialist it was perhaps inevitable that Attali should gravitate towards Mitterrand.

Attali runs quickly through the various upheavals in French political life in the late 1960s. On 1968 he remarks that the events of May led to a victory for the Right in June.

Left Unity

The famous dictum of André Malraux —*"between de Gaulle and the Communist Party there is nothing"*—applied less in the 1960s than in the 1940s. Nevertheless the French Communist Party was still the most powerful force on the left with about 25% of the vote. The French Socialist Party didn't exist at that time. The Left alternative to the Communist Party was a *pot-pourri* of tendencies surrounding various individuals. It was only at the Congress of Epinay in 1971 that Mitterrand succeeded in forging those tendencies into a party.

Mitterrand believed that the strong position of the French Communist Party was an unnatural element of French political life and could only be explained by the heroic role the Party had played in the Resistance. But whereas other socialists, such as Michel Rocard, wanted to oppose the Communist Party, Mitterrand undermined it by forming an alliance.

In 1974 Mitterrand was the agreed Presidential candidate of the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. In the era of the Cold War it was inconceivable that a Communist could be elected President of France, given the military powers accorded to that office.

Mitterrand was narrowly defeated by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (12.7 million to 13.0 million) in the election of 1974. Attali makes the point that Mitterrand had more votes in France Métropolitain (i.e. mainland France), but the votes of the overseas territories and postal votes favoured Giscard. Mitterrand, according to Attali, always believed that the Gaullists stole most of the overseas and postal votes and thereby robbed him of victory.

Following the defeat of 1974, Mitterrand remained the dominant figure on the French Left. But, although the Communist Party was in terminal decline by the 1970s, it remained a powerful force and was still needed by Mitterrand if he was to win the 1981 Presidential Election. Meetings between the Communists and Socialists in the late 1970s were interminable and contentious. At one such meeting as negotiations had *"turned to vinegar"* Paul Laurent the Communist Party's number 2 concluded the meeting with a joke:

> "Comrade Lenin was in exile in Switzerland. He had been working very hard and his comrades brought him to the countryside of Cervin. They walked a long time. And near the top of a mountain everyone waited for his reaction to the beautiful view. After a long silence Lenin said: 'Pathetic! Absolutely pathetic'! Everyone was astonished by this reaction until someone asked comrade Lenin: 'but how can you say that about such beautiful scenery?' 'Oh, my apologies', replied Lenin. 'I was thinking of Social Democracy'."

Attali says that a *"heavy silence"* descended and everyone turned to see Mitterrand's reaction. He exploded with laughter. From other passages in the book it is clear that Mitterrand had contempt for some of his Social Democratic comrades.

The negotiations in 1977 broke down on two issues: a Minimum Wage and the extent of the Nationalisations. The Communist Party wanted a minimum wage of 2,400 francs a month, whereas Attali, who was the economics advisor for the Socialists believed that the State could not afford more than 2300. On nationalisations the Communists and Socialists agreed on what needed to be nationalised, but the Communists wanted the subsidiaries of the nationalised industries to be also nationalised.

Mitterrand was perfectly willing to concede on the minimum wage. As he said to Attali: *"you mean you are prepared to sacrifice the unity of the left for 100 francs a month!"* However he was intransigent on the second issue. He felt that the Communists wanted to use the newly nationalised industries to buy up other private companies and gradually bring all of the economy under state control.

This reveals two elements of Mitterrand's political philosophy. He was prepared to concede on what he considered inessentials, but was inflexible on what he considered was important. Secondly, he never worried too much about whether the State could afford a necessary reform. Attali says that Mitterrand believed economics was invented by civil servants and conservative types to prevent politicians from achieving things in the world. According to Attali Mitterrand often said:

> "France is a rich country even if the French for the most part are not. Don't worry about reforms which we may be able to do. They are marginal compared to what France can bear. Our real limit is not the finances but the character of the French: so conservative, so difficult to develop. And those who call themselves communists are the most resistant to change."

He was not worried at the breakdown of negotiations with the Communists. As he said to Attali:

> "They {the communists—JM} will return and support a united candidate of the Left. The people want it and they know it. They cannot betray the working class."

A Left Wing Government

And so the day arrived. Mitterrand was elected President in 1981 and in the parliamentary elections the Socialists and Communists had a majority.

In the interregnum between his election and swearing into office Mitterrand observed the constitutional niceties and refused to make any decisions until he was sworn in. Instead he occupied his time reading Zola and Maupassant. He laid a rose on each of the graves of Jean Moulin, Victor Schoelcher and Jean Jaures. Attali was asked to lay a rose on the grave of Leon Blum. On his election Mitterrand read the messages of congratulation from world leaders. He was particularly taken by a warm note from King Juan Carlos of Spain, who it turned out detested Giscard d'Estaing because of the latter's habit of constantly giving advice.

Mitterrand also took time out to offer the following wise advice to Attali:

> "The one thing I would ask of you is to beware of the women. Yes I am being quite serious: the women. They are attracted to people who have power. And they will do anything to approach them. Don't trust them. Beware!"

On Mitterrand's accession to power Attali remarked that the functioning of the State remained as before. The Government had changed but not the State. However, there were some personnel changes in the administration, but most of these were not controversial. After the sacking of one

particularly incompetent diplomat a typical Gaullist reaction was:

> "You see my dear friend, even the Socialists find you vulgar".

But once Mitterrand acceded to power he wasted no time in implementing the Socialist Programme. He believed that the momentum was with the Left after his election and therefore it was important to implement as many reforms as possible before the tide turned. The slogan of the Socialists was *"changing life"* (*changer la vie*). And Attali makes a good case that Mitterrand succeeded in doing precisely that in France. Among the reforms that Mitterrand implemented were:

- the 39 hour week
- reduction of the age of retirement to 60
- a fifth week of paid holiday leave
- abolition of the death penalty
- improvement in working conditions
- a rebalancing of the relationship between tenants and landlords
- Abolition of discrimination against Homosexuality. Also the decriminalisation of Homosexuality which was a crime in France as it was in Ireland.
- paid maternity leave
- increased powers to regional government

Attali argues that these were fundamental reforms which changed French society and could not be reversed by subsequent Gaullist Governments. But Mitterrand believed that his greatest achievement was to be elected and then re-elected for a second term of seven years. For a country which had been dominated by right-wing Governments, the fact of left-wing power was even more significant than what it had achieved. Attali quotes the following from Mitterrand:

> "Since the first French Revolution in 1789 the Left has only been in power four times. In 1848 for four months. In 1870 for two months and only in Paris: the Commune. In 1936 for a year. Therefore one can say that the first long lasting leftwing government was ours."

Attali also says that under Mitterrand there was greater access by the working class to third-level education. However, the Socialist President was not too enthusiastic about the ambitious plans of his Education Minister Jean Pierre Chevenment, who wanted 80% of young people to graduate from University.

> "What are we going to do with all these graduates? We also need bakers!"

Mitterrand's Governments implemented a wave of nationalisations. Although most of these were reversed by the Gaullists, Attali makes the point that many of these companies were on the verge of bankruptcy when they were nationalised and were bought back by the private sector at a substantial profit to the State.

Attali claims that the growth in the French economy under the socialists compared quite favourably with economic performance under the Gaullists. However, the socialists were no better than the Gaullists at tackling the problem of unemployment. Mitterrand believed that a Leninist policy could solve the problem of unemployment, but he was not prepared to pursue such a policy because of the loss of individual liberties which it would entail.

Ultimately, Mitterrand was a Social Democrat. He said to Attali that he would never pursue a policy which he knew in advance would fail. I take this to mean that he would never try to impose a policy on French society against its will.

Attali is quite critical of Mitterrand's Governments. He says that after the first three years he let things drift and preferred to concentrate on foreign policy. Perhaps Mitterrand felt that in regard to domestic policy he had come up against the limits of what was achievable in a parliamentary democracy.

In 1986 the Left lost the parliamentary elections and for the next couple of years there was a period of *cohabitation*. (A left wing Government returned after Mitterrand was re-elected in 1988.) Mitterrand remained as President but the Gaullists were in Government. The French Constitution was unclear as to the prerogatives of the President in this situation and so the issue was resolved by a battle of wills between Mitterrand and the Gaullist Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac. Again we see how Mitterrand was prepared to concede on inessentials but was inflexible when it came to what he considered important.

In the period of cohabitation Mitterrand summed up his relationship with Chirac as follows:

> "I control the Army and you control the SNCF {the French railways—JM}".

The *"Army"* included all matters of foreign policy. The *"SNCF"* was shorthand for the domestic economy. Accordingly, Mitterrand had to sign off on the privatisations of the recently-nationalised companies. However, he successfully resisted Chirac's attempt to privatise companies which had been nationalised in 1945. He argued that these were part of the heritage (*patrimoine*) of the State and as head of the State he was obliged to defend their retention. When Mitterrand threatened to have a referendum on the issue, Chirac was forced to back down.

Foreign Policy

Chirac made some feeble attempts to muscle in on foreign policy but he was no match for Mitterrand. In any case, although Mitterrand detested de Gaulle, it turned out that his foreign policy was very Gaullist in orientation. However, he seemed to have had a soft spot for Margaret Thatcher. Although he found the British Prime Minister's economic policies repugnant, he admired her ability to defend her principles in the face of massive unpopularity. He was also fascinated by her dominance over her Cabinet. Attali says that Mitterrand described Thatcher as having "the eyes of Stalin and the voice of Marilyn Monroe", which probably says more about the French President's imagination than Thatcher!

Mitterrand had no illusions about British foreign policy. Nevertheless, he supported Thatcher in the Falklands/Malvinas War. Much to the chagrin of the Quai d'Orsay (the French Foreign Office), he revealed the technical details of the Exocet missiles France had sold to Argentina to the British, making them easier to bring down. Mitterrand had no regrets about this. He believed that France had interests in Europe and Africa, but had no influence in Latin America or the Middle East and therefore it was in France's interest to support Britain.

Attali briefly refers to the war in Rwanda. He says that Mitterrand saw it as a conflict between Francophone and Anglophone countries, which I think is accurate. Attali also exonerates France of any responsibility for the genocide, which I also think is fair. (This will be examined in more detail in a future issue of *Irish Foreign Affairs*).

However, he disagreed with Thatcher in her policy regarding the IRA Hunger Strikers. He also found her toleration of Apartheid in South Africa repugnant. His approach to the Soviet Union was different. And, of course, he was permanently at loggerheads with her on Europe.

He had a hard-headed attitude to the defence of France. He believed that France should have all the weapons of any potential enemy including biological weapons. France can say that she will not use them. But she should only destroy them if her enemies do likewise.

Unlike many social democrats of the time Mitterrand was a strong believer in the nuclear deterrent. In particular he believed in an independent nuclear deterrent for France. However, he had no interest in France having short-range nuclear missiles. For France to have an effective nuclear deterrent its enemies—no matter where they were in the world—must believe that they themselves could be attacked. For this reason he preferred to have his nuclear weapons in undetectable submarines.

France was, and is, the only independent nuclear power in Western Europe. (Britain is not independent of the USA.) However, Mitterrand believed that she was incapable of defending Western Europe on her own. He hoped that in time Europe would be capable of defending herself, but until that time came the defence of Western Europe was the responsibility of NATO. For this reason he was in favour of American nuclear missiles located in West Germany.

His great fear was that there would be a nuclear war confined to Europe. He thought that the USA could watch from across the Atlantic, but in such a war France *"could not escape to the moon"*. For this reason he always demanded that American Presidents commit themselves to attacking the Soviet Union in the event of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe. Anything less would render the nuclear deterrent ineffective.

He refused to form a nuclear alliance with West Germany. Such an alliance would compromise France's independence. This was consistent with the policy of de Gaulle, Pompidou, and Giscard d'Estaing. When nuclear disarmament was implemented in Europe, Mitterrand insisted that France's nuclear missiles were not included. Attali remarks that this annoyed both the USA and the Soviet Union which both agreed that France should not have an independent nuclear deterrent.

The USA was also against France having an independent foreign policy in relationship to the Soviet Union. Mitterrand tried to develop relations with Gorbachev but was undermined by leaks to the media. (I have read elsewhere that Mitterrand believed that a senior journalist in *Le Monde* was working for the CIA.)

Attali recounts a very revealing meeting Mitterrand had with Constantine Chernenko, the elderly Soviet leader. During the meeting Gorbachev arrived late from an economics meeting. In front of Mitterrand, Chernenko asked Gorbachev how things were. Gorbachev proceeded to outline the dire economic state that the Soviet economy was in. Attali doesn't comment on this incident. But in my opinion it shows Gorbachev's naivety. Gorbachev believed that the West would help him make economic reforms.

But while Mitterrand thought that the West should give unconditional economic aid, this was not the policy of the USA and Britain. They made aid conditional on a collapse of the existing economic system.

I have sometimes speculated what would have happened if Brezhnev's successor, Yuri Andropov, had lived longer. Attali says that the Austrian Socialist Prime Minister Bruno Kreisky thought that Andropov *"was the strongest Soviet personality since Lenin"*.

Mitterrand viewed the collapse of the Soviet Union with a sense of foreboding. He was particularly worried about political developments in Germany. However, unlike Thatcher, he was realistic enough to know that a United Germany was inevitable. He concentrated his efforts on anchoring Germany within the European Union. He also insisted that Chancellor Kohl recognise the border with Poland. In the euphoria of unification there was a strong political tendency in favour of reclaiming the German parts of Poland.

However, Mitterrand did not resist Germany's recognition of Croatia's independence. Attali says that Mitterrand was horrified but felt he could do nothing because negotiations for the Euro were at a sensitive stage.

On the subject of the Euro, Mitterrand decided to hold a referendum in France on the Maastricht Treaty because he thought that Europe should be a Europe of the people. He won a narrow victory. But in the light of recent events, it would be interesting to know how he would have responded to a defeat.

Mitterrand & Second World War

Mitterrand followed the Gaullist doctrine that France under Vichy was not the *"real France"* and therefore the *"real France"* had nothing to apologise for. Whether one agrees with that historical view or not, it makes sense for France to adopt that position in relation to other countries so as to avoid being at a moral disadvantage. Recently Nicholas Sarkozy repeated this Gaullist doctrine, but as has been pointed out in this magazine, in his book *Testimony* he says France was liberated by the Americans. De Gaulle always claimed that France liberated herself.

The life of Francois Mitterrand shows that the "real France" was a very complicated entity. In the Autumn of 1994 Pierre Péan, a distinguished journalist, revealed that Mitterrand worked for the Vichy administration from the Spring of 1942 to the beginning of 1943. It was not until 1943 that he joined the Resistance.

This revelation caused a personal crisis for Attali. He realised that he had been lied to by Mitterrand for all the years that he had known him. Attali felt that he had to reassess his relationship and the record of Mitterrand. He couldn't believe that Mitterrand was anti-Semitic. On the contrary, he seemed an admirer of Jewish culture. His mother had inculcated in him a great love of the Bible. He was a supporter of the State of Israel,while recognising that the Palestinians should have their own State. Attali claimed that France was the only country that had good relations with both the PLO and Israel. Attali felt that Mitterrand was less *"arabist"* than the Quai d'Orsay.

Attali was forced to recall other incidents and conversations that he had witnessed. He remembered meeting Mitterrand at a restaurant in 1977. The latter was dining with some well-known figures in the Resistance and some other people that Attali did not know. Two of the diners turned out to be senior members of the Vichy police force. One of them, René Bousquet was involved in the notorious Vel d'Hiv incident, in which thousands of Jews were transferred from Paris to the concentration camps. When Attali questioned Mitterrand on this, he said that Bousquet had given valuable information to the Resistance and that no one could really understand that period in French history unless they had lived through it. In my opinion the fact that Resistants were dining with Collaborators seems to indicate that Mitterrand had a point.

Attali also describes an evening spent with Francois Sagan and other writers in which Mitterrand seemed to defend the notorious French Nazi Pierre Laval. Mitterrand remarked that Laval, along with Léon Blum and André Tardieu, was one of the few men of real stature in pre-war France. But he had lost his way because he had no convictions and had too much confidence in himself. Attali suggests that Mitterrand could have been talking about himself. Maybe so! Mitterrand certainly had feet of clay. But if Attali is suggesting that one should suppress all thoughts about a person because of his repugnant politics I would have to disagree.

Elsewhere he recalls with horror a discussion Mitterrand had with Kohl on the subject of Rudolph Hess, who had been arrested by the British at the beginning of the War. Mitterrand thought that Hess's punishment of 40 years imprisonment was *"inhuman"*. He continued:

> "You know I saw Hess. I was present at a session of the Nuremberg trial. It was grotesque to see those accused in front of the judges in all their finery like a spectacle. Certainly they were awful people, but some perhaps less so. And among them Hess appeared like a stranger. During breaks in the session they talked among themselves. But Hess did not mix with the others. He remained on his own in a corner."

Mitterrand went on to talk about Goring and concluded:

> "He was not an ideologue. He was an adventurer."

Attali is shocked at what he sees as an attempt to humanise the Nazis. He seems to think that the Nazi ideology is so terrible that all thought about it should be suppressed. And that furthermore Mitterrand's opinions are a subconscious defence of his collaboration during the War.

Attali also recalls a speech in 1987 in which Mitterrand recalled the kindness of a German woman who gave him bread when he was a prisoner. He concluded that the Germans do not hate the French. And the French do not hate the Germans.

Attali is outraged at this. He turned to Mitterrand's foreign minister—Roland Dumas, the son of a Resistant who was shot by the Nazis—and said:

> "Surely he should have said *some* Germans did not hate France."

Dumas replied:

> "You cannot understand. De Gaulle thought the same".

To which Attali responded:

"But I did not think we were Gaullists."

Dumas smiled and made a sign to indicate that he wanted to hear the rest of the speech. Mitterrand concluded his speech by saying:

"We must change. Let us move on from grief, the wounds of all kinds, divisions…".

In Attali's opinion Mitterrand was trying to build the Franco-German alliance on the basis of forgetting the past. But I don't see it like that. I don't see why it is necessary to dwell on the Nazi atrocities in all dealings with Germany. Furthermore, in some ways, despite Mitterrand's lies and evasions, the evidence of this book would suggest that he was grappling towards a more realistic view of the Second World War than Attali!

The Mitterrand Enigma

At the time of writing there is a television series on Bertie Ahern. One of the themes is Ahern's enigmatic quality. But a reading of Attali's book indicates that Mitterrand was even more complex. Ahern had a similar style to Mitterrand in conducting Cabinet meetings. Both would not reveal what they thought about a particular issue before finding out what their Ministers thought. However, there was one difference. Ahern would arrive at a decision by consensus and by nudging the discussion in a certain direction. Mitterrand, on the other hand, would conclude a meeting by saying that he would *"reflect"* on what had been said. The following morning he would issue written instructions. There was never the slightest ambiguity as to who had made the final decision.

Attali tells us that Mitterrand had a rural background and preferred the regional press to the national newspapers such as *Le Monde*. His favourite authors were also provincials: Chateaubriand, Lamartine, and Barbey d'Aurevilly. He didn't like Malraux, Aragon, or Proust: *"too Parisian"*.

He had no interest in America: neither its language nor culture. But he did like her *"provincial"* literature: Steinbeck, Dos Passos, and Styron.

He believed that Socialism in France must be rooted in her national traditions. And yet he stood as a centre-right candidate in his youth. He said that to understand a person's politics you must not look at what he says but at his feet. Where does he stand? Mitterrand claimed that he stood on the ground of the working class.

There is so much information about Mitterrand in this book, and yet he remains an enigma. He didn't believe in religion, but did believe in a supernatural power. He thought prayer was important as a means of communicating by thought with *"something higher"*. He didn't believe in heaven or hell, but did believe in the *"forces of the spirit"*. He assured his friends that he would not leave them when he died. Every day he thought about *"his dead"*, people whom he remembered. He saw himself as a *"tomb of memory"*, a *"guardian of memory"*. He hoped that people would, in turn, remember him after his death. Most of all, he hoped that he would see his mother again.

Attali concludes the book by writing movingly about Mitterrand's last days. As I write, I am thinking of a good friend of my own, Pat Murphy, who is also dying. I reproduce the passage below while thinking of him as well as the French President.

"When he left the Élysée in May 1995, he only thought of himself and the mark he had made in the memory of others. He braced himself to look in the face of death. At that adversary who had hung over him and on whom he had imposed his own time table; fifteen years after the dire prognosis of his doctors. It was, as he said himself, 'an honourable fight'.

"The apartment he chose, in rue Frédéric Le Play, near the Champ de Mars, was the antechamber of his death, a neutral place, without any link to his former lives. Never choose. Always remain free. Right until the end.

"For nine months, he prepared his departure and received some of his friends. Not all. Not me. He was too sick to accept the least criticism. At the end of his days he walked in the neighbouring streets and loved when people stopped him in the street and said to him a simple 'thank you'. He said to me on the telephone that he was far from being detached. He suffered enormously. On his last New Year's Eve he said to Jack Lang: 'I suffer as if I have the Gestapo in me'.

"On the 8th of January 1996, at the end of his strength, he chose to go before his death, beyond pain and nothingness, towards what he hoped would be the smile of liberty."

Quel homme! What a man!

John Martin

Does It Stack Up ?

Withdrawing all pig products

Things do not happen by accident. Mostly. There was knowledge of the dioxins (PCBs) in pork products at least as far back as last September. Why break the story with such ferocity on Sunday 7th December 2008? It was just not a leak of information—it was a full-blooded officially-backed scare at a time of maximum selling near Christmas. Ah, those farmers who marched against Lisbon were going to be taught a lesson by those who govern they would not soon forget. By the time the problem was declared—well not a problem—the farmers were on-side and EU money was promised in compensation and Lisbon 2 made its landing full throttle.

But back to the beginning of this highly intriguing story. In the newspapers of 8th December 2008, which must surely have gone to print by 10pm on Sunday evening, there were full instructions given on the disposal of all pork and bacon products. On the RTE 6 o clock news that night, we were shown workers who had gone to a slaughtering and processing plant for work at 7am as usual, and they were told by Department of Agriculture officials that they wouldn't be allowed on site and to go to the Social Services office for their dole. There they were told that it would take until at least 6 weeks before any claim could be processed: it was hard watching hard-working parents reduced to penury by our State just before Christmas. This is how our Government acts these days when our democracy is out of step with the political elite over EU policy. And make no mistake that is what this so-called crisis was all about. All told, some 1,800 workers in pig meat factories were laid off immediately.

Then on Friday 12th 2008, the scare was over, killed off by Minister of Agriculture, Brendan Smith TD, after obtaining on Thursday 11th a promise of fifteen million Euro from the EU Commission. And *mirabile dictum*, with a wave of his ministerial wand, the pigs and all the pork, bacon and sausages were fit for human consumption again. The Government, the Minister and the EU had all between them saved Ireland's bacon and everyone thanked the Government and the EU for being able to look forward once more to their Christmas Hams and Turkeys. Phew—what a relief!

By Friday 12th, everyone and particularly the print media seemed to have forgotten (a) the Government and the Minister for Agriculture had started the scare, (b) the Minister's order to pull all pig meat and dump it was way over-the-top and did enormous damage to Ireland's export markets—millions of Euros worth of damage and (c) the Department of Agriculture was guilty of gross negligence in not inspecting the food production plant more often that twice a year. But who cares? The Government was praised in the media for fixing the 'problem' and the EU promised to contribute Euros and the re-running of the Lisbon Treaty was again announced. So we must all be good citizens and vote 'YES'.

Scientific Genius?

Again the "pig crisis" showed up the lack of a decent State laboratory in Ireland. So much for our knowledge-based economy. The PCB/Dioxin tests were sent to a laboratory in York, England and cost £1,000 per test.

A matter of serious national importance, which our pig industry is, was entrusted to a laboratory in a competing country (and also a country which is one of our biggest customers). The Government which boasts of our high turn-out of young scientists is caught out once more to be caring nothing for our science graduates, who have to emigrate, probably to places such as York, to get work.

The same also happened also in the Foot and Mouth epidemic and it is happening also with the Health Services Executive, which sends its cancer screening tests to the USA. What the Department of Agriculture and the HSE are doing is not only depriving young scientists of jobs but also ensuring that there is no expertise being passed on in Ireland in what should be our scientific community. Also, of course, the present policies show a substantial lack of National Self-Respect for our own security and sovereignty even during all these Celtic Tiger years.

Michael Stack

Notes in Response To Feargus O Raghallaigh's *Commodities: there's anudder way to build an economy*

(November *Irish Political Review*)

Perhaps these notes might start a trail leading to a structured response, perhaps with someone else.

1. These is a genetic problem with the Chinese regarding their ability to digest cows milk. this is likely to emerge as a problem, but there are perhaps ways around it. i have observed this at first hand among Chinese in Ireland.

2. China as a food importer is undoubtedly of interest to Australia and New Zealand, and global food trade is going to develop all sorts of new channels. the problem is going to be how to sustain production by recycling nutrients back into the soil, using urban waste biomass as source. this will impose constraints on the length of the supply chain. Globally food supply will need to be localised as near as possible to the main conurbations.

3. Yes we can produce food from grass, but pure pastoral production is essentially seasonal. To deseasonalise production we need to Winter-feed with fodder crops, and promote Autumn calving as well as Spring.

4. Our problem is not the dual-purpose cow; this has gone decades ago; Frisians are everywhere. The problem is that the milk production follows the grass cycle; the seasonality factor is 10 or more. Whence the concentration on powdered skim; a Summer peak disposal operation.

5. We also have the problem of regional over-specialisation, generating a long-haul load for intermediate products. Pigs and poultry in Monaghan fed with Wexford barley. Calves from Connaught fattened in Meath.

6. We need somehow to re-develop natural local synergies between livestock, tillage and horticulture, generating all possible added-value user-ready food products. This is the co-operative production challenge. Can we do this systematically, in a town hinterland, on a managed scale of say 100 sq kms? 10k ha? This problem needs to be addressed by ICOs: think how to scale up the supply chain of Myrtle Allen's foodie hotel.

7. OK, there would still be specialisations; Munster for milk, Meath for beef, Wexford for barley, Armagh for apples, but in all cases as a prime product in a product mix, all export-worthy, and all giving a rich local supply.

8. the key idea is to treat the grass-clover mix as a rotating crop, as a 5 to 7 year ley in a multi-crop rotation, where the fertility is built up by ploughing in the urban bio-waste fertiliser during the tillage part of the cycle. This is the organic alternative to industrialised monocultures, dependent on pesticides and artificial fertiliser; these are not sustainable, and are gluttons for fossil energy.

see also perhaps
http://www.iol.ie/~rjtechne/climate/orga0708.htm
also
http://www.iol.ie/~rjtechne/climate/fwcc0807.htm
and the other papers hotlinked from it.

It will be evident from the foregoing that I am trying to re-capture something of the tradition of Craig and Ralahine, as noted by Connolly in his *'Reconquest'*. Also Plunkett and Russell; later my father, with his 1923 Agricultural Commission report addendum, and his 1951 'Irish Agriculture In Transition'; also R.M. Burke in Tuam, whose centenary was recently celebrated. but I am not in a position to give a lead, in retirement at age 79, and living in Dublin. It is a matter of finding an organic activist who is motivated to re-discover the co-operative movement, and build an integrally-managed multi-product 'estate' from the bottom up, reviving and updating Bobby Burke's Tuam vision. Perhaps the Rossinver organic people will come around to this in the end.

The Left has never got on top of the agriculture problem. it cannot be done by industrial analogy. You have to know how to keep the earthworms happy and working away at the ploughing! Perhaps the energy crunch will wake people up.

Roy Johnston PhD FInstP CIEI

Film Review

Bobby Sands Remembered

Steve McQueen's film *Hunger* is not easy to watch, especially the reconstruction of the 'dirty protest' in the H-blocks in Long Kesh (under its alias of Her Majesty's Prison, The Maze). The transmission of 'comms' (communications) is pretty eye-watering stuff too, and is shown in detail. In some ways, this is the documentary that could not be made at the time of the Hunger Strikes.

Steve McQueen is Black British, which is probably significant. He is culturally close enough to the British (especially the official) mentality to understand it—and tangential enough not to take it at face value. He is an Art College product and has been accused of 'over-aestheticising' the physical conditions of the men on the 'dirty protest'. That is not accurate. Thank the Abstract Entity the 'smellies' never really took off.

Steve McQueen contributed to the script (the 'writer' billed is Enda Walsh). The now-famous discussion between Bobby Sands (Michael Fassbender—who looks nothing like Sands—and in one full-face close-up strikingly resembles Roger Casement) and 'Father Moran' (Liam Cunningham) is fascinating. The person Sands had this debate with was Father Denis Faul. He might have engaged in folksy chat about his job. But he was a Catholic priest of the old school who would have argued the point of hunger-striking to the death (if necessary), and would not have flounced out when Sands made it plain he was prepared to go all the way to death.

'Suicide' as 'Father Moran' puts it. Even though, (unlike Denis Faul), he is described—by Sands—as 'a Republican'. A reason why this section of the film has disturbed so many critics is that Sands is allowed to put his case remarkably clearly. And the visual artist McQueen allows the discussion to carry the film—the camera does not move for seventeen minutes. Sands made the decision, (essentially), to re-commence the Hunger Strike because the authorities had not kept their end of the bargain that had ended the previous strike.

This was in his capacity as O/C of the PIRA prisoners. (There were INLA prisoners—it was in this period that the Workers' Party disowned Official IRA prisoners—leaving their welfare needs to their families and friends.) 'O/C' means 'Officer Commanding', and Sands makes the cold-blooded calculation that the strike should be 'staggered'. He would begin the hunger strike and others should join him on a fortnightly basis. This (military) aspect is implicit in the script of *Hunger*—Sands is not portrayed as a victim of

circumstances—he is calling the shots.

This aspect of the matter has made this film problematical for British critics. *Sight and Sound*, the journal of the British Film Institute has not reviewed it—which is extremely unusual. Neither has the *Guardian*, which takes film very seriously. The only mention of *Hunger* on its website is a very short notice from May, when the film was shown in Cannes.

Ireland's own revisionists will undoubtedly be less inclined to silence. Fintan O'Toole was first out with a confusing (and confused) article (*IT* Sat., 22.11.08) *'Hunger' fails to wrest the narrative from the hunger strikers*. It is by no means clear why the 'narrative' ought to be 'wrested' from the hunger strikers. Or even of what this 'narrative' consists. O'Toole doesn't say it, but he is concerned about the dialogue between Sands and (in effect) Faul. And that Sands makes his case so vigorously. So half the article is given over to the aesthetic effect of the film. There is a curious sub-theme involving the former hunger striker, Pat McGeown, whom O'Toole once accompanied on his rounds as a Belfast Councillor. The relevance of the latter appears to be that Sands and the rest ought not to have died, and by his {Fintan O'Toole's} reckoning become 'martyrs'.

He writes (of the hunger strikes), that *"... aesthetics trumps politics. The fusion of a visual imagery that deliberate tapped into images of Christ..."*. Steve McQueen made the point that there is only a minute and a half's worth of moving film of the strikers. Most of the still images of the strikers were taken from this stock.

In O'Toole's view, the hunger strikers were manipulated by Sinn Féin, the National Anti-H-Blocks Committee. And the media. The strikers were absorbed by the facts of the strike. The Christ-images that O'Toole is referring to are of men with long dark hair and beards. Sands himself was fair-haired. His supporters also deployed the photographic image of Sands as a cheerful, open-faced, young man. The latter image was used on the cover of his books of verse. And on the mural on the Falls.

Then there is the assertion *"the prisoners were killers"*: it is true enough that many of them were 'killers'. They were IRA Volunteers, who killed for specific political reasons. The police and soldiers they killed themselves killed for pay or pleasure. O'Toole asserts that *"29 prison officers"* were *"murdered by the IRA"*. Surely the Loyalist paramilitaries (who have—decidedly—not gone away) were more enthusiastic about killing prison officers than Republicans? A *Guardian* blog on *Hunger* starts with a similar, if more crude, assertion that the strikers were criminal, thus simplistically taking British law as the yardstick.

Part of the context was that young Sands happily played soccer in a 'mixed' team in Newtownabbey—until the day the UDA (Ulster Defence Association) toured his own housing estate turning the Taigs out—and in many cases burning their premises. There is also the fact that when the Taigs, in 1968-'69, asked to be allowed to be properly British, Unionism went berserk. And Westminster (which is where the power lies in the UK State) did nothing about it—other than lecture the natives about being undisciplined, or impatient—until the (television) images coming out of the place meant they had to be seen to do something. At which point, they sent seventeen-year old troops to Belfast. Where they ran away from armed and trained loyalists who burned Bombay Street to the ground in a matter of minutes.

The hunger strikes did not happen in stable states and societies like those in the cosy Twenty-Six counties (from where Fintan O'Toole does his pontificating), or Great Britain (from where NI is ruled).

Seán McGouran

Historians?

Part Two

Continuation of review of *Jack Lynch* by Dermot Keogh

"Conspiracy To Import Arms

"The 'autumn of 1969 provided fertile ground—and luxuriant cover—for conspiratorial politics', wrote Dick Walsh, "whether designed to hijack the party or to subvert the state, or to achieve both ambitions at once". He argued that the causes of the Arms Crisis in 1969-70 were

> 'the existence in the competing factions that were prepared to seize any issue as a vehicle for their ambitions and the party's failure to arrive at any clear definition of its first national aim and how it might be achieved'. {From Dick Walsh's book, *The Party*, 1986.}

"While Lynch carried the party at the ard-fheis {17 Jan 1970}, there were those in the Government who only gave lip service to Government policy. Blaney, who would emerge as the leader of a shadowy 'parallel government', only rejected the clear statement of non-violence repeated by Lynch. He sought, in a sinister and underhand manner, to weaken Lynch's leadership and to implement his private policy on Northern Ireland to arm militant nationalists in order to 'finish the job' and restore national unity'.* The newly formed Provisional IRA embarked on a 'long war' to bring about a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland achieve the goal of Irish unity. The illegal importation of arms, in such a combustible situation, had to be stopped by the state. Yet the Special Branch had passed on information to the Dept. of Justice in Oct. 1969 that implicated Capt. Kelly in a plan to use Government funds to purchase and import arms illegally for the purpose of distribution in Northern Ireland"—but the information was not passed on, and the Taoiseach, Lynch, said he had not been informed of it (p233).

The reference Note indicated by the asterisk is given 300 pages later, on page 535. One expects it to substantiate the assertion that Blaney was running a *"parallel government"* in defiance of the Taoiseach and was engaged in illegally importing arms for the IRA through the agency of Captain Kelly. But, if you interrupt a reading of the narrative to assure yourself that the assertion is supported by some evidence, you find that the reference Note is about Kevin Boland, who is not mentioned in these crucial paragraphs and was not charged with Conspiracy.

The reference given for the assertion that Blaney ran a *"a parallel government"* that was trying to import arms illegally for the Provisional IRA is as follows:

> "Ironically, Boland was not part of that inner circle and, for all his bluster, would not have agreed with its alleged collective action {sic} that resulted in a failed gun-running attempt. He wanted a British declaration of withdrawal. Not expecting that partition would be ended over night, Boland anticipated a period of transition of two parliaments in a federal Irish state. In reality he was very far from the Blaney line—and the supposed Haughey line—which expected immediate full unity following a British withdrawal. Boland was also worlds apart socially from Haughey. Although they had attended the same secondary school, and Haughey had been in an accountancy partnership with Kevin Boland's brother, in 1969 they moved in different social milieus—Haughey in the world of fine living, high art and the young entrepreneurial movers and shakers. As Minister for Finance, Haughey had to discipline the spending propensities of his colleague. He did not respect Blaney very much and, according to Bruce Arnold, felt that Lynch ought to have got rid of him early on because of his divergent views on the North. But that view was expressed before the 1969 general election" (p535).

So what we get in the reference note on the crucial paragraph are random thoughts, connected by free association, about somebody against whom no allegations of criminal conduct were ever made, and who did not figure in the Arms Trial in any way whatever, but who, in the light of the political mess brought about under Lynch's

leadership, resigned from the Government, and was removed from Party office for refusing to withdraw a statement that Lynch had acted treacherously.

Dick Walsh is the seminal authority for the paragraph. I met him once, and would not waste my time meeting him again. He was an *Irish Times* journalist who sat on a bar-stool and circulated the latest gossip brought to him from the corridors of power. In those days I presumed—in accordance with Burke's injunction—that important people in public life acted with the best intentions. Walsh had some importance in public life. I tried to engage him in a discussion of social realities in the North—as in those years I did with people across the entire spectrum of politics in the Republic—in the hope of showing them that their idea of the Ulster Protestants was a piece of completely groundless make-belief, and that it would all come to grief on the reality, unless that reality was come to terms with beforehand and a radically different approach adopted. He wasn't interested. He seemed to live in a dimension where reality did not count. He is an apt authority for Professor Keogh.

The Walsh/Keogh case was put to the test of a trial for criminal conspiracy against the legitimate authority of the State. As Keogh puts it:

> "On 10 May {1970} Lynch had "handed to the Attorney General all the copy documents given to me by Mr. Berry "Secretary of the Dept. of Justice, who claimed he had been trying to inform Lynch of these things since the previous October} for whatever action he, the Attorney General, decided. I had nothing further to do with the matter or with the subsequent trial".
>
> "The law took its course" (p265).

The law took its course in the form of two Trials, the first of which was aborted by the Judge who took offence at a remark made by a Defence Counsel. Keogh's account of *the law taking its course* takes up six lines in a book of over 600 pages:

> "On 22 Sept. the "Arms Trial" began, Mr. Justice Aindrias O'Caoimh presiding. It was stopped on 29 Sept.—the day following the James Ryan funeral—after an exchange of views between the judge and a defence counsel. The jury was discharged. a new trial opened on 6 October and lasted fourteen days. On 23 October, the four defendants were acquitted. The writer Tom Mc Intyre described what happened" (p267).

And that's it!

A short paragraph by Mac Intyre is included, describing not what happened at the Trial, but the response to the verdict: *"The place flies asunder to a brute roar..."* etc. Mac Intyre's *Through The Bridewell Gate* (1971) is the only book ever published about the Trial. (A book called *The Arms Trial*, by Justin O'Brien, has little in it about the actual Trial.) Keogh has two quotations from it, neither of which says anything about the Trial itself. The other one is:

> "Few Governments would have survived the tumultuous aftermath of the trial—but, in Dublin, the Party, long in power, kept power… Oh Cabbage Republic, 'tis of thee we sing" (quoted by Keogh, p270).

The law took its course. The course that it took was promptly ignored by those who launched it on its course, as it is now ignored by their historian.

The Prosecution case was presented to the Court in concentrated form (at least it seems concentrated by comparison with the diffuse form in which the historian rehashes it), was gone over in detail for three weeks, and was found wanting. The Defence case was upheld by the verdict. The historian makes no mention, that I noticed, of what the Defence case was.

It was that the Government authorised a covert import of arms—meaning an acquisition of arms that would not be known to the British State—and that those charged with criminal conspiracy had acted covertly but on lawful authority.

The Prosecution apparently depended on the Director of Military Intelligence, Colonel Hefferon, to give evidence against his subordinate, Captain Kelly. The Colonel in fact gave evidence that Captain Kelly had acted under authority, and with the knowledge of the Minister for Defence.

Thirty years later it came to light that the Statement which Hefferon gave to the police was altered by the Prosecution before being put in the Book of Evidence for the Trial. Parts of it which conflicted with the Prosecution case were deleted or changed to say something different. Privilege was claimed over the original documents. (The Judge in the second trial recently issued a statement that he did not know that this file had been withheld by the Government on the grounds of privilege.)

When the Colonel saw his Statement as given in the Book of Evidence, he must have seen that it was not the Statement he gave to the police. It is not known if anybody in authority discussed the altered Statement with him. The significance of the alterations cannot have escaped him—they had to do with his reports to the Defence Minister about Captain Kelly's activities. All that is known is that he seems to have had a crisis of conscience immediately before giving evidence in the first Trial. And the certainty is that he gave evidence in accordance with his Statement as given to the police. This Statement appeared in the National Archive thirty years later, where it was not discovered by any historian or investigative journalist, but by Captain Kelly.

The day after Hefferon had finished giving evidence the Judge collapsed the Trial on a flimsy excuse. It would then have made sense for the Government either to let the matter rest, or to present a new case for a new trial. It did neither. A new Trial was held very quickly with the same Prosecution case and the same list of Prosecution witnesses, with the difference that the Prosecution indicated that it would not call its main witness, Colonel Hefferon, to give evidence.

The Defence protested against this Prosecution attempt to exclude Hefferon's evidence while retaining him on its list of witnesses. The Judge responded by himself calling Hefferon to the witness box. But, having called him, he did not examine him, and he did not require the Prosecution to examine him. What he did was call on the Defence to question him and then call on the Prosecution to question him. This was as close as could be got to allowing the Prosecution to cross-examine its own witness.

Cross-examination of Prosecution evidence is the essential right of the Defence in adversarial trials. The Defence was deprived of it in this instance by the actions of the Prosecution and the Judge. There was no Examination and there there could be no Cross-Examination. But, by requiring the Defence to question this Prosecution witness first and then passing him over to the Prosecution, the Judge gave the Prosecution the *de facto* right to cross-examine its own witness without declaring him hostile.

But the Prosecution failed to break its own witness. The essential thing in his evidence remained firm—that Captain Kelly acted under official authority with the knowledge of the Defence Minister.

The Defence case, which convinced the jury, is not even mentioned by Keogh, even though it is substantiated by military documents put in the National Archive thirty years later. The Army was instructed by the Government to prepare for possible incursions into the North, and for the arming of Nationalist civilians in the North, if events in the North took a certain turn. The latter required the covert importation of arms, which Captain Kelly organised.

The distinction between *covert* and *illegal* should not be difficult to grasp, but it is not a distinction that is made by Keogh who, *de facto*, equates covert with illegal.

Half a century after the foundation of the State there was still no Irish arms industry. Arms had to be imported, and the arms imported in the regular way were known to the British State and therefore could not be made available to nationalists in the North.

The relationship of the British State to

the Irish Army is one of those sensitive matters that are not spoken of, though nobody who looks at the matter can really believe that there is no relationship.

The Irish Army post-1921 was not the Army that in 1919-21 fought the war against Britain (in support of the 1918 electoral mandate) which obliged the British to negotiate, and to concede much more than it would have done without that war. But, in conceding, it had the object of breaking the military force which had obliged it to negotiate. It succeeded brilliantly in this.

Collins imagined that he could take what Britain offered (under ultimatum) in December 1921 and use it as a stepping-stone towards gaining what was denied. He failed to carry the bulk of the Volunteer Army with him from the Republic to the Free State. During the first half of 1922 he organised a new, paid, Army which was armed by Britain. He hoped to devise a Free State Constitution that the bulk of the Volunteer Army could live with, but Whitehall would not allow it. He still hoped to proceed with the formation of the Free State while leaving the Volunteer Army in being for further development, but he was given another ultimatum: if he did not make war on the Volunteer Army, the British Army would do so. So, with a paid Army armed by Britain, he set about destroying the Army that had compelled Britain to negotiate.

The Treaty War—the so-called Civil War—was fought by the Free State on the authority of the Crown with armaments supplied by the Crown. And that was the only war it ever fought, or was equipped to fight. It was called a Defence Force rather than an Army, but was actually a force for internal repression. One would expect the General Staff of a Defence Force to look across the borders of the State it was supposed to be defending and to draw up contingency plans and play war games relevant to a range of possible situations. The Free State/Irish Defence Force did not do that. Though amended somewhat after 1932, and particularly under the prospect of British invasion around 1940, and though it took part in UN operations after 1960, it still in 1969 had not done most of the things one would expect a Defence Force to do.

It remained very much an Army subordinate to the British influence through which it was established in the first place. In 1939-40 Ireland was urged by Britain to make war on Germany—after Britain had ensured that it lacked the means of making war on anybody. (And Britain, which understood this very well, did not want Ireland to make war, only to make its territory available to Britain for the War.) And by 1969 the Irish Defence Force had still not peered across the Border.

Actual war-making capacity lay with the Volunteer Army that had fought the War of 1919-21, that had been crushed by Collins's Army acting as a British proxy in 1922-3, but that survived with real military potential half a century later, due to systematic misgovernment by the British State in the Six Counties. (I do not say, 'because of Partition', because I do not think that Partition would have remained an issue capable of generating war if the Six Counties after 1921 had been governed within the British political democracy.)

I am not saying that the IRA remained the legitimate national army despite the Treaty, the repeal of the Oath, and the 1937 Constitution. I used what little influence I had in an attempt to prevent its revival in West Belfast in 1969-70. But there are such things as facts in the world, and one of them is that Irish military tradition was alive in the IRA and nowhere else.

The IRA was continuously regenerated because of the position of the Catholic community under the form of British government imposed on the North, and was continuously repressed in the South where it disputed the legitimacy of the State.

After the Treaty War the work of repression passed from the Defence Force to the Special Branch of the Guards. Long-term control of the Special Branch was exercised by the Secretary of the Justice Department, Peter Berry. In the August of 1969 the Army was deployed on the Border for the first time, and it was instructed to make provision for incursions into the North, either openly or in conjunction with the defensive insurgency that came into existence there in response to the pogrom of mid-August.

The Special Branch had tunnel vision. There was nothing improper or unusual in that. Agencies of the State have their own particular purposes to which they are dedicated. In the Autumn of 1969 the Army went about the tasks set for it by the Government. The Special Branch noticed that there were contacts of an unprecedented kind between members of the Government and of the Army and people from the north which it was programmed to see as IRA. Berry was told about this by the head of Special Branch, and he tried to tell Lynch about it. That was in October 1969. He did not succeed in telling Lynch—or in getting Lynch to acknowledge what he was being told—until April 1970. Then, as soon as he admitted to being told, Lynch launched the Arms Crisis, sacking his chief Cabinet Minister, Haughey, and prosecuting him—along with Captain Kelly of Military Intelligence and John Kelly of the Defence Committees in the North, for criminal conspiracy against the State—and also sacking Blaney but not prosecuting him, for a reason that was never admitted.

The occasion of the Prosecution, and the basis of the formal charge, was the final bungling, in April, of the Army attempt at a covert importation of arms.

The proceedings of the Trial left no realistic grounds for doubt that Captain Kelly's covert actions were authorised by the Government. The military documents of the period, made public in 2000-2001, confirm that covert action was required by the Government. That covert action was called off on 20th April 1970, and there is no evidence that Haughey, or Captain Kelly, or the two together, intended to persist in it after it ceased to be authorised by the Government. The Ministers were dismissed on 6th May and the Prosecutions were launched three weeks later.

The launching of the Arms Crisis ended the effective influence of the Dublin Government on Northern affairs—an influence which it had actively sought in August 1969, and during the following Autumn and Winter.

The Irish army was required from August to April to do something which it was incapable of doing, because it not only lacked experience in it, but had been forbidden to contemplate until it was ordered to do it. The attempted covert operation was a fiasco.

The other Irish Army equipped itself illegally for war, declared war, and kept it going for a quarter of a century under apparently impossible conditions.

Legitimate fact and accomplished fact parted company in the Summer of 1970, and legitimacy became infinitely problematical even as a notion. Until then the position was that the Irish Constitution asserted a *de jure* right of sovereignty over the 6 Counties while limiting *de facto* jurisdiction for the time being to the 26 Counties. An assertion of sovereign right carries with it implicitly a right of enforcement. Lynch may have made *"a clear statement of non-violence"*, and said that unity should only be sought through *"agreement between Irishmen"*, but he did not revoke the sovereignty clause of the Constitution—and neither four years later did the Coalition Government in which Doctors FitzGerald and O'Brien had the handling of Northern Ireland policy in Cabinet. That Coalition pleaded in Court that the sovereignty clause remained intact for future Governments to handle it as they pleased.

Lynch said he did not intend to enforce the sovereignty claim by military means. That was no more than was said by all his predecessors and by all his successors. And it was all he had the authority to say, as he left the Constitutional claim standing.

But, while saying it, he continually reasserted that no section had the right to opt out of the nation, and that Partition was the cause of all the trouble.

Saying that he would only use peaceful methods to achieve the primary aim of his party and of the State, and to overcome the fundamental breach in the life of the nation, did not amount to a policy—not unless he was doing something else to achieve that aim. I could not see at the time that he was doing something else, and Keogh does not show that he was.

Seeking an evolution of unity through agreement between Irishmen requires in the first instance that you should catch the attention of the relevant Irishmen. And that required as a precondition that you should not be asserting a right over them, as Lynch was. Policy-wise he did not even reach the starting point. With every speech he intensified the hostility of the Unionists, and they just stopped listening.

From August until April his government cultivated contacts with the defensive insurgency of the Northern Catholics which had come about in response to the August pogrom. Lynch went into denial about this later, but there is no credible doubt about it. Then he slapped the Northern Catholics in the face by prosecuting John Kelly. He thereby lost the means of influencing the conduct of the Catholic community whilst continuing to antagonise the Protestant community by telling them that they had no right to opt out of the nation.

Lynch is praised for smashing a Republican conspiracy within his Government. There are no Doubting Thomases about that. It is an obligatory article of faith for academic or commercial writers that such a conspiracy existed, so evidence is not sought. Even though the Prosecution failed, the fact of prosecution is held to have aborted the conspiracy. (This put me in mind of Anthony Eden's insistence that, even though his invasion of Egypt failed, the fact that he attempted it stopped in its tracks the Fascist movement that would otherwise have over-run the Middle East.)

But the Republican disposition of the bulk of the Fianna Fail party was not wiped out by the prosecution. There was jubilation at the failure of the prosecution. And it seems to me that Haughey's rapid return to the Front Bench, and his replacement of Lynch as Taoiseach, was fuelled by a belief, for which there is no evidence, that he was guilty as charged but got away with it.

The Provisional IRA scarcely existed when Lynch launched the Arms Crisis in May 1970, and broke the relationship between the Dublin Government and the Defence Committees—in which Catholic Ex-Servicemen from the British Army played an effective part. It was then that the Provos began to flourish.

*

Keogh gives this account of Captain Kelly's contacts with Northerners:

> "Capt. Kelly spent nearly six weeks travelling around the North… He met members of the defence committees in Belfast and Derry at a time when the lines were blurred between those who were members of the IRA and those who were nationalist activists… Kelly was very much influenced by what he had witnessed; he could be said to have become less an observer than a partisan. that is the setting in which the following events need to be set and understood* (p217: the * reference is a remark about rivalry between Special Branch and Military Intelligence. It contains nothing in support of the assertion about Captain Kelly ceasing to be an observer and becoming a partisan).

As to the distinction between IRA members and *"nationalist activists"*, the condition in which the political structure called Northern Ireland placed the Catholic community meant that it was a mere distinction of expediency at the best of times. By treating it as a substantial difference of principle, Keogh shows that he never tried to envisage the public conditions of Catholic existence in the North.

Berry was informed about Captain Kelly's activities. He tried to contact Lynch to tell him, but Lynch *"was out of town"*, as he was at so many critical moments. So he told Haughey instead. Haughey seems to have been the *de facto* Acting Taoiseach on the many occasions when Lynch was not only out of town but out of reach of the telephone. The Tanaiste, Erskine Childers, seems to have been treated as a mere figurehead by everybody (which was just as well, as he was a regular visitor to the British Ambassador). Haughey reassured Berry that all was OK:

> "Berry would not have been so reassured had he known, as he learnt subsequently, that Haughey had had a meeting in his home with Capt. Kelly and… Col. Hefferon in late September and again on… 30 October—the day before he visited Berry to reassure him… According to Michael Mills, the minister… told the captain that £50,000 was available for the purchase of guns" (p217-8: the Mills reference is to *Hurler On The Ditch*).

Berry tried to tell Lynch himself about it and thought he had done so, but Lynch denied it (p218).

> "Blaney… made his views very clear on his support for the use of force in certain circumstances in Northern Ireland. "The Fianna Fail Party has never taken a decision to rule out the use of force if the circumstances in the Six Counties so demand… {*Irish Times* 9.12.69}… Lynch said emphatically that he had ruled out the use of force and that Fianna Fail had never taken a decision not to rule out force in Northern Ireland {IT 16.12.69}…" (p223).
>
> "Lynch encouraged Blaney to issue a clarification… Blaney claimed that his speech was in perfect harmony with the Government policy on non-violence {IT 12.12.69}…" (p223).

Then there is Dick Walsh's assertion about the parallel Government subverting the State, given earlier.

Thus we arrive at February 1970, when—

> "According to one account, the Minister for Defence, Jim Gibbons, on …6 February, issued a directive on army contingency plans to the chief of staff… and the director of intelligence, Col. Michael Hefferon… According to contemporary sources in Military Archives, Gibbons issued the following directive orally to the chief of staff, in the presence of Col. Hefferon…: "The Government have instructed me to convey to the army a directive that plans be immediately put in train for operating in Northern Ireland in the event of the situation (in the opinion of the Government) warrants {sic} interference. The Government further directs that training and planning programmes be directed to cater for such an eventuality*…" (The* referencing of this is odd. The documents in question are in the National Archive, with a Reference Number, but Keogh's reference is to *Magill*, May 1980. The wording in question has Gibbons telling the Chief of Staff and Colonel Hefferon: ""The Taoiseach and other Ministers have met delegations from the North. At these meetings urgent demands were made for respirators, weapons and ammunition the provision of which the Government agreed. Accordingly truck loads of these items will be put at readiness so that they may be available in a matter of hours.{"}".

Keogh then refers to a record of a meeting on 10th February 1970 between the Chief of Staff, the Adjutant-General, the Assistant Chief of Staff, Colonel Hefferon, and Lt.-Colonel Adams, entitled *Ministerial Directive To Chief Of Staff*. Again he does not give the Archive Reference, but says: *"I am grateful to Commandant Victor Lange, head of Military Archives, Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin, for sending me this document, together with a transcript and other documents"* (p535).

These military documents, and others covering the period from August 1969, were collected and published by Angela Clifford in *Military Aspects Of Ireland's Arms Crisis Of 1969-70* in 2006. Keogh chooses to direct the reader neither to this book nor to the National Archive.

Keogh refers to these authoritative documents, and then passes on as if they had no bearing on what went on in that period from August 1969 to April 1970. He makes charges against Haughey, Captain Kelly and Colonel Hefferon based on journalistic gossip, without presenting a shred of hard evidence, and he turns a blind eye to the clear evidence regarding covert but legal actions, which was the core of the Defence in the Arms Trials.

He takes leave of those documents with the following paragraph:

> "On a 'Prime Time' television programme in April 2001 Capt. Kelly claimed that a directive had instructed the army to prepare for a situation in which it would have to move into the six counties to provide people in the civilian population with arms to defend themselves. On the same programme Desmond O'Malley said that the scenario could happen only in a doomsday situation. Clearly, the directive covered a hypothetical situation. Action would be taken only in case of a complete breakdown of law and order, in which the forces of law and order in Northern Ireland were "unable or unwilling to protect the {Catholic} minority"*. Contextualised in that way, the decision was both responsible and prudent. The instruction, however, provided the chief of staff with an opportunity to advise against such a move and to demonstrate how ill-equipped the army was to undertake such an order" (p237).

So Lynch *did* contemplate invading the North, and he instructed the army to make preparations for an invasion, if a certain turn of events happened. His position therefore was not that there must be no military incursion into the North under any circumstances—because if that was his position he would have had no reason to instruct the Army to make preparations for an incursion under certain circumstances. But Keogh, until he suddenly admitted the existence of this Directive to the Army, had been giving the reader to understand that Lynch had absolutely ruled military incursions into the North off the agenda regardless of circumstances. And he makes no attempt to reconcile these two positions.

The * reference he gives for the quotation, *"unable or unwilling to protect the {Catholic} minority"* is neither for the National Archive, nor for the collection of documents published by Angela Clifford but to the *Irish Times* of 2001, 2nd January. The words are not from either of the two lots of Army minutes recording the Directive.

The wording of the Directive might be considered irrelevant to the Arms Trial if there was a shred of evidence that the defendants were committed to an unprovoked invasion of the North without Government authority. But there is no such evidence. And the defendants (or the two that counted in this respect) were clear in their evidence that they had acted in accordance with the Government Directive that preparations should be made for a doomsday situation, with action being set in train by the Government.

Keogh quotes O'Malley against Captain Kelly, but Kelly's position at the Trial was identical with the position stated thirty years later on television by O'Malley, who in 1970 as the Justice Minister had presided over the tampering with Colonel Hefferon's police statement in the service of the Prosecution.

So what was it all about? That remains a mystery. What it was NOT about was a difference of opinion over invading the North, with Lynch making preparations to do it in certain circumstances and Haughey wanting to do it now regardless of circumstances.

(The February 1970 Directive to the Army, on which the Defence case rested, is mentioned by Keogh between pages 235 and 237, and then is promptly forgotten. And, brief and inconsequential as his commentary on it is, a reading of it is interrupted by eight pages of photographs of Lynch meeting important people, which are inserted between pages 236 and 237)

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Keogh does not maintain that the Court verdict, dismissing the Prosecution charge of criminal conspiracy, flew in the face of the evidence presented to the jury and was perverse. Nor does he take the verdict as being in accordance with the evidence presented, and thus requiring the motives of the Government to be queried as problematic. Nor does he present Prosecution evidence which later came to light and which, if available to the Prosecution, would probably have gained a Guilty verdict. Nor does he mention the statement made by the Tanaiste (Childers) to the British Ambassador that the jury had been tampered with. He just treats the Trial as an irrelevance, barely mentioning it amidst a welter of gossip of various kinds.

Haughey had *"overweening ambition"* and lived in the fast lane *"in the company of self-made entrepreneurs"* (as distinct from what other kind?}, and engaged in *"antics"* that did not amuse the elders of the party (p117). He had *"lingering and growing feelings"* of *"unrequited ambition"* over not getting the leadership when Lemass retired, and he *"bided his time, waiting for an opportunity"* (p126). His *"flamboyant style must have jarred with senior officials"*, though no instance of this is given (p124). He became wealthy and *"displayed his wealth most ostentatiously"*, wearing a Mohair suit and *"sitting all too comfortably in an official Mercedes"* (p126) etc.

But what have these (atavistic?) expressions of Spartan dislike of the new Irish business class got to do with it? If one praises Lemass for freeing Ireland from the De Valera mould (and Keogh does), where is the sense in deploring the consequences? The Lemass/Whitaker change of direction required *"self-made entrepreneurs"* (as distinct from what other kind? Government licensees?) in order to function. It may be that Lemass and the party elders disliked the new breed that they unleashed, but it is odd that an Establishment historian should be giving such raw expression to that dislike forty years later amidst the hectic prosperity of the Celtic tiger created by the self-made entrepreneurs with Haughey at their head—especially when that Professor also deplores the republican sentiment of De Valera's Ireland!

The purpose of the subjectivist character-assassination of Haughey is to take the place of evidence that he engaged in criminal conspiracy in 1969-70. Although it is conceded that he was not *"considered to be of authentic republican timbre"*, if the reader participates in the Professor's intense dislike of the ostentatious flamboyance of his wealthy life-style—the antithesis of authentic republicanism—he will take it on trust, without the need of evidence, that Haughey engaged in a criminal republican conspiracy to invade the North with the ulterior motive of gaining the leadership.

I first heard gossip about Haughey around 1964, from Republicans from the 1956 campaign who became internationalist revolutionary Marxists after its failure, who claimed to know everything that went on in Dublin. They told me that not only was Haughey a capitalist, but he did not live in the fear of God and was known to have paid visits to Mme X's. It was natural that they should hate him in that way. He had suppressed the Republican campaign, and Dublin was still Spartan—apologies to Sparta over the comparison. But to hear the same gossip from an Establishment source forty-five years later, amidst the flamboyant ostentation of entrepreneurial Ireland, is a sad case of atavism.

Keogh presents one case of alleged difference between Lynch and Haughey in 1969, which he calls a *"gulf"*. It had to do with Haughey's response to a suggestion by T.K. Whitaker (who was Lynch-s guru in 1969-70, according to Keogh) regarding constitutional reform:

> "Whitaker, in his letter of 22 September… made reference to longer-term planning on North-South relations. He sought an urgent examination of the kind of "constitutional setting" that might prove acceptable to a majority in the North.

Referring to a conversation between himself and the Taoiseach the previous week, he said: “I mentioned the ingenuity required and you mentioned the possibility of an informal study group gathered around the Attorney General”.

He had another proposal:

"On reflection, I think that it would be quicker and more effective to have specific ideas come forward from Denis Fahy and Kevin Murphy (the two Finance men responsible for the constitutional paper you have already seen) and myself. One of the crucial elements in any plausible solution is how to keep the British £100m a year for the North, and to work the requirement into a constitutional {sic} demands some knowledge of Common Markets, Customs Union etc.—economic information not normally possessed by lawyers" (p205-6).

Whitaker thought *"it might be possible to find a way of separating Northern Ireland politically from Britain without severing the economic and financial links at least for a long time..."* (p206).

Keogh says that *"Whitaker favoured making haste very slowly on constitutional change and urged that it be sectional—as for example the repealng of article 44 {on the special position of the Catholic Church}"*—and this accorded with Lynch's cautious approach.

Transferring the matter to the Finance Department meant giving it to Haughey to consider. Keogh asserted earlier that Haughey's style *"must have jarred with senior officials, such as Whitaker"* (p124), but supplied no evidence that it did so. And when Whitaker suggested that, in order to get urgent consideration of a *"constitutional setting"* acceptable to Unionists should be dealt with by the Finance Department, he knew who the Minister was. And Keogh does not suggest that Whitaker wanted to make use of Finance Department civil servants behind the backs of the Minister.

Here is Keogh's evidence of the *gulf* between Haughey and Lynch:

"Charles Haughey… was probably very sympathetic to the idea advanced by Whitaker. But his emphasis was distinct. On 25 September 1969 he wrote to Lynch enclosing a “self-explanatory” letter that he might “consider sending to the Ministers named in the programme of work attached”. He added: “The object, briefly, is to complete as quickly as possible a dossier of the practical problems that would have to be solved in the context of any moves to evolve a new constitutional relationship between North and South”. This was concerned with the broad field of government administration. Those studies needed to be paralleled by an examination, possibly conducted by the Attorney-General of the various possibilities for a new relationship between North and South, “since on this would depend the framework within which solutions to the practical problems thrown up by the proposed departmental studies would have to be propounded” {Haughey to Lynch 22 Sept. 1969. Ref P175 in Whitaker Papers, UCD}. Haughey's draft letter to be issued by the Taoiseach spoke of the events of recent months having “opened the possibility of changes in the existing constitutional arrangements in that area”. That called for a thorough examination in order to identify “the practical problems that may have to be overcome if any worthwhile progress towards national reunification is to be made”. He had in mind an examination covering “all major areas of government activity”.

"Haughey's draft stated that a start had been made by the Department of Finance, which had completed a study “of the financial implications of the ending of Partition” and had produced “a first draft of a study on the constitutional position of Northern Ireland”. His letter asked departments to concentrate “on the *comparative* aspects of the services, methods of financing, administrative arrangements etc., concerned with a view to identifying the main problems of assimilation”. The draft stressed the confidential nature “of this whole exercise and would ask you to ensure that the officials of your Department who may be concerned are so advised” {Haughey draft letter, with Ref. No. in National Archives}.

"The correspondence quoted above shows the gulf in outlook on the North between Haughey on the one and Lynch and Whitaker on the other. The Taoiseach sought to make haste slowly; Haughey, in contrast, concerned with planning for “assimilation” and “reunification”…" (p206-7).

And that's it!

Whitaker also suggested that consideration of a *"constitutional setting"* for unification would be *"quicker and more effective"* if dealt with by the Finance Department. Haughey set the wheels in motion and reported to Lynch three days after Whitaker made the suggestion to Lynch. And that demonstrates that there was a *"gulf in outlook"* between Haughey and Lynch. Haughey was asked by Lynch to plan for reunification and the fact that he did so demonstrated that there was a gulf between him and Lynch!

The suggestion here is that Lynch did *not* want a *"quicker and more effective"* consideration of the matter. But, if so, why did he refer it to Haughey's Department? If he had wanted it put on the back burner he should have referred it to his own Department. Everyone knew that Haughey was by far the most energetic and businesslike Minister in the Government.

If Lynch felt that Haughey's Draft demonstrated that there was a *"gulf"* between them, where did he indicate this?

A Memorandum on *The Constitutional Position Of Northern Ireland* was produced by the Finance Department in late November 1969. Keogh gives the reference number in the National Archive and comments:

"The Whitaker-Maher-Murphy paper was a thoroughgoing examination of North-South relations. The thinking was non-sentimental, factual and free from republican yearnings. It also brought into the domain of the Department of Finance a clear articulation of the reasons for continuation of the Lynch line on the North" (p208)

Then, in the following paragraph he says of Lynch that *"two of his most senior ministers were not reconciled to his peaceful Northern policy"* (p207). It is not mentioned in this connection that Haughey was the Minister of the Department that produced the Memorandum, but the implication is that civil servants in Haughey's Department produced a Memo which directly contradicted Haughey's views on the matter. Was Haughey the kind of Minister who was likely to let that happen? In the absence of hard evidence to the contrary, the realistic assumption is that the Memo expressed Haughey's position.

What was Lynch's position? Before, during, and after the Arms Crisis he declared that Ireland was a nation, that no section had the right to opt out of the nation, and that Partition was the cause of the trouble in the North. That is how I recall it, and that is how it appears in Keogh. Lynch also said that Partition should only be ended by peaceful means, by agreement between Irishmen. But, as I recall it, every statement he made aggravated those Irishmen whose agreement was needed for the peaceful ending of Partition, and Keogh almost concedes that this was the case. For the leader of a party whose primary aim was the political unification of the dogmatically-asserted Irish nation, that was a futile position at best.

Lynch's position was in accordance of that of the Official IRA at the time. It was anti-British for nationalist reasons, rather than anti-Stormont for reasons to do with intolerable government. With Stormont preserved and the Dublin Government washing its hands of the North so piously, while still retaining the sovereignty claim, the defensive insurgency changed character and the Twenty Year War began. And the first achievement of the War was the abolition of the Stormont system which Lynch and the Official IRA had wished to preserve. Both saw the North through a dense ideological fog which completely obscured the social realities of the North. And, in an official culture of mere anti-

Provoism which a series of Dublin Governments shared with the Stickies, the Official IRA all but took over RTE.

Lynch did not accept that the Trial verdict as being in accordance with the evidence. He insisted that there had been an attempted illegal importation of arms. He treated Captain Kelly outrageously, withholding his pension and gratuity for a year after it was due, and by intimidation of printers and booksellers tried to prevent him from telling his story. But injustice brought out the rotweiler in the Captain. Lynch blackguarded Colonel Hefferon behind the scenes, and the Colonel tolerated it.

Haughey made a statement after the verdict that the Trial had been political. People had the Whip withdrawn for less. He was not expelled, as he should have been if those in command of the party believed what they were saying. In preparation for the next (1973) election, Frank Aiken, an Elder of the party, gave Lynch an ultimatum: Haughey should not be allowed to stand as a party candidate, and if he was allowed to do so, he (Aiken) would withdraw his nomination in Co. Louth and make a public statement of his reasons. Lynch broke Aiken on the issue, compelling him to slink away on pretended health grounds. Haughey topped the poll in Dublin, but the election was lost. (In the 1969 election Lynch was the nominal leader, but the party campaign was run by Haughey and Blaney, with Lynch being carted around the country to shake hands.)

After the 1973 Election, Colley—the major figure in the party and Lynch's assumed successor—told Lynch that Haughey must not be brought back on the Front Bench. Lynch brought him back. In 1977 Lynch won the election on an irresponsible populist economic programme. In early 1979 he was obliged to retire over a piece of administrative incompetence involving the North. Haughey won the leadership election. Lynch left behind a little group of fanatical followers dedicated to overthrowing Haughey, but only succeeding in damaging the party. Then, in 1980, Lynch had to defend himself against the contradictions in his own story of the Arms Crisis, brought out in Justice Secretary Berry's post-humously published 'Diaries', with Haughey looking on as Taoiseach and holding his tongue.

There is a story needing to be told there. Keogh does not tell it. His Lynch is incredible—always on holiday at critical moments, always failing to be told things it would be awkward to hear just then, always somehow missing the point, always managing these things innocently.

Keogh writes that on 20th April 1970, *"Lynch was hearing for the first time of the plot to import arms, involving two ministers, known about by the Dept. of Justice since the previous October"* (p294). That was Jack Lynch's story. Berry's 'Diaries' told a very different tale. Keogh defends Lynch's account by referring to the well-known fact that Berry's 'Diaries' did not consist of daily entries—as Lynch himself did at the time of their publication—and says *"the historian must avoid the temptation to become over reliant"* on them. And yet little would remain of his own account of this if all that he takes from Berry was deleted. His narrative is supported by 34 Diary references. Dick Walsh, the Oracle, comes second with a mere 9.

My impression of Lynch was that he was a devil at the manipulation of inner-party conflict in a closed system, but was hopeless at statecraft in a situation that had been blown open by the events of August 1969. This tallies with the remark of Bruce Arnold at the time (a staunch Lynchite, but also an Englishman) that Lynch was a man of the middle ground but he could not see where the middle ground lay.

The provoked insurgency of August 1969 might possibly have been maintained in a defensive posture with Dublin support under Dublin moderating influence. When Lynch ended that relationship in April 1970, the independent revolutionary insurgency of the Northern Catholic community took off, and it resonated within the body of Fianna Fail.

In my experience of that period—and I was close to the centre of things in Belfast—most of the people stirred up by the civil rights agitation were far removed from Republicanism in their own minds. All of that was *passé*. They were modern people with modern ideals. It was for lack of anything else to be that they became Republicans. One saw it happening with the most surprising people during that year. It put one in mind of Ionescu's play about an epidemic of people turning into hippopotamuses. An occasional person did it at first, but as the numbers built up it became a rush.

I tried to establish something different for them to be—and a surprising number did. But the Catholic community as a whole quickly became a base for the positive Republican insurgency that fought a war for a quarter of a century and then transferred the momentum into a peace settlement. And Lynch, after his Arms Crisis, was dragged along in the wake of this development. At first (apparently under T.K. Whitaker's tutelage) he said that the Stormont system should be preserved as an Irish institution with which an agreement might be gained. But this went against the grain of actual experience, and before long he was a revolutionary demanding regime change. He could neither influence events in the North nor let it be. And his wife (who was apparently his most important adviser) found it expedient to issue a public statement that she did *not* support the British Army.

Lynch was, of course, praised by the British Government for launching the Arms Crisis—which I assume he did at its insistence. But he was also held in contempt by it thereafter and it paid little heed to his carpings. He was the best Irish Prime Minister the British had, and they humoured him as far as was convenient, but when he got too uppity they put him down with a firm hand—a tactic which had stopped being effective in 1916 but became operative again in 1970.

Lynch is praised by uncritical admirers as a man of peace. They are filled with a kind of nameless terror about the dreadful things that would have happened if, after the covert operation had ended, those who had undertaken it had not been prosecuted for subversive conspiracy. There might even have been war!

But what happened when Lynch ended the Government connection with the defensive insurgency of August 1969 was that a positive Republican insurrection followed in the North. If, when launching the prosecutions, Lynch had declared that the North was part of a foreign country for which Dublin had no responsibility, had initiated a Constitutional reform to give effect to that position, and had urged the Northern Catholics to behave peacefully as required by the legitimate authority under which they found themselves—then it might be said that he at least had washed his hands of the Northern situation in the Summer of 1970. He did not do that. Since he did not undertake to repeal the 32-County sovereignty claim, he lacked the Constitutional authority to do it.

So he kept on interfering in the Northern situation with rhetorical statements which irritated Unionists, and idealistic reform demands which were incapable of being enacted. And he had forfeited the means by which he might have directed or restrained the political movement of the Catholic community.

Unionists therefore came to see him as a cheerleader for the Provos, and to disregard his pious exhortations about peace.

Lynch sponsored the development of the SDLP as an alternative focus of Catholic political activity, but in doing so he merely succeeded in dividing the vigorous Defence Committee people off from the futile, self-contradictory 'Constitutional nationalism' supported by Dublin. If was self-contradictory because its *"British rights for British citizens"* was only achievable in practice through integration with the British political system, but the party programme remained

withdrawal from Britain and merger with the Republic. I put this to Gerry Fitt at the time and urged him to choose one of these conflicting aims as the operative aim. He refused to make a choice voluntarily, but a choice was forced on him in June-July 1971 when Brian Faulkner proposed a kind of power-sharing arrangement through Parliamentary Committees. The immediate SDLP response at Stormont was to welcome the proposal. It said that this was Faulkner's finest hour. But then it found that community opinion was not favourable. Instead of trying to give leadership for constitutional evolution through Stormont, it rejected the proposal with the extreme gesture of abandoning Stormont and setting up an 'Alternative Assembly', thus conceding Provo hegemony. Keogh skates over this.

In August 1969 the Constitutional order of the North had broken down. It was bound to break down because in its proper functioning it alienated the Catholic third of the population, which therefore looked to Dublin. The Irish Constitution asserted a right of sovereignty over the Six Counties, which the Unionist two-thirds rejected. Lynch continuously asserted that right, while having no policy through which it might be realised. In asserting that right, at Whitaker's prompting he made ineffectual attempts to use language which did not express the special relationship between his government and the Northern Catholics but also embraced Protestants and Dissenters against their will. It fooled nobody.

The net effect of all of this was that the Northern Catholics were on their own. They were excluded from participation in the political life of the British Constitution (without which the British Constitution is an empty show), and the Irish Government had broken off the joint action with them which had gone on from August to April.

A population cannot be without legitimate rights in the modern world—in which only democratic rights are legitimate. The doctrine of passive obedience to established power was denounced in principle by the 1688 Revolution, and was not restored as a reputable principle by the mere fact that those Revolutionaries immediately set about enforcing it in practice in Ireland, and persisted in the attempt for a century and a half. John Locke was a hypocrite, but his hypocrisy was sacred to the regime which he helped William to found. And, in accordance with the reasoning of the famous Second Treatise, I did not see how it could be denied that the Northern Catholic community had been thrown into a state of nature in which its legitimacy derived from itself. And the logic of that position was eventually conceded under the arrangements by which the War was brought to an end.

Leaders of the Provo war, who never said *mea culpa*, now run Government departments. There is a tacit admission that Gerry Kelly and his colleagues acted within the rights which fell to the Catholic community, when thrown into a state of nature by both States, when it decided to make war.

But the Republic is still suffering existential *angst*, moral confusion, and intellectual atrophy as a consequence of Lynch's conduct of government in 1970, as Professor Keogh's book demonstrates.

A traumatic event in Keogh's political life was the burning down of the British Embassy in Dublin after the Bloody Sunday shootings in Derry. He described this in an RTE history of the state, *Seven Ages*, broadcast about ten years ago. O'Malley also spoke about the *"incident"* on that programme, and Keogh refers to it in the book. O'Malley was rather light-hearted, as I recall: there was anger and it was vented by the burning. The alternative of protecting the Embassy by shooting people was unacceptable. But Keogh was shattered by the event:

> "What happened that day was much more sinister than the irrational actions of people driven by blind emotion… Trade unionists turned out in their thousands… The march ended in a rally and speeches. The formalities over, many thousands of people were left leaderless in the environs of the embassy. I found myself in the garden of Merrion Square, directly in front of the Embassy—a fine, newly restored Georgian building. Suddenly an instruction was given to knock down the railings by a man standing next to me. As I looked incredulously at him, a mob began to follow his lead and shake the railings in unison… The small Garda force… was powerless to protect the building. What happened next had been planned. Two men, one with a lump hammer, scaled the area to a window ledge and smashed the glass. Molotov cocktails were lobbed… The building quickly caught fire, to an atavistic chant of 'Burn, burn, burn'. Later I saw members of the Provisional IRA in uniform take over 'crowd control'. It was a profoundly sad moment for Irish democracy" (p832).

What he said on television ten years ago ended on a different note. As I recall, he said: *'I saw that it was Fascism!'* And I wondered that somebody, who thought the burning of the Embassy—of the State that had just tested the effectiveness of the taste of administrative massacre in Derry—was Fascism, should set up to be a historian of 20th century Ireland. And who was it who decided to let the Embassy be burned? Not O'Malley. But Jack Lynch, standing idly by, and fuelling the war in the North with demands for regime change.

Brendan Clifford

The following response was submitted to the *Sunday Business Post* in answer to an *ad hominem* review by Steven King of *Coolacrease,* *The True Story of the Pearson Executions in Co. Offaly, an Incident in the War of Independence.*
It did not appear.

A Review Of What ?

BICO IS DEAD—LONG LIVE BICO!

Steven King's review of the Coolacrease book in the *Sunday Business Post* (30.11. 08) is surely the poorest excuse for a review that one could ever read. The book itself is 472 pages of detailed information, including many original documents and page after page of discussion on the subject of the execution of the Pearson Brothers, considered from every possible angle. I believe it is one of the most comprehensive books on any subject that one is likely to come across. Yet what we get from King is a rant about the publishers and their, and others, alleged views on other issues. Anything and everything but the subject of the book. It is in effect a review that inadvertently, by omission, concedes the case the book makes about the executions.

Mr. King has a fixation with BICO. He makes it seem one of the most bizarre things that ever appeared on earth. BICO was made up of people who had tried to be part of a variety of other left-wing movements and parties in the 60s and found them wanting.

For example, I began political life in the Irish Labour Party and specifically in creating a branch where it and other parties were then banned, UCC. Despite my best efforts to stay with it, the more I got to know the Labour Party the more disillusioned I became with it. I then associated with the Internationalists and while they were certainly a real alternative to the Labour Party—there was never a dull moment—they tended towards the dogmatic and the unreal.

The ICO was my next port of call. It made sense of things. Its very origins and its main argument was that the Soviet Union was on the road to capitalism after Khrushchev. That Stalinism was a continuation of Leninism and both were 'history' after Khrushchev. It argued that the then EEC would be good for Ireland. It argued for an industrial democracy approach to industrial relations along the lines of what became the Social Partnership. It argued and campaigned for a separation of Church and State in the Republic. When the North erupted in August 1969, it helped the Defence Committees in the Falls area. It concluded that the Ulster Unionists were a national grouping. It argued for a deletion of Articles 2 and 3 as a gesture of good relations between North and South.

These are just a few of its positions it took and when they were proven true it 'moved on' as they say. What else should

it have done? Some of its positions were proven to be failures—that Westminster should include Northern Ireland in its democracy via its political parties; that the British Trade Union movement adopt the Bullock proposals of 1977 and thereby avoid Thatcherism. It did not believe in flogging dead horses and 'moved on.' Maybe withered away would be a better description. As with all forms of living things, one adapts or dies and of course one learns as much from failures as from successes. Mr. King seems to regret we did 'move on' or maybe he thinks that we did not or should not or could not. I am not exactly sure what he is trying to say. In any case BICO clearly lives for him and I am sure it will never die while he is alive.

His rant includes some new and startling allegations. He says: *"Think of any of the far left's pet causes in the 1970s and 1980s and BICO could be relied upon to take the opposite stance. The Birmingham Six, Sean South and Mary McAleese were some of their particular hate figures."*

I am at a loss to recall or figure out what the Far Left's view of Sean South was, that BICO was opposed to? The Far Left hated him, as I recall, as an anti-Semitic fascist, so did BICO support him? In fact I don't recall any BICO position on Sean South. Some members had fought with him in the '56 campaign and liked him but he was hardly mentioned by them or anyone else in those days. He simply did not figure.

Neither do I recall a view opposed to the Far Left on the Birmingham Six. Is he suggesting that BICO had a position of them being guilty? I do not recall BICO ever taking a position or commenting on them. Aubane has certainly never done so in its many publications.

I should declare an interest here. I was a family friend of Hugh Callaghan who one would need to know for about two minutes to realise he was innocent—as all the prison officials immediately realised. Hugh loved singing, playing music and playing cards, mostly in pubs. The idea that he could conceive of, or carry out the blowing up of a pub is about as credible as him planning to blow up his local Church. His 17 year ordeal was occasioned by his concern to return a pound he had borrowed from one of the other Six and his inability to resist a game of cards to pass the time while waiting for a train. To suggest, as King does, that I or any associates considered him or any of the others guilty is about as scurrilous as you can get—and I have developed a pretty thick skin for such allegations.

As for Ms McAleese, if a member is sued for libel by a Law Professor, one has to pay a certain amount of attention to the litigant. What it has to do with BICO opposing the Far Left view of her I find even more bizarre than the other people cited. Did we criticise her because the Far Left supported her or *vice versa*? What planet is this guy on?

There is a remark that Aubane is not a conventional Local History society. That is undoubtedly true. And ordinary History Society is what it wanted to be. Its early publications were about such mundane things as the history of local roads in the townland of Aubane. But the *Irish Times* suddenly took a keen interest in us and traduced. Then we discovered we had become the butt of a Roy Foster party piece at international conferences, and the rest, as they say, is history, conventional and otherwise.

Jack Lane

This response to King's review, by Philip O'Connor, editor of the Coolacrease book, appeared in the SBP in shortened form two weeks after the the original review.

Coolacrease Review

As editor and co-author of the book reviewed by Steven King in the *Sunday Business Post,* 30th November ('Coolacrease book has numerous axes to grind'), I must demand a right to respond to his outrageous comments.

Mr King's review consists largely of an attack on the publishers (Aubane Historical Society) and the views he claims some of the people involved in AHS held forty years ago (!). Virtually his only reference to the book itself is a throw-away remark: "making a 52-minute television documentary the subject of a 472-page book isn't funny. In fact it's sad."

Surely the least he could have done is engage with whether or not the book does what it claims, i.e. that it disproves the claims of the RTE film in relation to the execution of the Pearson brothers of Coolacrease during the war of Independence?

In the RTE film its star performer, Senator Eoghan Harris, in a reference to the Offaly historian who provided the facts of what actually happened at Coolacrease, blurted out: "When Paddy Heaney tells me things like that, I want documentary evidence in corroboration." And this is exactly what the book does (and why it required 476 pages). It has sourced much new evidence—including documentary evidence—which conclusively disproves the claims made by the RTE film, including most notably the following:

That the execution was a local affair carried out by local men in pursuit of a grievance against the Pearson family: the records of both the IRA and the British military show that it was carried out by a Brigade level unit in retaliation for an armed attack on an IRA roadblock and on the basis of instructions issued by General Mulcahy himself. This occurred in a time of war.

That the men were deliberately shot "in the genitals, in their sexual parts" (Sen. Harris): The records of the British military court of inquiry prove that this was not the case. The men received multiple wounds, none in their "sexual parts";

That the Pearsons were peaceable "Amish-type" farmers (Harris): The Pearson brothers and their cousin William Stanley—whose religion played no part in what happened—became active in a paramilitary capacity in the British war effort in Ireland, and that was the sole reason for their execution;

That the Pearson family was then forced to cut its losses and sell their farm to the Land Commission at a loss following intimidation and boycott: documentary evidence proves that there was no boycott and also that the Pearsons received a handsome price for the farm;

That the Pearson farm was "grabbed" and "squatted" by local people and that the Land Commission distributed the land to these people: documentary evidence proves that there was no squatting of the farm and that after its purchase the Land Commission distributed it in scrupulous adherence to procedure, in fact favouring anti-republican claimants and specifically former British Army soldiers.

The book does exactly what it says on the tin: it reconstructs precisely the "true story of the Pearson executions" and backs this up with the reproduction of extensive relevant contemporary documents. The horrendous charges of sectarian murder and land grabbing aimed at the people of Cadamstown, Co. Offaly, the army of the First Dáil (which had a uniquely democratic mandate), officials of the Land Commission and others are shown to be the hollow—and, I might add, sectarian—prejudices that they are. With the publication of this book, RTE, Senator Harris and the academic experts called on to support the theses of the film are left with a very serious case to answer.

Philip O'Connor

RYANAIR continued

December 15 (which was an extra €150 on a round trip to New York) and there is talk that they may recommence short-haul flights from Shannon to Heathrow.

Rupert Murdoch was often cast in a mould similar to O'Leary, as an anti-Trade Union ogre, Murdoch was not that, he was not anti-Union, neither was he pro-Union, if he really needed a deal and the Trade Unions acted honourably and rationally—he would cut that deal!

O'Leary would appear to be in a similar situation, he is not a fool! Whatever about IMPACT and the pilots, SIPTU might be wise to act now from some position of strength and put it up to O'Leary. They have nothing to lose!

RYANAIR continued

Even the latest Ryanair bid would reduce those losses by €8m, while a successful offer would almost certainly cut them further.

Trade Union response

"UNIONS last night warned that anyone who sees Michael O'Leary as 'some sort of modern day Robin Hood' needs a 'reality check'.

"SIPTU and Impact warned against the dangers of an airline that was 'not noted for its concern for the public' gaining a monopoly position by raiding Aer Lingus's 'treasure chest'.

"They also claimed the no-frills carrier, which does not recognise unions, would drive down employment standards.

"SIPTU claimed the travelling public, exporters, airport authorities and workers would become hostages to fortune if Ryanair's last bid for Aer Lingus succeeds.

"Union sources said employees would rather accept reduced terms and conditions in cost-saving agreements that SIPTU and Impact negotiated with management, than work for the budget airline.

"SIPTU national industrial secretary Gerry McCormack said Mr O'Leary was offering €745 million for a company with cash reserves of €770 million as well as a fleet, infrastructure, staff and expertise to operative effectively on transatlantic routes.

"He called on the Government and EU Competition Commissioner Nellie Kroes to ensure competition was preserved for the Irish people.

"The latest bid will make members even more determined than ever to defend decent pay and conditions within the aviation sector," he said (Irish Independent, 2.12.2008).

SIPTU represents the majority of Aer Lingus workers.

Government, Company and Workers

That workers would continue to *"accept reduced terms and conditions"* rather than work for Ryanair is a very brave statement indeed! It is even more brave considering the economic depression that is beginning to set in just now.

The aviation industry has taken a hammering! At least 30 carriers went to the wall last year. Another 30 are expected to disappear this year. Last November, the Association of European Airlines claimed the recent drop in international air traffic was the worst decline in 25 years.

Over the past year, there has been a rash of mergers in the airline business as companies, faced with going bust, scramble to cut costs and consolidate operations.

At the moment British Airways is eyeing Iberia and Qantas, and Lufthansa's focus is on Austrian Airlines and BMI in Britain. Air France-KLM is probably more interested in Alitalia and its recent deal with Delta-Northwest on transatlantic flights out of Heathrow would seem to lessen its need to gain Aer Lingus's slots at the London airport. Besides, Ryanair's 29.8 per cent stake in Aer Lingus is sufficient to block any other bid.

Even if O'Leary fails on this occasion, once he makes a bid that is attractive to the Government shareholding (25.1 per cent), combined with his own 29.8—it will be a done deal! The current offer is worth €188 million to the Government. The Unions can forget about the protection of EU competition law—if the Ryanair offer is attractive to the Cabinet, Brussels will give the nod: consumer and labour interests will take second place to Mr. Lenihan's fiscal famine.

Ryanair

Ryanair was probably the most spectacular Irish business success story of the "Celtic Tiger" era of the '90s. It is Europe's largest low fares airline. It operates a fleet of 135 Boeing 737 jet aircraft, and in the last 12 months carried almost 42 million passengers on its 229 low fare routes between 30 EU countries. (Aer Lingus carried 8 million on its 42 aircraft.)

It employs 3,300 people at over 16 bases and operates to 22 European countries. Aer Lingus employs 3,500 staff.

Between them, the two airlines hold an 83 per cent share of passenger routes out of Dublin.

Ryanair was born out of Aer Lingus, which sat on its state-owned ass in a comfortable monopoly as the world around it changed.

If the Trade Union movement had been serious about state or national ownership, in the first place, we would never have allowed the company to be floated on the stock exchange in 2006.

Many of O'Leary's critics would prefer to see British Airways, indeed any foreign carrier take over Aer Lingus at the expense of Ryanair—anybody but O'Leary!

There are some valid reasons for his unpopularity. Ryanair has adapted a ruthless approach to customer and industrial relations. But if people acted according to what they say, then Aer Lingus and not Ryanair would be the main operator out of Ireland. Contrary to common belief, it is not. Significant numbers of Irish people travel with Ryanair each year despite affecting to hating it and to preferring the culture of Aer Lingus. These people would soon get over any sale.

The Trade Union movement and the aviation workforce haven't the luxury afforded the petty-bourgeoisie and their subjectivism on the big bad world. We don't like O'Leary's manners but we have to live in the real world—and a right stark place it is just now.

The final straw would be the awful scenario of workers being forced to vote themselves into a *"race to the bottom"* in an endeavour to sustain Aer Lingus and ultimately end up being employees of a Ryanair model operation.

The ramifications of the Aer Lingus/ Aviance deals may yet come back to haunt the Trade Unions: in the present industrial climate IBEC and ISME will be encouraging their employers members to queue up for similar arrangements.

The climate on the shop floor will be equally harrowing: workers engaged in similar tasks, yet receiving separate rates for the same job.

If Social Partnership is something really serious, surely this is the big moment, between them the social partners have a real strong hand, nearly 50 per cent of the Aer Lingus shares—which in itself would go a long way to providing the necessary employment guarantees in any Ryanair/ Aer Lingus merger?

A potential repeat of the Eircom experience—where the company was repeatedly traded by greedy investors to the detriment of necessary investment in the upgrade of services—would be one of the great fears. Again, conditions of sale can be laid down to provide protections, based on the experience of the failings of the Eircom sale.

Ironically, Colm Barrington, the Chairman of Aer Lingus is also Chief Executive of Babcock & Brown Air in Dublin, an arm of the Australian company which now owns Eircom.

Incidentally, Australia's Qantas Sale Act limits foreign ownership of the Australian flag-carrier to 35 per cent and the board must be two-thirds Australian, though the foreign ownership provision is set to rise to 49 per cent.

In early December, O'Leary appeared on the RTE "Late Late Show", there was no tantrums; he was out to convince and explain.

O'Leary has always insisted that the European Commission's decision to block the merger in 2006 was politically motivated. This time round, he appears determined to play the political game to get the deal across the line.

O'Leary's plan for Aer Lingus would see it set up bases in frontline airports in the UK and Europe and take on EasyJet, which prefers to use these airports. He's offering to create 1,000 jobs and guarantee the Heathrow slots.

Since O'Leary's bid: Aer Lingus announced the removal of all fuel surcharges on its long-haul services from

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RYANAIR continued

involve the novel 'leave and return' option, which a majority of S.I.P.T.U. members decided to go for. The I.M.P.A.C.T. deal is not dissimilar, at least in part, to the so-called 'yellow pack' arrangements that were common in Aer Lingus and the country's big banks in the later 1980s" (*Industrial Relations News*-9.12.2008).

The cabin crew agreement means significant changes in work practices, and the loss of certain allowances—as well as a new lower entry rate. Included are up to 96 voluntary redundancies, although the number of volunteers may be much higher than this target. Like the SIPTU deal, which involves around 115 voluntary redundancies, the IMPACT agreement also includes a pay freeze until July of 2010.

Figures have emerged which mean that the Aer Lingus/SIPTU agreement will match the viability criteria laid down by management. The company was concerned that too many people might opt to remain 'as they are' on their existing pay and conditions, an outcome that would have undermined the cost cutting targets.

Management wanted at least 50 per cent to opt for the 'leave and return' option. But it looks as if they have well exceeded this target, with this option chosen by over 75 per cent of those who will stay.

"IRN understands that the following are the options chosen by SIPTU members since they formally accepted the deal: 850 ('leave and return'); 200 (voluntary redundancy/early retirement); 230 (retain status quo) and around 85 with less than 18 months service who are not entitled to benefit from the terms of the agreement." (*Industrial Relations News,* 9.12.2008).

The ratio of 'leave and return' to 'stay as you are' staff comes as something of a surprise, suggesting that the fact that 60 per cent of staff on the ground have under 10 years service is a major factor. Equally significant may be the fact that over 30 per cent are non-nationals, who may have found the lump sums on offer (minimum of €30,000 up to €70,000) very attractive.

AVIANCE VOTE FOR 15% PAY CUT

No sooner had Aer Lingus succeeded in achieving its €50 million cost-savings than workers at maintenance and ground-handling provider *Aviance* voted on 11th December 2008, by two to one in favour of a 15% pay cut that will save 150 jobs at Dublin Airport.

Aviance had been planning to close its Dublin operation because it had carried out a full review of its British and Irish businesses and found that *"the cost base and customer profile could not be sustained within the Dublin business model"*.

It is believed it has been finding it hard to compete with rivals that are less worker-friendly.

Furthermore, in the aviation crisis, airlines are cutting the amount they are willing to pay for ground and maintenance services.

However, SIPTU, which represents the affected staff, had said it believed it could deliver efficiencies from the workforce that would make it more feasible for *Aviance* to remain in Dublin.

Following meetings with the company, the Union's representatives held a three-hour meeting with workers after which they agreed to ballot on a 15% pay cut as long as other conditions were protected.

The ballot yielded a 67 per cent majority in favour of acceptance of the terms.

SIPTU aviation sector organiser, Dermot O'Loughlin, said:

"It will mean a very big sacrifice for our members.

"However, the staff retain their secondary benefits, including sick and holiday pay entitlements."

RYANAIR BID FOR AER LINGUS

On 1st December 2008, the day before workers voted on redundancy and work practice proposals, Ryanair Chief Executive, Michael O'Leary made a €748 million takeover bid for Aer Lingus. It was his second bid in over two years. The offer was rejected by the Aer Lingus Board.

The bid included a guarantee that Ryanair would recognise Trade Unions at Aer Lingus; that it would give the Government control over the Heathrow slots and that it would post separate €100 million bonds payable to the Government if it did not deliver on its promise to cut Aer Lingus fares and abolish its trans-atlantic fuel surcharge.

Aer Lingus was state-owned until its initial public offering in late September 2006, when Ryanair started accumulating shares before making a hostile €2.80-a-share bid that October.

The current bid valued the airline at €748 million—around half the €1.48 billion valuation placed on it by Ryanair when it made the initial offer for the airline two years ago. Ryanair said the merger of the two airlines would save Aer Lingus, which announced losses of over €22m this year.

Aer Lingus has turned down the offer because it undervalued the company and was also *"not capable of completion"*.

The European Union blocked Ryanair's previous attempt on competition grounds, but the changes to the global economic climate and the airline industry mean that conditions are now dramatically different.

The Board of the airline includes Government and Trade Union nominees. Unions and the Labour Party bitterly oppose the Ryanair move.

O'Leary said he would *"ignore"* the wishes of the Board of his bitter rival and urged the Government—which owns 25 per cent of the airline—to consider his €748 million offer. The deal would net the Exchequer €188 million if it sells its stake to Ryanair.

"Mr O'Leary confirmed Ryanair is seeking a meeting with the Aer Lingus workers' Employee Share Ownership Trust (ESOP): 'We want to bring them with us this time as I think I alienated them last time.'"

"Mr O'Leary added that apart from Aer Lingus chairman, Colm Barrington, and member, Sean Fitzpatrick, the rest of the board 'are about as useless as the board of FÁS'" (*Irish Examiner*-2.12.2008).

THE 2006 BID

On 5th October 2006, barely an hour had passed after the announcement of Ryanair's bid before Brian Cowen, then Minister for Finance and Martin Cullen issued a joint statement opposing the deal.

This time, Minister for Finance Brian Lenihan says the offer needs to be *"considered carefully"* and Minister for Transport Noel Dempsey is *"neutral"* on the proposed deal until such time as he sees the full offer document.

Dempsey even met Michael O'Leary as a *"courtesy"* following his bid. This must be of some concern to Aer Lingus's Board if it truly is determined to remain independent.

NEW IRISH AIRLINE GROUP

O'Leary promised a new *"strong Irish airline group"* with a domestic fleet twice its current size, the creation of 1,000 jobs, a doubling of the number of short-haul flights and protection for the Aer Lingus slots at Heathrow.

But the IMPACT Union said the merger would result in a monopoly and SIPTU said it was just another attempt at mischief-making by Mr O'Leary.

SHAREHOLDERS

The shares in Aer Lingus are divided between Ryanair with 29.8 per cent, the Government with 25.1 per cent, the workforce with 15.2 per cent and others with 30.8 per cent.

In 2006, 600 Aer Lingus pilots formed a company, spending tens of millions buying a Two per cent stake to help prevent Ryanair getting the magic 50 per cent plus one in shares.

Some even mortgaged their homes to come up with the cash. Their pension fund also bought shares.

Between them, they are nursing losses of over €30 million on their shares.

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LABOUR Comment

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Ryanair Recognises Trade Unions?

On the face of it—it is surely one of the most bizarre agreements ever negotiated and approved by any Trade Union movement!

Aer Lingus, a company with gross cash of more than €1 billion, gains a €50 million cost cutting plan; dispenses with over 200 jobs; wins a wage freeze; creates a two-tier shop floor operation and rejects a €748 million offer from Ryanair, its largest shareholder, describing it as a flagging low-cost yellow pack operation.

Last month, Aer Lingus concluded two related agreements with its Trade Unions, SIPTU and IMPACT in a major cost reduction plan after the company threatened to outsource 1,300 of its 3,500 jobs.

Close on 200 ground handling workers have opted to leave Aer Lingus as part of an agreement to knock €24.5 million off the loss-making airline's costs.

The number of staff who have decided to take early retirement or a severance package, worth a minimum of €30,000 per worker, *"substantially exceeded"* expectations.

A seven per cent reduction in the ground handling workforce was part of a proposal put forward by SIPTU to avoid the outsourcing of the 1,300 jobs.

But the number that will leave the company is now likely to be well over 10 per cent.

Over 800 people will take the severance deal but return to work on new contracts under poorer terms and conditions, including a cut in pay.

A further 300 will remain on their existing terms and conditions but will not get the severance package, which is worth nine weeks' pay per year of service.

Earlier, workers had balloted to take strike action prior to the Christmas period but this was averted when the Union's alternative plan was brokered at the Labour Relations Commission.

Options

The plan involved a seven per cent reduction in the workforce as well as poorer terms and conditions of employment for most of those who remain.

Staff had three options: they could stay with the company on the same terms and conditions; take a voluntary severance package and return on reduced terms and conditions; or leave with the severance or early retirement package.

SIPTU's alternative plan had to take €24.5 million off costs as part of an overall plan to shave €50 million off staff costs after the airline announced losses of €22 million this year.

The targets included:

- a 7 per cent reduction in staff in Cork and Dublin;
- a 35 per cent reduction in staff at Shannon;
- half of the remaining staff must move onto the new terms and conditions, including a reduction in the average wage from €42,000 to €38,200.

Questions have been raised, however, about the workers getting the severance payment tax-free when they were then returning to work for the airline.

But SIPTU said it has been assured by the Department of Enterprise that the scheme complies with legislation, as the workers will return to new jobs under new terms.

At least 50 per cent of staff have agreed to accept the 'leave and return' package, fulfilling that target, while the aim of reducing the workforce in Shannon by 35 per cent was near target.

The schemes were *"well over-subscribed"* and would lead to a far greater reduction in ground handling operations than envisaged by management.

This would mean many temporary workers will now be given the option of applying for permanent posts.

SIPTU's plan was backed by almost 80 per cent of its 1,700 members at the airport.

IMPACT Cabin Crew

However, the vote of the IMPACT cabin crew was a much closer result

– 59 per cent to 41 per cent in favour of the cost-cutting plan.

The total cost reduction plan targeted €74 million at the outset. Around €50 million of the original proposed total in cuts was to come from labour cost savings.

IMPACT had indicated that the proposed package would be tough for the 1,500 members of its cabin crew branch to accept, but said it had recommended the deal on the basis that it would *"minimise job losses and keep the Shannon base open"*. The deal also means the scrapping of a plan to outsource jobs on three transatlantic routes.

Aer Lingus said that the outcome of the IMPACT decision, together with a pay freeze in all other areas of the company and the outcome of the SIPTU vote *"means the Company will deliver annualised staff cost savings of €50 million"*.

The company said the decision by IMPACT also secures the future of the company's long haul services for the Shannon region.

Different Deals

"The cabin crew deal is quite different to the one agreed between the airline and S.I.P.T.U. ground staff, as it does not

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