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## The State We're In

Cowen came to power in Ireland with an agenda of restoring the autonomy of the state, notably by freeing it from social restraints to enable it re-shape the economy as it saw fit. But it was a different agenda from that espoused by Labour Party statesman Ruairí Quinn, who last year, at the "Lemass International Forum", in a curious metaphor attacked the "*blancmange where the slowest carrying caravan on the tail of social partnership is the one that's leading the speed of change*" and who had previously denounced the "*cloying effects of social partnership*". Cowen's ascent was certainly marked by a distancing of the state from social partnership and a resurgence of the central role of the civil service, and particularly the Department of Finance. If this had been for its own sake, as Quinn espouses, it would have represented a reactionary development of the Irish political economy, as was pointed out at the time by this journal.

As the financial crisis bit deep in late 2008 and early 2009, and the state believed the economy was facing meltdown, the Government met with the Unions to give social partnership its chance to come up with the answer. The Employers—IBEC—stood on the sidelines, effectively in support of the Congress position. The National Economic and Social Council (NESC)—the "*senate of social partnership*"—came up with some pious but inane solutions. The Trade Unions had sought an extension of the period of "*financial adjustment*" to 2016—three years beyond the Government plan—so as to ameliorate the social cost of contracting state expenditure, and on the basis that there would be no public sector salary cuts, regardless of what was happening through market forces in the private sector.

The Trade Union position was seen by Government to be unrealistic—and the international markets were anyway unlikely to wear it—and so the Government moved to re-assert the hegemony of the state over the recovery process and stabilise the country's economic and financial viability. To date the three most effective Fine Gael leaders of the last 50 years (Fitzgerald, Dukes and John Bruton) have abandoned party to row in behind the Government strategy for patriotic reasons. They decisively undermined Fine Gael's nit-picking "*alternatives*" to NAMA (National Asset Management Agency) in the process.

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## Brother England & Gallipoli

Fianna Fail Minister, Martin Mansergh, has decreed that England is not a foreign country. He is not denied that all the other countries in the world other than England are foreign. He might have denied it on the grounds that the very notion of foreign countries is alien to the universalist ideology of the United Nations. He has not, as far as we know, denied that European countries are foreign countries. It is only England that is not a foreign country. The celebration of England's wars, which Ireland has been indulging in recently, follows naturally enough from this view. If England is not a foreign country then its wars are Our Wars too.

Thousands of Irishmen were killed by the Turks when we took part in the attempt to invade the Turkish mainland at Gallipoli. That invasion attempt was represented as a crusade on the Taoiseach's website. A crusade is a war against the heathen. The Turks were undoubtedly heathens. Francis Ledwige—who abandoned narrow Irish nationalism to take part in the great British escapade against Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Croats, Czechs, Slovaks, Turks, and Greeks—wrote a poem, in which he rubbed home the point about its being a Holy War. And now the President has led a Pilgrimage to the sacred site.

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## David Cameron's UCUNF

So David Cameron has won international recognition, though maybe not in a way he would have wished: personal appeals from Hilary and George W no less. Leaves him looking like an amateur who has blundered into matters beyond his understanding or competence.

A few weeks ago the *Guardian* gave him a history lesson, in an interesting editorial from which I will quote just briefly:

"When it comes to Ireland and the union, the Conservative party has form. On occasion, very serious form indeed. It is no

exaggeration to say that the readiness to mobilise unionism against the British national interest has been one of the darkest and most atavistic Tory political vices from the 1880s onwards. Think of Lord Randolph Churchill, FE Smith, Andrew Bonar Law and, more recently, Enoch Powell. So it may not be surprising that, even under Mr Cameron, things have not entirely changed, even to the extent of holding the secret talks at Hatfield House, where a previous Lord Salisbury hosted rallies against Irish home rule long ago."

But should Mr Cameron require such history lessons? In preparation for the possible (though not by any means certain)

advent of a Tory government, I skimmed through a biography of the man. Interestingly, among the couple of dozen photographs there were no less than three from County Antrim: one with a shooting party hosted by Viscount Dunluce at Glenarm Castle; another with the local Fire Brigade at the same place, following a burnt toast incident; lastly a naked Cameron emerging from a stream.

I'm sure that our possible future ruler acquired a wealth of local knowledge from these incidents, but there's more. There is one direct reference to Northern

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

Moment Of Destiny?

(back page)

The recovery strategy came in stages. First came the Bank Guarantee Scheme, denounced by the EU leadership but since widely replicated elsewhere; then the McCarthy Report; then a rigorous cutting of public expenditure over two Budgets; and finally NAMA. Nerves were calmed, the IMF and EU lined up to praise the Irish strategy, and Ireland was lifted from the PIGS group of states threatening to 'fail' (Portugal, Italy, Greece, Spain: the acronym was coined by an influential *Financial Times* columnist; originally the 'I' represented Ireland).

The backing for the Government from the Fine Gael statesmen—as with the Tallaght Strategy of 1987—was based on an assumption by them that stabilisation and recovery could only be implemented at large-scale social cost and against the wish of Irish society.

Once again—as with Haughey in 1987, when he underpinned his recovery strategy with the institution of Social Partnership based on the European model—the Fine Gael statesmen have been proved wrong. Major cuts in public expenditure and in the public sector salary bill have this time

been achieved while maintaining the substance of the welfare state created over the last decade and keeping the door open for a return to Social Partnership.

In an ingenious twist, the Government has committed itself not to cut but to close the "gap" in public expenditure by €3bn in each of the next two budgets.

Effectively, the more that this gap is closed by increased revenues—through a combination of the effects of a recovery in international trade and tax increases—the less will be required in actual cuts. And this leaves plenty of room for the Social Partners to bargain for, when and if they chose to re-engage with the realities of the crisis.

Workers in the public sector have largely accepted the logic of the Government position and responded to Union calls for protest with a distinct lack of enthusiasm. That the Chief of Staff of the Irish Army is no longer paid more than his counterpart in the nuclear-armed British Army, which is involved in renewed imperial missions around the globe, is regarded as a necessary rebalancing of things. Or, at a more mundane level, Irish politicians and civil servants have been

reduced from their above-top EU salary levels to something approaching a saner norm. Though, mind you, there are many further "adjustments" that could be contemplated, with Hospital Consultants still luxuriating in incomes two and a half times their French or German equivalents.

But, as part of the turnaround implemented by the Cowen Government, the Department of the Taoiseach has been sidelined and a civil service leadership elite, led by (though broader than) the Department of Finance, has emerged as the Command Staff of the process.

The Government has succeeded in this strategy beyond both its own wildest dreams, as well as those of the senior state servant stratum. There has been a massive recovery in confidence in the state among civil servants and policy-makers. A coterie of senior state officials has now been gathered around the Cabinet leaders and it is effectively driving state recovery strategy in unison with the inner Cabinet leadership cadré of Cowen-Lenihan-Hanafin-Martin-O'Keefe-Ó Cuív-Carey-Gormley.

The George Lee incident was a useful interlude, indeed a watershed in public perceptions of politics. It has led to a resurgence of belief in the public interest commitment at the heart of politics that cannot be replaced by the indulging of *prima donnas* from the media. The influence of the media—and particularly of media Cassandras such as Professor Lucey and Fintan O'Toole of *The Irish Times* David McWilliams and others—peaked with Lee and has been falling with him.

The essential refusal by *The Irish Times* in the 1920s to believe that the Irish natives are other than corrupt, or incapable of

### David Cameron

*continued*

Irish political parties: "*Cameron left the Commons chamber... vowing revenge on the DUP*" after they had switched to the government side on the forty-two day detention policy.

But studying for "A" levels at Eton, Cameron chose as a subject "*Northern Ireland: A Study in Conflict*" and was taught by Dr Andrew Gailey, apparently an Ulsterman, who was also his Tutor in his final two years at school. What light might this interest of the adolescent Cameron throw on the current Leader of the Opposition? Either he is even more intellectually lightweight than already expected, or else, possibly, Ulster Unionism is an essential part of his political fabric.

What is certain is that if the Ulster Unionist fly under the flag of UCUNF it will be a boon to graffiti artists.

**Tom Doherty**

running a state, has morphed into a populist or leftist liberal Oppositionism that is essentially the same thing. But balance has now been restored in the public mind over the relationship between politics and the media. The howling of media commentators, and of the middle class mobs mobilised through RTE events like the Pat Kenny TV show *Frontline*, are now parading their "anger" to a less receptive society.

The Unions throughout, while talking class war, have recently made it clear that they are available for a renewed Partnership process, one that no longer will require as a pre-condition—in the short term at least—a reversal of last year's salary cuts. And the Government is responding with (conditionally) open arms. The beginnings of a process is underway towards an agreement on a transformation strategy for the public service (based on the 2008 OECD Report *Transforming Ireland's Public Services*), which goes way beyond the moderate but still substantial "modernisation" achieved through two rounds of benchmarking.

There are also preliminary talks about a follow-up full Social Partnership arrangement. But the turn-about has been decisive. The NES (National Economic & Social Council) has been pared back to its essential role, with the add-ons of the NESF (National Economic Social Forum), along with Peter Cassells' "Centre for Partnership" abolished without a whimper. In addition the once mighty FÁS (training) organisation has been destroyed, with its Social Partnership Board disbanded and a Ministerially-appointed replacement board appointed, devoid of a single Trade Union representative. The legislation required for this was passed by a sullen Dáil,—without a murmur of protest from (New?) Labour. But if a Partnership deal is reconstructed, it will represent little more than a social contextualising of the recovery process (a good thing in itself)—rather than the driving force of it, which is located at the centre of Government. This is the fault of the Social Partners, not the Government. If they had come up with a credible answer to the crisis, the role would have been theirs for the taking.

The latest triumph by the Government, in its recovery from its 20% poll ratings at the height of the much invoked "public anger", is the reshuffle announced on 23rd March. Brian Lenihan remains at the helm of Finance as long as his health allows, an act not without an echo of the self-sacrificing spirit of the GPO of 1916, and noted that way by the public. Mary Hanafin's move from Social and Family Affairs to Arts, Sports and Culture is not a demotion. Since January's "diaspora" gathering at Farmleigh on the economic potential of the arts and "creative industries", this issue has moved to the centre of

## The 'Square Peg' Response

I am grateful to the IPR for devoting so much space to a review of my *Square Peg*, and to John Martin for his detailed and, largely, fair analysis of its contents, and particularly for drawing attention to my error on page 91 where I said "first McDowell and then Gageby had been brought in to modernise" the *Irish Times*, when of course it should have been the other way round, Gageby then McDowell. I must have read that phrase half a dozen times in draft and proof and never spotted it, as did none of the three *Irish Times* veterans who read that chapter for me.

If an author can misread his own copy, how much more easily can a reviewer do so. John Martin refers to Colonel FitzSimon's account of how an Irish regiment stationed in Germany or Austria in 1921 welcomed the news of "the Anglo-Irish Treaty", and goes on to make a political point about reaction in Ireland to the Treaty. But as the book states clearly the reference was to the announcement of the "truce of July 1921 between Lloyd George and DeValera", not to the later Treaty.

I may or may not have, as John Martin suggests, "a distain for the cut and thrust of politics"—I shall have to think about that—but as a first example in the book of this weakness, or strength, on my part, he cites my story of the Paisley march on the *Belfast Telegraph* offices in protest against an editorial I had written, and says the most interesting aspect of my account is that I do not indicate "what precisely the Paisleyites objected to".

But I do—on page 35 I state, precisely, that it was my description of them as "the lunatic fringes of unionism".

Mr. Martin sees further evidence for my distain for politics in the book having little to say about Hillery's attempt to have Northern Ireland raised at the UN in 1969, failing to add an analysis of South Africa under apartheid to my account of a visit there in 1969, and not including the assassination of JFK in 1963 in a one paragraph reference to the fact that I had spent a year in America in 1963-64. But *Square Peg* is not about these things—it is a book about my experience, as a northern Protestant, of living in Dublin, and of working for the *Irish Times*.

Two minor points; I do not have an "Ulster Methodist background", nor does the book say so. My dalliance with Methodism began and ended with my years in Dublin. Second, I did not suggest that part of my motivation for going to Ethiopia was that missionaries were exempt from income tax. I was recruited as a journalist; the fact that all employees at the Lutheran radio station in Addis Ababa were deemed missionaries and therefore exempt from income tax came as a pleasant surprise with my first, but still very modest, pay packet.

Dennis Kennedy

Government strategy. As Bill Gates told Hanafin, what Microsoft needed was not computer engineers but creative people, and this area is regarded as having huge employment and enterprise potential into the future—a perspective boosted by the five recent Academy Award nominations for technical creativity to graduates of Ballyfermot College of Further Education.

The re-arrangement of the Education, Skills, Employment and Social Protection portfolios also signifies some dynamism and an imaginative restructuring of public services, and is in line with the central employment and enterprise aspects of the recovery strategy which are now about to be rolled out.

This magazine consistently expresses the hope that the Fine Gael and Labour parties develop a substantial politics of opposition and potential Government, but they continue to disappoint. In response to the re-shuffle, Leo Varadkar, FG front-bench spokesman on Enterprise, attacked Cowen with a remarkable paraphrasing of a 1988 US presidential election jibe: "Taoiseach, You're no Seán Lemass. You're no Jack Lynch and you're no John

Bruton. You're a Garret FitzGerald. You've tripled the national debt, you've effectively destroyed the country .... So enjoy writing your boring articles in *The Irish Times* in a few years' time" (*The Irish Times*, 24th March). Thus is Garret's refusal to endorse FG's economic 'alternative' resented among the Blueshirt!

And the American analogies continued with Labour, with Gilmore surveying the re-arranged Cabinet with the weak imitation of an Obama flourish "This is not what real Change looks like!"

Rather than emerging as a credible alternative, Fine Gael/Labour seem ever more trapped in their traditional role, "fruitlessly waiting", as *The Irish Times* put it at the start of the year, "for a devastating tribunal disclosure which would propel them into office", rather than using "their time in waiting to consider their policies for government" (2nd January 2010). The evidence is that they remain content in the role of offering an occasional rest for the natural party of Government while it gets on with the job.

## Brother England *continued*

This war, in which Gallipoli was an incident, came about because we (that is, the non-foreign British) wanted one bit of the Turkish state and Russia wanted another bit — and then, when we got the war going, the French wanted a third bit. So we called off our conflict with Russia so that together we could squeeze the Turks.

Russia joined us in the war against Germany and Austria in August 1914—in fact we joined it, because it was Russia that started it so that we could join in—with the object of getting Constantinople (Istanbul). The whole world knew that what Russia wanted was Constantinople. The dogs in the street were barking it. We had earlier fought a war against Russia to stop them getting it. That was the Crimean War. We were not yet ready then to take our bit of Turkey, so we had to stop the Russians taking the bit they wanted. But we were ready in 1914, and we went into action together with the Tsar.

A letter in the *Irish Independent* (April 25) says that, in making war on Turkey, we "*were fighting, in the words of Woodrow Wilson, to make the world a safe place for democracy*". We were fighting for democracy, and the big army in that war for democracy was our ally, the absolutist Tsar.

Influential American opinion at the time was of the view that the main reason for the war on Germany was that Germany was helping the Turkish state to strengthen itself, and thereby to obstruct the expansionist ambitions of the Tsarist Empire and Our Empire to take Constantinople and the Middle East.

Three years later America entered the war on the side of Britain and France and it defeated Germany for them. Britain and France (the *Entente*) had got very heavily in debt to the US in 1915-16. The Germans and Turks proved much harder to beat than was expected. The *Entente* was unable to supply itself with arms. It had to buy from the US, and to borrow from the US in order to buy. The Turks were holding their own, and the Germans, despite being greatly outnumbered, were in danger of winning, or of forcing a negotiated peace—which would have been a victory for Germany, which had no territorial claims, and a defeat for Britain and Russia, which had. And, if Germany had won, the US would have had to write off the massive *Entente* borrowings as bad debts.

So the US entered the war and defeated Germany—but made a point of not joining the *Entente* in its war against Turkey. So Woodrow Wilson must have thought that Turkey was an OK state. So the "*Our War*" which we celebrate at Gallipoli is exclusively a British Empire War, recognised as such by the USA.

Turkey declared itself neutral in the European War of 1914, and in the World War which followed quickly when the British Empire joined in, blockaded Germany, and seized German trade and German possessions. The Turkish object was to survive the World War, despite the fact that Russia and Britain had designs on it. And it kept up this neutral stance despite British provocations. Two warships built in Britain for Turkey, bought and paid for, were seized by Britain in July 1914, before anyone had declared war. Then, in August, two German warships caught in the Mediterranean were shepherded by the Royal Navy into Turkish waters. The Germans made a gift of them to the Turks. Britain declared this a breach of neutrality and blockaded Turkey. But it did not declare war at that point, nor did Turkey—though the blockade was an act of war.

The war in Europe stabilised in the Autumn. Both sides dug themselves into strong trenches along the entire Western Front, and the Russian Steamroller was stopped to the east of Germany. That was when the war on Turkey was launched.

What actually went on between Turkey and Russia in the Black Sea is a matter of speculation. The certainty is that Russia was in the war to get Constantinople and everybody knew that. And it was a good guess, and later an established fact, that Britain had agreed that the Russians should have Constantinople.

It was also no secret that Britain was in expansionist mode in the Middle East. Egypt was British. And in the years before 1914 maps were being published which coloured in Southern Persia (Iran) as part of the British Empire. (Britain had allocated Northern Persia to Russia.) And it was coming to light that the British Empire had crossed the Gulf and gained a foothold in Arabia by means of a secret Treaty with a Sheik in Kuwait, who owed allegiance to the Turkish Empire and had no authority to make Treaties. A continuous land Empire from India to Egypt was in process of construction.

With Britain and Russia in connivance, Turkey had no realistic prospect of sitting out the war as it wished to do. Russia declared war on 2nd November, on foot of some incident, or alleged incident, in the Black Sea. Everyone knows that the pretext for the British war on Germany was the march of the German Army through Belgium. It's in all the history books. But the Black Sea incident has been rather coy about presenting itself.

About fifteen years earlier Britain decided to have the Boer Republics, and set about building pressure on them. It squeezed the Republics until they decided the only thing to do was to hit out: and that was the moral justification for their destruction. Britain is skilled at this casuistic morality—a kind of morality which at an earlier stage in its development it denoun-

ced as the immoral morality of Rome.

The incident in the Black Sea, whatever it was, no more obliged Britain to make war on Turkey than it obliged the USA a couple of years later. But Britain itself was intent on having a piece of the Turkish state, and it also had a secret agreement with Russia, and so it too used the Black Sea incident as an excuse for war.

And then it demanded that Greece should make war on Turkey and offered it a fourth bit of Turkey as bait. When Greece refused to declare war, Britain declared it to be a German agent, invaded it, overthrew its Government, set up a puppet Government which did declare war—and suffered heavily a few years later as a result.

While Britain was in the course of conquering the Middle East the Tsarist State collapsed, and the middle class state that followed collapsed because of its attempt to keep up the Tsarist war.

Once Russia declared war on Turkey, the Turks engaged in active combat. They were caught between Russia and Britain in the Middle East. When the Russian Armies dissolved, Britain extended its operations into the Russian sphere. It had allocated Northern Persia to Russia, but now Britain had to hold the Front in that region.

A recent book about this says that up to ten million people died in a Famine caused by the mode of British operations in Northern Persia in 1917-19, Mohammed Gholi Majd: *The Great Famine And Genocide In Persia 1917-19* (University Press of America 2003).

We are being urged to embrace *Our War*. So let us at least find out what we are embracing.

Greece is not having an easy time just now. Let us do something to cheer it up. Let us explain what a good thing it was for us to invade them, to free them from the Hun-lovers that were keeping them out of the wars, and to force them into war with the Turks, with all the good things that followed from that.

This year Gallipoli; next year Smyrna! How about it Mary? (But whatever happened to Smyrna?)

The President says that making war is a good thing and should be celebrated regardless of the purpose of the war. The *Irish Times* supported her view (25 March) and quotes a Ledwidge poem saying Gallipoli was a war for peace. It does not quote his lines saying it was a Christian Crusade against the heathen. And the Middle East is still trying to recover the peace which our war on Turkey shattered.

And the Latvians are celebrating *their* war, in which their heroes fought in the Nazi SS against Bolshevism in 1941-4, but we don't seem to approve of that. Why not? The Latvians had at least been ruled by the Bolsheviks. We were never ruled by the Turks. 

## Garret, Greeks and Germans

Garret Fitzgerald writes a weekly homily in the *Irish Times* and the state of the EU is a typical theme for him. These are usually muddled affairs that make sense in some ethereal world of his own. On 6th of March he ruminated on:

"Tighter control of euro zone states needed. Europe cannot let irresponsible states undermine the currency union"

and the object of his admonitions was of course Greece. But who or what exactly is going to enforce 'tighter controls' Garret does not specify. He has to admit that this problem with Greece is happening at a "very time when the cohesion of the EU is already very weak", which would seem to rule out any tighter control of anything by the EU.

But we were told that the Lisbon Treaty was required to deal with this very problem of an alleged lack of cohesion. The basis of this growing lack of cohesion is never spelt out.

The EU is now dominated by the needs of the major states. That is the only reality. When the Greek 'crisis' arose, Germany and France decided what to do and nobody else was even present. That is the inter-Governmental approach to issues: Lisbon signalled the full emergence of that approach in contrast to the community approach where all are equally engaged.

The new approach is also seen with Baroness Ashton and her role. She was appointed by the Governments and they decided to give her job a zero role—she is to do as she is told by them. She fits the bill perfectly. Cometh the hour cometh the woman.

But she also has a specific job to do which is to create the new External Action Service (EAS) and take as much power as possible from the Commission, hitherto the centre of the EU.

"Many European governments have urged Baroness Ashton to hold strong in talks with the Commission. Minister for Foreign Affairs Micheál Martin last night said the Commission would have to "share responsibilities" when the EAS is established. "It has to be particularly generous in relation to the office of the High Representative in my view in terms of the role and functions", he said of the Commission" (*Irish Times*, 6.3.10).

This is a nice piece of 'Eurospeak', which says to the Commission 'let go of more power and look happy about it'. At a certain point this denuding of the Commission will mean that the centre will not hold.

Even Garret realises something has gone wrong here:

"Her appointment was a political deal to satisfy the egos of heads of several major European governments—and also, perhaps, to ensure no serious competition between the new high representative and president of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso. This should not have happened." Unfortunately Garret sees no further than egos. This is a pathetic explanation. It is a transfer of power but Garret has never been good at calling a spade a spade—or even recognising one.

The relationship between the Member States and the new EAS was spelt out even more clearly in the following report:

"At their biannual informal meeting, the (Council of Foreign) Ministers also discussed plans to establish a new EU diplomatic corps. Against the backdrop of resistance in the European Commission to the ceding of powers to the European External Action Service, ministers expressed the view that the body should not dilute their power in external affairs.

"The main player is the council of the foreign ministers with the high representative", said Luxembourg minister Jean Asselborn, echoing the views of many of his counterparts.

"I think that we have to finish very, very quickly this discussion because foreign ministers are there to speak about foreign policy and not about formalities and all these logistical instruments"... (IT 8.3.10).

The EAS is therefore simply a "logistical instrument" of the Foreign Ministries and, as that instrument is taking more power from the Commission, it is quite clear where power is gravitating and who is now in charge. It is absurd that the smaller Member States are encouraging this development, which ensures there is no serious element in the structure that treats all members on an equal basis. They must be satisfied with the rhetoric of Europe but not to be taken seriously when real issues are on the table.

The Baroness's speech to the European Parliament on 10th March was reported as follows and gives an indication of what might be in store:

"Priorities for the EAS would be the ability to plan and conduct military operations, to develop ways to co-ordinate civilian operations and to link with organisations such as the UN and Nato.

"Baroness Ashton outlined her foreign policy vision, saying it was "impossible to state how important this moment is" and that it was a "once-in-a-generation opportunity".

"The EU's approach to the western Balkans was a model for what the EU strategy should be, she said..." (IT 11.3.2010).

The wars in the Balkans were caused by the EU in their hubristic wish to break up the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a move initiated by Mrs. Thatcher. The EU facilitated secessions, which every dog in the area knew would inevitably create ethnic conflict. The EU is therefore responsible for the subsequent horrors and hundreds of thousands of deaths, which has ensured ethnic conflict for generations to come. And this is now the EU model for foreign policy success! Let's hope the Baroness writes her biography soon so that we can follow her thought process from Treasurer of Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament to this.

After all his admonishing of Greece Garret admits that: "*The Stability and Growth Pact, negotiated in Dublin in the 1990s, has clearly been a failure and needs to be radically reviewed.*" So Greece is to be condemned, although the policy that caused the problem was misguided. Garret does not elaborate on the review he has in mind. More of the same, or less, or none?

And, while on his high horse, he declares:

"Europe cannot afford to permit irresponsible member states to act in a way that may undermine the economies of all their partners. This means the economic policies of euro zone states need to be subjected to much tighter control at European level."

But there is one exception and there can be a situation where all the rest of the EU is out of step on economic policy:

"However, just because many decades ago other western European states made the mistake of deciding to tax company profits heavily, we should not be obliged to follow that counter-productive practice."

So again all can be all right if looked at exclusively from what is best from your own state's point of view. Very EU indeed!

The Euro has been so arranged that, as before, the Germans provide the money-bags when needed. They did cough up with a clear conscience when there was something better and bigger to aim for—a united Europe. But now they are asked to bail out another country, with maybe others to follow later—and they are asking themselves: for what? The EU is also so arranged that it is draining Germany's self-respect as well as its coffers. And the former is ultimately more important than the latter for them as for anybody else.

There is a great desire to desire to hide this obvious fact:

"Commission president José Manuel Barroso said last week the financial support mechanism would be constructed in such a way that neither individual governments nor the euro zone collectively would be assuming Greece's debts.

"The German government regards this as essential, because EU treaty law contains a "no bail-out" clause that could be invoked by domestic opponents of financial aid for Greece in a constitutional lawsuit.

"Euro-zone officials said Germany's role might involve KfW, a state-owned development bank whose remit includes the financing of "internationally agreed support programmes" and supplying funds "in the interests of the German and European economy". (IT, 15.3.10).

This is an attempted sleight of hand. The bank concerned will hardly oblige unless loans to Greece are guaranteed by the German Government and so the whole problem is back in Germany's lap in a very short time. Otherwise Barroso is some kind of magician.

Germany created a united country, and paid for it and did it for a clear and obvious reason—to unite the German body politic. It was able to do it because there was such a body to unite. It is natural that they would look on that as a template for uniting Europe. But the prospect of a united Europe is a mirage by comparison and a potential nightmare for them if present policies are followed through and the EU message to them is pay up and stop moaning.

The *Irish Times* editorialises on the same point, putting it a little more grandiosely but it would be no less infuriating for any German:

"The German government has opened up a badly-needed political debate on this, but Germany's interests alone cannot dictate the outcome..." (IT 15.3.10).

But sometimes he who pays the piper insists on calling the tune and quite right too. If and when the Germans decide that others must dance to their tune, the Greek 'crisis' will be small beer indeed compared to what might then come down the track for the EU.

**Jack Lane**

## INVESTING IN DEATH

Kills whole villages for one Taliban.  
Kills whole generations for one Afghan,  
these Reapers—Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.  
A computer screen, coffee and bagels,  
coward's comfort at Creech Airbase, Nevada.  
Flown from Kandahar with killer's ardour  
to deliver two five-hundred-pound bombs  
and fire four Hellfire missiles with aplomb.  
They said communism was delirium,  
courted Nazism for equilibrium,  
while they possessed and oppressed the  
Third World.  
Now they are giving it another whirl.  
There could have been peace in East and  
West  
but bred they who wear the suicide vest.

**Wilson John Haire**  
11th February, 2010

## Sinn Fein And Gallipoli

Remarks on *Some Comment* in March *Irish Political Review*

Sinn Fein's support of the Irish President's intended visit to Gallipoli to honour the Irish dead of 1915 has got to be a new low. Their reply to Mark Langhammer's protest is a disgrace. I wonder now if this united Ireland they are on about sometimes could be one within the British Commonwealth. Why else would Sinn Fein throw its weight in behind this past British Imperialist adventure? They are not going to win the Northern Protestant over in this manner. Many of the battered survivors were around when I was a teenager and most of them condemned having been sent to almost certain death. Their grandchildren will be aware of this cynicism. Forget the slogans on the banners of the Orange parades, still celebrating Queen Victoria and British Imperialism, that doesn't represent the majority of the Protestant population.

The truth of the matter is not many Northern Protestant are going to care that much about Southern Catholic lackeys going to their death in Gallipoli. They don't care all that much for Southern Protestants either, as I discovered in the Belfast shipyard during the 1940s-50s. Nor cared much for the loyal Northern Catholic. James Magennis was a young Belfast Catholic who joined the Royal Navy after leaving school in 1935. When the European colonial powers were defeated in the Far East, he was part of a midget-submarine team that sank a Japanese cruiser in Singapore. For this he was awarded the VC (Victoria Cross), the only one awarded in the Six Counties for WW2. Back in Belfast the Lord Mayor of the Unionist Belfast Corporation denied him the Freedom of the City. It took until October 1999 before a plaque was erected in his honour at the Belfast City Hall. You can imagine the whoops of triumph if a Protestant had won it. His face would certainly have appeared on an Orange banner.

I notice that on British Television programmes like the recent *Any Questions* held in Belfast the Sinn Fein representative on the panel took all the insults from the Unionist about the Provisional IRA and violence but seemed unwilling to clarify by bringing in such facts as Loyalist violence through their death squads. At least they might have explained the situation if only for the benefit of the English viewer.

The *Irish Political Review* has observed astutely that in Britain militarism seems to be enough in itself—though the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan aren't popular in Britain, the troops are. Of course the last time Britain went to war with its equal was in 1940 and was defeated, by the German Army. An issue of the *Irish Political Review* pointed out some time ago that Britain didn't go it alone on mainland Europe with this powerful enemy for the rest of WW2 (nor took on any fully-developed nation ever again).

Since that time they have fought ill-equipped guerrilla movements in their colonies, fought a thirty-year war against the Provisional IRA in the Six Counties without achieving overall victory, and went to war with Argentina (who lags well behind the European military power) over the Malvinas and even came close to losing that intrusion. All options are open now with China and the Soviet Union out of the equation. How many now remember the threat against Cuba in 1962 and that all too coincidental feint of the Chinese Red Army in its sudden attack on India over disputed territory. Then too there was the Suez invasion by the UK, France and Israel, and the Soviet invasion of Hungary, both in 1956. Such moves made for a more cautious Western European-US imperialism.

Britain can't even go it alone with a poor nation like Afghanistan and is there with NATO and forty other nations. And is Iraq a fully developed nation? They have got to be pretty desperate to crow over such small pickings. What is Turkey doing entertaining this shadow of an imperial power? A few years back Turkish political prisoners were dying on hunger strike by the dozen. Sinn Fein felt it was its duty to visit these people. What has happened since that time—destroyed its left-wing in order to curry favour with Britain and the Irish/American super-rich?

**Wilson John Haire**, 21st March, 2010

## NIGHTIE NIGHT

'Unlawful killing by the Taliban.'

A verdict by a British coroner,  
of soldiers killed by the foreigner.

Not in England but in Afghanistan.

What kind of arrogance rules now this land.

Three liberal parties in league with murder.

A media willing to embroider.

Proud parents give their loved ones to the shroud.

All you do is die to be a hero.

How worthless life has become in Blighty.

Did history begin with Ground Zero,

Maybe love began with Aphrodite.

Did Imperium begin with Nero

Brit law dreams—rules the world in its nightie.

**Wilson John Haire**  
10th March, 2010

# Shorts

from  
*the Long Fellow*

## THE MEDIA AGENDA

There was a time that media personalities were not supposed to express their political opinions on air, but that was a long time ago . . .

Pat Kenny's *Frontline* of 22nd February began with the host asking what our young people think of our discredited political system. The 'fact' of our system being discredited was taken as read; the only issue was how people were to respond to it.

The opening assumption was the same as a programme he did on the *Late Late Show* last year but the format was slightly different. On last year's show *The Irish Times* journalist Fintan O'Toole lectured an audience of politicians and members of the public on the shortcoming of the political system as well as the Irish people, whom he thought should "grow up". He was aided and abetted by Kenny and two other media personalities.

On the *Frontline* programme two politicians faced a hostile audience (as well as Kenny). But, whereas last year O'Toole had about 10 minutes to make his case and did it from a pulpit at a distance from the audience, the two *elected* politicians on this year's programme (Thomas Byrne of Fianna Fáil and Lucinda Creighton of Fine Gael) were allowed 90 seconds each to make their case. They were placed a few feet from the hostile audience in the manner of defendants appealing for leniency for their transgressions.

A Labour Councillor in the audience suggested that his party could provide an alternative, but he was quickly 'corrected' by Kenny, who pointed out that Labour was the same as Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. The problem as Kenny made clear from the outset was the political system. All parties were culpable.

## DEMOCRACY IS THE PROBLEM!

Having attempted to secure a conviction against the system in a rigged trial, Kenny then proceeded to offer a solution. The ground was carefully prepared in advance. The successful Irish businessman Bill Cullen was invited to speak, but Cullen was unreliable for Kenny's purposes because he didn't think much of the audience members who castigated the politicians. He thought that they were spoilt children who expected things to be done for them rather than doing things for themselves. In an even more egregious *faux pas* Cullen said that Fianna Fáil's car scrappage scheme had saved the car

industry in this country. No wonder Cullen was in the audience rather than having the status of one of Kenny's invited guests!

Kenny tried to salvage something from this by asking Thomas Byrne why the scrappage scheme had not been introduced earlier. The Fianna Fáil TD replied that there was a strong economic argument against introducing the scheme because this industry had no manufacturing jobs in this country. However, the Government relented when the extent of the job losses in this sector became clear.

The discussion was then turned away from the audience and Kenny asked Byrne and Creighton how many business people were on the Front Benches of their respective parties. Again there was an unstated assumption: that it was not enough for a politician to be elected by the people. This led to an uncritical interview with Dylan Collins, a young Irish entrepreneur who made his fortune in games software. Not surprisingly, he thought that the country would be better run by businessmen like himself.

Towards the end of the programme Pat Kenny sneered at a Fine Gael policy proposing that only 12 TDs out of 166 should be appointed through a list system. Again, the unquestioned assumption was that a system of directly elected politicians was undesirable.

## ELECTORAL REFORM

There is a case for the proposition that our politicians are too close to the people and constituency demands mean that they do not have time to consider the great issues of the day. But the Long Fellow thinks that the great issues of the day should not be decided upon in splendid isolation from the people. The prospect of individuals in government not directly accountable to the people is a cure much worse than the supposed disease.

Nevertheless, there are three reasons why our electoral system should be reformed. Firstly, there is a fundamental flaw in the operation of the system. The distribution of surpluses is arbitrary. It is not practical to distribute fractions of an elected candidate's surplus votes. This is why the 'deck' is shuffled in advance, so that the distribution of surplus ballot papers does not come from an unrepresentative area in a constituency. There have been occasions in the past where unsuccessful candidates in closely fought contests have felt, very understandably, that they were robbed. A computerised system might have overcome this problem, but rightly or wrongly, the Irish people have decided that they do not trust such a system.

A second disadvantage is that it is too proportional. While many people consider this an advantage, the decline of Fianna Fáil, as well as judicial decisions regarding constituency boundaries, have meant that it is almost impossible for a single party to

obtain an overall majority. This has resulted in smaller parties having a disproportionate influence (e.g. the Progressive Democrats from the late 1980s up until recently). The argument against a less proportional system has been that it would result in permanent Fianna Fáil Government (as if we haven't had that in recent years!?). Whatever about the validity of this in the past, it does not apply now: the opinion polls show that Fine Gael is now the largest party and Labour is not far behind Fianna Fáil.

A third flaw is that in multi-seat constituencies candidates from the same party are competing against each other. Since they cannot compete on the basis of policies there is an incentive to compete on the basis of needless constituency work.

The Long Fellow thinks that a constitutional amendment allowing only single seat constituencies would overcome the defects of the existing system while retaining the principle of directly elected politicians under the single transferable vote.

## THE PRINT MEDIA

The print media in Ireland as elsewhere is struggling, but some newspapers have suffered more than others. Among the big losers was *The Irish Times*, whose average daily circulation fell by 7.4% to just under 107 thousand in the second half of 2009 compared to the same period the previous year. According to the Audit Bureau of Circulation this compared with a drop of 3% to about 150 thousand for the *Irish Independent*.

*The Irish Times's* circulation peaked under Conor Brady's editorship (1986 to 2002) at about 115 thousand and has experienced a marginal decline under Kennedy's editorship. This must be a little disappointing for the newspaper which, unlike its more down market rival, has not experienced any serious competition from imported British titles.

It is a moot point whether other information media complement or are a substitute for reading newspapers. The introduction of television in Ireland during the 1960s coincided with a dramatic increase in the circulation of *The Irish Times*. But it appears that the internet is substituting for, rather than complementing, newspaper sales.

One of the problems for newspapers is that consumers are less dependent on the journalist. If they are interested in a particular story, alternative sources of information are just a mouse click away.

## RYANAIR AND HANGAR 6

An online reading of the Oireachtas Transport Committee hearings on the controversy surrounding Ryanair's proposal to create 300 aircraft maintenance jobs in Hangar 6 shows how inadequate the print media's reporting of this issue has been.

To put it mildly Ryanair's offer to create 300 jobs if Aer Lingus were evicted from Hangar 6 has little credibility.

Michael O'Leary produced copious correspondence for the Committee. But, as Michael Kennedy of Fianna Fáil pointed out, the Ryanair Chief Executive somehow forgot to produce a letter from himself to the IDA dated 2nd July 2009. In this letter O'Leary gave an undertaking to comply with the lease conditions requiring the prospective tenant to move from Hangar 6 to alternative premises, if this was required by the Dublin Airport Authority to develop the airport. This letter also somehow failed to be published by O'Leary's groupies in the *Sunday Independent*.

So O'Leary was prepared to move from Hangar 6 once he had evicted Aer Lingus from it but was not prepared to contemplate the provision of alternative accommodation by the IDA, which would have avoided the necessity of evicting Aer Lingus.

The Ryanair Chief Executive was badly exposed by the Committee. His original plan was to create 500 jobs if he obtained Hangar 6. This "promise" was reduced to 300 after he had agreed to create 200 jobs at Prestwick airport in Scotland. But the Chief Executive of the "low cost" airline was still making the creation of the 300 jobs in Dublin conditional on occupation of Hangar 6 which has an area of almost 4 times the size of Prestwick and which under his original proposal could house 500 employees. Christoph Mueller, the Chief Executive of Aer Lingus, also pointed out that, not only was the area way in excess of what Ryanair needed for 300 maintenance jobs, it was also far too high—which would result in excessive heating bills. However, the height of the building is necessary to maintain Aer Lingus's A330s, which have a tail fin of twice the height of Ryanair's Boeing 737s.

O'Leary claimed that the Dublin Airport Authority was a "dishonest and corrupt" organisation and he hadn't been able to deal with it since 2006. But the Chief Executive of this organisation, Declan Collier, denied this. His organisation had negotiated directly with Ryanair last year in connection with other Hangars at the airport. The correspondence he had with O'Leary would "fill the library of Congress" and he had met him on a "formal basis" only two weeks previously.

#### RYANAIR'S REAL MOTIVATION?

So what is all this about? Last month the Long Fellow suggested two possible reasons for Ryanair's interest in Hangar 6:

a) It wants to use it as a terminal (resulting in a loss of jobs elsewhere in the airport).

b) It has only recently been required to pay full rent at its existing Head Office in Dublin Airport and thinks it will obtain more favourable terms for a Head Office

in Hangar 6 either as a freehold or with the IDA as its landlord rather than the Dublin Airport Authority.

But there is a third more compelling explanation for O'Leary's behaviour. Ryanair has a 29% stake in Aer Lingus. The Irish State holds 24%. If Ryanair can demonstrate that its political influence is such that it can compel the Irish State with its 24% stake to act against the interests of Aer Lingus, the share price of this airline will plummet, enabling Ryanair to take over the company at a bargain price. The other shareholders might very well have a legal case against the State for destroying the value of the company, but that won't worry Ryanair.

In pursuing the mirage of 300 jobs the Irish State would have only succeeded in destroying the 3,700 real and existing jobs in Aer Lingus.

#### RETAIL MADNESS

Has Fine Gael learned anything from the last two years? That is the question that arises from a proposed 25,000 square metre retail development supported by Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

A Fine Gael County Councillor supports the development on the grounds that it will create "800 full time jobs, 700 construction jobs and 1,500 support/part-time jobs" (*The Irish Times*, 8.3.10). The councillor claims that this contrasts with another development nearby which is losing money.

Did it not occur to the Fine Gael councillor that there might be a reason for the other nearby development not doing well? Jobs in retail can only be "created" at the expense of other jobs. Retail by itself does not create wealth in an economy.

The Long Fellow thinks that Minister for the Environment John Gormley is right to intervene to prevent this retail madness.

#### NATIONAL ANTHEM

The Long Fellow is an admirer of Irish rugby star Trevor Brennan who made a successful career for himself in France.

At the launch of his autobiography a couple of years ago he was asked by his fellow Irish international, Peadar Clohessy: "who had he got to write the book?" To which Brennan replied: "who was he (Clohessy) going to get to read the book?"

In typically robust terms Brennan said what most Irish people were thinking after our defeat at the hands of France in this year's Six Nations: the policy of not playing our national anthem at away games is putting our all Ireland rugby team at a severe disadvantage. With all due respect to Phil Coulter, *Ireland's Call* cannot compete with the blood curdling call to arms of the *Marseillaise*.

But it is said that if *Amhrán na bhFiann* were played, the small number of Ulster

players in the squad, who consider themselves British, would be alienated.

This is a problem, which has wider implications. If the country moves towards a United Ireland will this require a dilution of our Republican traditions? ... *Ireland's call* writ large?

Be careful what you might wish for. It might come true!

#### Report

## Connolly's Rebel Song At Imperial War Museum

On March 13th the International Brigade Memorial Trust (IBMT) held a celebration in London's Imperial War Museum of the life of its late President, Jack Jones (1913-2009). The following address was made by Manus O'Riordan:

It is, indeed, a great honour for us children of *brigadistas* to share with International Brigade veterans Sam Lesser (95 next week, March 18th) and Jack Edwards (96) in this celebration of the life of Jack Jones. It is all the more so for myself, since the last overseas journey undertaken by Jack James Larkin Jones was to Dublin in January of last year, to celebrate the centenary of the foundation of my own Irish Union—the ITGWU, now SIPTU—by Jack's fellow Liverpoolian and namesake, Big Jim Larkin.

Those who have viewed *Memories of a Future*, the documentary on the IBMT's commemorative re-crossing of the Pyrenees in 2006, will have seen Jack's identification with Ireland's struggle for independence further exemplified as he joined with my wife Annette in singing *Kevin Barry*, a song that he himself had especially requested from her. Indeed, his son Mick recalls from his childhood years how Jack used to sing *Kevin Barry* to both Jack Jr. and himself—as a lullaby!

In *Union Man* Jack wrote of how the writings of James Connolly had been among the formative influences of his youth. I also recall, when I brought both Mick and himself to visit Dublin's Kilmainham Gaol in 2003, how moved Jack was on coming to the exact spot in that grim prison yard where the wounded Connolly, strapped to a chair, had been executed by British imperialism after the Easter Rising of 1916. (See [www.atholbooks.org/connolly\\_america.pdf](http://www.atholbooks.org/connolly_america.pdf) for Manus O'Riordan's "*Connolly in America*", first published by Athol Books in 1971).

"We are proud of the British Battalion", is that line from *The Valley Of Jarama* which we sing out with such justifiable pride at the close of IBMT commemorative ceremonies. Here today, in this Imperial War Museum, it is important to recall that the British Battalion also stood in the best anti-imperialist traditions of the Labour

movement. On the eve of the 1938 battle of the Ebro, British and Irish International Brigade volunteers—including IBMT members' relatives like Sam Wild (Battalion Commander), George Green (who would be killed in action), Frank West (who would be captured and imprisoned in San Pedro concentration camp), James Jump, John Langstaff, Edwin Greening, together with my own father Michael O'Riordan and Jack Jones (both of whom would be wounded on Hill 481)—were particularly honoured to be associated with India's struggle for independence, as they received a solidarity visit to that Ebro front from the Indian National Congress leader, Pandit Nehru, accompanied by his daughter, Indira—a future Prime Minister like her father.

The British Battalion's anti-imperialism was even more strongly affirmed by its adoption, as one of its marching anthems throughout the course of the Spanish Anti-fascist War, of James Connolly's own *Rebel Song*. At the IBMT Pyrenees commemoration ceremonies in the Figueras fortress of Castell de Sant Ferran, there were three International Brigade veterans present: the late Bob Doyle of Dublin and the late Jack Jones, a Liverpool Club supporter, accompanied by his lifelong comrade and friend from youth—notwithstanding the fact that he's an Everton supporter!—this veteran whom, to the end of his days, Jack Jones both addressed and referred to as *Young Jackie Edwards*, although his senior by only one year! . And in that Catalan fortress, on Easter Sunday 2006, there could be heard, loud and clear, the voices of both of those Liverpoolian *brigadista* Jacks, as they heartily joined with me in singing this song by James Connolly:

*Then we'll sing a rebel song  
As we proudly march along  
to end the age-old tyranny  
that makes for human tears.  
And our march is nearer done  
with each setting of the sun  
and the tyrant's might is passing  
with the passing of the years!*

(NB: See [www.atholbooks.org/jackjones\\_MI5.pdf](http://www.atholbooks.org/jackjones_MI5.pdf) for a dossier compiled by Manus O'Riordan on the British intelligence smear campaign against Jack Jones.)

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Report: Book Launch by **Professor Cathal MacSwiney Brugha**, University College Dublin, Wednesday, 10 March 2010 of ***The Unknown Commandant: The Life and Times of Denis Barry 1883–1923*** by **Denis Barry**. (The Collins Press)

## A Founder Of The State

*A Árd Mhaora, Dara Ó Murchú, is a Cháirde Ghaeil, táimíd bailithe inniu chun leabhair Donncha de Barra a sheoladh, agus chun onóir a thabhairt do a uncail Denis Barry. A Árd Mhaora, cuidíonn sé leis an aitheantas atá á thabhairt do Ceann Catha Denis Barry go bhfuil tú i lathair inniu, agus go bhfuil an leabhair seo á lainseáil i Halla na Cathrach Corcaigh.*

*Leanfaidh mé as Bearla ar eagla go bhfuil daoine ag éisteacht nach dtuigeann Ghaeluinn cé go raibh ár dteanga go flúirseach ag na ceannairí a bhí páirteach i Cogadh na Saoirse.*

In *The Unknown Commandant* Donncha de Barra has written an invaluable book that anyone interested in how we won our freedom will want to read.

*The Unknown Commandant* is a compelling account of Commandant Denis Barry's part in the foundation of the state. Some of the Barry family are here at this launch in Cork City Hall. I hope that the book will give them a sense that their relation is now being properly recognised for the sacrifice he made to help give us the freedom we enjoy today.

We are here this evening both to launch an excellent book and to celebrate and affirm the memory of many Irish heroes who remain 'unknown', other than in stories of their families. History can be somewhat unfair, particularly because, over time, we tend to forget those who fell.

Denis Barry's remains lie alongside those of Tomás MacCurtain and Terence MacSwiney in the Republican Plot in St. Finbarr's Cemetery.

But how many know anything about Denis Barry?

In this book you will discover how Denis Barry developed from being a top sports-man to a leader in the field of politics.

It may be hard for today's generation to understand how these men and women found the courage and conviction to go into conflict with the British Empire, even to understand why they did so.

Many stories still remain untold about the War of Independence and beyond. The task remains to establish the truth in the next decade before a century has passed since these events, and the memories inherited in families throughout Ireland have faded. With truth comes a renewal of trust, reconciliation, and understanding, and a legacy of national integrity for future generations. Donncha de Barra has done

us a great service in his account of his uncle's story. He deserves our thanks.

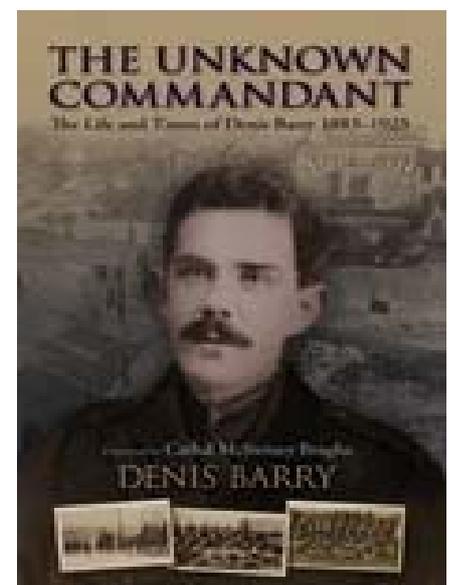
As we get nearer to the hundredth anniversary of 1916 there is increasing interest in understanding the events that led to our freedom, and the foundation of our political institutions. Because it very much characterises who we are as a nation amongst the nations of the world, it is understandable that this part of Irish history should be analysed, discussed, reviewed, reflected on, and celebrated.

However, writing history is difficult because the people who do so, whether they are professional or amateur historians, or writing family memoirs, bring their own personal and political biases to the task. Also, often it can be about resolving differing personal accounts about events that happened very quickly and under great stress.

As we all know, the Civil War overshadowed the War of Independence. Comrades became opponents, leaders died in suspicious circumstances, stories were told about people that only partially reflected the truth, and, in some cases, the stories weren't told at all.

There are so many unanswered questions about this time, and so many stories yet unwritten. There is no authoritative history of the Irish Republican Police, of which Denis Barry was the first commandant in Cork.

There isn't even an authoritative history of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) during that critical time after Dáil Éireann had instituted its own Government in



**Commandant Denis Barry**  
Brigade Staff—Cork No.1 Brigade, Óglaigh na hÉireann 1914 - 1922  
And, Divisional Staff—3rd Eastern Brigade Wexford, 1922

January 1919, when continuance of the IRB was such a 'bone of contention'.

In this biography of his uncle, Denis Barry has done a service to his name-sake, to his family, and to us, because this is a story that had not been told, and that needed to be told.

Denis (Denny) Barry holds the title of Commandant because he was one of the officers on the Brigade Staff of the Cork No.1 Brigade of *Óglaigh na hÉireann* and Commandant of the Republican Police in Cork during the War of Independence. This was a significant position because he had to contend with the deterioration in the behaviour of the British forces in Cork City, the Amy, Auxiliaries, Black-and-Tans, and the RIC.

Some things make this story special, or at least unusual. The first is why he should be described as the "*Unknown Commandant*". Until recently the Department of Defence had not formally recognised Denis Barry's involvement in the War of Independence.

As Denis had died in 1923, he had not sought a Military Service Pension or a Service Medal. Therefore there were no personal details of his participation in the War of Independence in official departmental records. Nonetheless, following a request from his nephew, the Department carried out a search of its records and recently found sufficient evidence to justify the posthumous award of a (1917-1921) Service Medal to Denis Barry.

Other reasons why he remained unknown were because he moved to Kilkenny in 1915, and so was not part of much of the action in Cork, and because of the death of his Commanding Officers on the Cork No.1 Brigade staff, Lord Mayors MacCurtain and MacSwiney who, under normal circumstances, would have testified to his role. Great credit is due to the author for doing so much to ensure this proper recognition for his uncle.

As a person Denis was significant and interesting in other ways. He was an excellent hurler, particularly successful as a defender, and might nowadays have been the holder of a hurling All-Star award. The story that emerges in this book is of a defender not just in sport, but of citizens as Head of the Republican Police in Cork, as an active member of his Trade Union, but also in the role that led to his death.

In 1923 the leaders of the Republican movement demanded the immediate release of all political prisoners, and proposed a Hunger Strike in protest against their unlawful imprisonment. Eight thousand Republican prisoners responded to the call. Denis was one of 1,700 who took part in this protest in the Internment Camp in Newbridge, County Kildare.

Within the first month of the protest, 7,800 hunger strikers, either individually or in groups, ended their fast. Two hundred continued. Denis acted consistently in solidarity with his fellow prisoners by bravely continuing on the Hunger Strike.

Prison conditions were poor, particularly in the Internment Camp.

On November 12th Denis Barry's health declined seriously. Unfortunately, the Government refused requests to have him moved to hospital. Sadly, Denis Barry died on 20th November after 35 days on hunger-strike. Two days later another hunger-striker, Andrew Sullivan, died in Mountjoy Jail.

It was a great shock and a tragedy that such a fit man as Denis would die at the young age of 40, given that many have survived Hunger Strikes for much longer than 35 days. His death galvanised a three-way negotiation between leaders of the Church, the Free State and Republicans, leading to a settlement, and the calling off of the Hunger Strike the next day, 23rd November. Some of the remaining prisoners accepted conditional release on pledging loyalty to the Free State. The rest refused to pledge and spent another year in detention.

It is fair to say that the death of someone as important as Denis Barry appears to have accentuated awareness of the seriousness of this situation.

It is quite likely that his death speeded up the negotiations and may have saved the lives of others: his last service to the nation.

The final reason why this story was worth telling is to try to explain to future generations—and indeed to today's—how such a significant person as Denis Barry could have been treated so badly at the end of his life, and after it? One part, which might seem explainable, is the behaviour the Free State Government which gave the impression that making any allowance would amount to giving the impression of weakness, which might in turn lead to more Republican resistance.

The other part was the refusal by the Bishop of Cork to allow Barry's remains into any Church in the Cork diocese, nor allow any priest to officiate at any religious funeral ceremony for him. This takes a lot more explaining, especially for young people nowadays. First one must understand the power that Bishops had then over civil affairs, and consequently their belief that they should use this power during political disputes. Bishop Daniel Coholan's actions contrast totally with his behaviour regarding MacSwiney, who had died on hunger-strike only three years earlier.

It is a matter of pride for me that my two grand-aunts Mary and Annie MacSwiney

participated in Denis Barry's burial ceremony at the grave, with Annie reciting the Rosary in Irish, and Máire MacSwiney TD delivering the oration.

It seems to me that both Church and State misused their power in the way that they treated Commandant Denis Barry.

Denis Barry embodied the philosophy enunciated by Terence MacSwiney in Chapter One of *Principles Of Freedom*: when he wrote:

"a man of moral force is he who, seeing a thing to be right and essential and claiming his allegiance, stands for it as for the truth, unheeding any consequence.... It is a first principle of his, that a true thing is a good thing, and from a good thing rightly pursued can follow no bad consequence. And he faces every possible development with conscience at rest—it may be with trepidation for his own courage in some great ordeal, but for the nobility of the cause and the beauty of the result that must ensue, always with serene faith. And soon the trepidation for himself passes, for a great cause always makes great men, and many who set out in hesitation die heroes."

From where did Denis Barry get his sense of "*moral force*" from which he derived the strength to take his stand for the rights and well-being of his people through the War of Independence, and ultimately to die in 1923 in conflict with Church and State, while defending his fellow-prisoners?

MacSwiney answered this in Chapter Nine of *Principles Of Freedom*: when before 1916 he predicted the growth of:

"a spirit of patriotism and a deep-lying basis of authority and justice that will give stability to the state and secure its future against any upheaval that from the unrest of the time would seem to threaten the world".

My sense of Denis Barry is that he carried this "*spirit of patriotism*" and "*deep-lying basis of authority and justice*" throughout his life, from the hurling field to the streets of Cork as Head of the Republican Police to his untimely death.

I welcome this book, and wish that others would follow the author's example, and help to contribute to a telling of the history of brave women and men like Denis Barry.

When I think of the importance of establishing Denis Barry's memory I think of the old Irish saying: "*Is beó duine d'éis a anma, ach ní beó d'éis a einigh*".

Noble souls such as Denis Barry deserve to live forever in the memory of the nation.

*Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.* ●

## Bill Sharkey

Bill Sharkey was a truly remarkable and distinguished person, in spite of his genuine modesty and charm. I had the privilege of being his friend ever since 1954, when we were both for a time students for the priesthood in Maynooth. In London in the 1960s, my wife Miriam and I had a close friendship with Bill, Muriel, Keith and Sarah, and Frank Tormey. We kept up a warm friendship over the years, and I cherish a glowing memory of recently being Bill's guest at Carrowmeenagh, and my son Donal and I had been before, and of being driven around spots of beauty and historic interest in Bill's beloved Donegal.

It would have been a surprise in anyone else, but not in Bill, that in what turned out to be the last year of his life he decided to undertake a Masters in Celtic Studies, at which he was achieving great success. The Gaelic language had been always the love of his life. He spoke Gaelic fluently and had an interest in Old Irish, and its relation to Bardic poetry. If he had done something like that years before he would have left a great legacy in Irish studies.

He had an abiding interest in the concept of an *Encyclopaedia Gadelica*. He was disgusted that an independent Irish Government had not undertaken to sponsor such a project.

Bill died in 2009. The following eulogy, delivered by James Daly at his interment in Urris, Co. Donegal on 22nd January 2009, has recently been passed on to this magazine

Bill had a great influence over me in teaching me to appreciate my Irish heritage socially culturally and politically. In the very English setting of the Cafe Royal in Regent Street, London, at Miriam's and my wedding reception, at which Muriel was matron of honour, he sang a Gaelic song in the sean-nos, startling our English guests.

He also helped to steer me gently in the direction of his own deep conviction of the need for egalitarian, mutually caring economic relations between all human beings. As Sarah reminded me yesterday, he used to argue that there was no connection between Darwin's theories and the conclusion wrongly drawn from them by right wingers that progress is due to competition—and he would point out that cooperation was much more conducive to survival and development. Politics such as Bill's are more necessary—and just perhaps more feasible—now than at any time.

My life has been enriched by Bill's friendship, kindness, sensitivity, forbear- ingness, loyalty and humour. Of him it is really true:

*Ni fheicidh muid a leithid ariamh.*

We shall not see his like again.

What McCormack wrote was convoluted and misleading. It left the reader in the dark as to the actual position Gwynn had taken on the Diaries in his book.

The speaker referred to a large bundle of letters dating from the 1920s and 1930s which went for auction at Soth- eby's, London on 17th December 2008. It would appear from the details provided by the auctioneer that they had belonged to the Parry Family, the descendents of Casement's cousin Gertrude Bannister. The collection was titled "*Lot 7 - Case- ment, Roger - A collection relating to his diplomatic career and posthumous reputation*". It included 36 letters related to the threatened publication of the Diaries in 1925 by Peter Singleton-Gates. All in all the bundle came to 170 pages.

The letters were bought by a person or persons unknown, at a price well in excess of the auctioneer's estimate. Where material of such great historical interest is bought at auction, the purchaser will usually make themselves known to researchers. However, in this instance, all efforts to contact the purchaser via Soth- eby's proved fruitless. Documents which can cast light on the Diaries controversy have sadly disappeared as soon as they became available. It was a bizarre turn, but, for those acquainted with the twists and turns of this longstanding controversy, not wholly unexpected.

\*

Report of Lecture by Tim O'Sullivan at the Casement Symposium (Dublin, November 2009), along with remarks on The Roger Casement Gathering (Tralee, 3rd August 2009)

## Casement Events

Regarding the Giles Report published in 2002 on its own, and in 2005 as part of a sequence of essays and papers published by the Royal Irish Academy (RIA) under the title *Roger Casement In Irish And World History*, there is a choice irony. The Giles Report claimed the forensic technique of *Ramon Spectroscopy* would not be appropriate for use on the Diaries owing to it being a "*destructive*" technique. Within a few months after publication by the RIA, this technique would be happily employed by Trinity College on *The Book of Kells* on account of its non-destructiveness.

The organizer of the investigation and report by Dr. Giles, one Dr. W.J. Mc Cormack, wrote a book, *Roger Casement In Death* (2002). As well as touting his "*forensic test*", the book made claims framed in elaborately obtuse language. In the Introduction, Casement's first biographer Denis Gwynn is mentioned. "*Since the days of Denis Gwynn (who was discrete though undeceived), Casement's biographers have broadly accepted the implications of truth behind the stories of*

Referring to what Gwynn had to say on the matter he wrote (page 26): "*It passed over the issue of forgery with what now seems remarkable insouciance*", i.e. lack of care.

But what Gwynn actually wrote in 1930 was:

"but that it was Casement's own diary is at least doubtful. Those who spent months in terms of closest intimacy with him are utterly incredulous concerning it; and two of his closest friends have special grounds for refusing to believe that it was what it was purported to be" (p18).

Gwynn went on to advance more arguments for his scepticism that the Diaries were actually Casement's— Diaries, the existence of which at that time was neither officially confirmed nor denied by the authorities.

There was a day-long Conference on Casement in Tralee on 3rd August 2009. The keynote speaker was Martin Mansergh TD. The speech covered many matters, among them the question of the Diaries. Mansergh referred to the "*pornographic diaries*" and how he retained "*an open mind*" as regards possible forgery. Regarding the "*white*" and "*black*" Diaries for 1910 there was "*an extraordinary contrast of tone*". In one account Casement was "*high-minded and idealistic*", in the other "*cynical and contemptuous of other human beings*".

He had read all (Government) files on the matter from the 30s, 40s, 50s and 60s. He was struck by the defensive reaction whenever the matter was raised. For instance there was Frank McDermott, a devoted writer of letters to newspapers on the subject, who was in the UK during the War and apparently worked for British Intelligence. What happened, in the end, regarding an investigation (the Giles Report) was "*a limited piece of private enterprise carried out with extraordinary defensiveness*".

Tim O'Sullivan

# The Spy Who Grew Up With The Bold:

## *the Irish Republican education of Sir John Betjeman*

In Part One (March *Irish Political Review*) I referred to an Easter 2000 Channel 4 TV documentary on John Betjeman which quoted, as an example of his wartime spying activities in Ireland, his simplistic and puerile 'analysis' of the IRA as an organisation divided into "*Republicans, place hunters and gun maniacs, Nazis, anti-Christian and pro-Hitler*". But a closer look at the TV screen told a different story. As an actor's voice declaimed these words, their source in the original documentation appeared on screen, to be briefly followed by a second document. In the blink of an eyelid, however, one had only the time to absorb the capital-lettered words of Fascism and Nazism, with their subliminal appearance of hammering home the message of the spoken word all the more forcefully. But, by freezing the frame on a video recording of the programme, the picture that emerged was the very opposite of the story being narrated—*Fascism and Nazism only appeared on this second document in the context of pointing out that such ideologies were meeting with the violent opposition of 35 percent of the IRA!*

This was the superb example of Betjeman espionage which the Channel 4 documentary ultimately chose to avoid mentioning, despite the enthusiasm that the programme-makers had earlier displayed when filming that report in the home of one of the objects of such spying activities. In spite of the extremely sophisticated understanding which this Betjeman document revealed concerning the complexities of Irish Republican politics, when it came to the crunch, Channel 4 fought shy of challenging the prejudices of both British and Irish salon society alike with a presentation of such an example of unequivocal Republican anti-Fascism. And so, when it came to the actual transmission of that programme on 23rd April 2000, a stage-Irish presentation of Republicanism was the soft option preferred.

And what might that effectively silenced intelligence document have revealed to both British and Irish audiences? Marked "Secret" and dated 29th July 1942, it was addressed to Dr. P.N.S. Mansergh—otherwise Nicholas Mansergh of His Majesty's Empire Division—with a "*copy to Mr. Pugh*", and with the following nuggets of subversive information and advice:

"My dear Doctor {Mansergh},  
Musgrove, about whose manuscript

### PART TWO

there was all that bother, came to me today and read to me the re-written section about the Ministry of Information. This struck me as wholly satisfactory ... An additional chapter is being provided by Musgrove on the present state of the IRA. In it he confirms what we know already—that the organisation is split into three factions. At the Curragh, he says, there are 400 altogether, of whom 140 are violently anti-Fascist, 40 are neutral and the remainder Nazi. On May Day this year the anti-Fascist section of the IRA in the Curragh published a manifesto appealing to the revolutionary spirit of Irishmen to attack Fascism and Nazism. It was 600 words long and was signed by some well-known IRA names. Musgrove is anxious to get this published, and so is the IRA, and for once I think we can find ourselves in agreement. In ten days Musgrove hopes to let me have a copy of this, and when I get it I will send it over to you. It seems to me an obvious bit of work for those people we mentioned when I was over last.

Yours affectionately, J. Betjeman."

This was an example of British Intelligence operating at its efficient and effective best. Freeing himself from the simplistic British propaganda that the IRA was just a gang of Nazis, and the blinkered regurgitation of such propaganda which he himself had earlier served up as 'intelligence', Betjeman was now proceeding to develop a sophisticated dissection and differentiation of the variety of opinion to be found within the IRA, much as Elizabeth Bowen had done in respect of Fine Gael. It was not, of course, totally sophisticated. The pro-Nazi faction of the IRA represented but a small minority among those 220 who were pro-German: the majority of them would have been pro-German only for very traditional separatist reasons, invoking the argument of "*England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity*". Nor did it follow that all the 140 Republican internees who were violently anti-Fascist would be fully supportive of the Allied War effort. Betjeman's report was a snapshot view of how the debate among IRA prisoners stood in the period from May to July 1942—a debate whose dynamics could not, however, be frozen into a single frame. But even the differentiation of opinion which Betjeman sought to present was itself indicative of a dynamic process within Irish Republicanism which the formulators of Britain's wartime strategic options were now able to take account of in an informed manner.

There can be no question but that what

both Betjeman and Mansergh were here engaged in was a very determined espionage project, undertaken on behalf of the British Empire itself, and for it alone. There was no question of sharing such information with the Government of their 'friendly neighbour', the Irish State. Quite the contrary. This was British subversive activity being carried on behind the back of the de Valera Government. This was a clandestine action that sought to explore the possibility of opening up a direct British Government line of communication to one wing of the self same IRA that the Irish Government had deemed it appropriate to intern without trial as a potential threat to Ireland's own wartime security.

It does not, however, appear that Betjeman ever succeeded in following up this vitally important Intelligence report with an actual copy of the 1942 May Day Manifesto itself. It had only ever existed in hand-written form. Even its last surviving co-author, my late father Micheál O'Riordan (1917-2006), no longer possessed an original copy after the War. But what he still had in his possession was a copy of that same manifesto reproduced a year later in May 1943 in the hand-written publication of the anti-Fascist internees, *An Splannac*. It was for this reason that the Channel 4 documentary team interviewed Micheál O'Riordan in his home on 31st January 2000 and excitedly filmed the text of the 1942 manifesto alongside Betjeman's Intelligence report thereon. But, when it came to the crunch, they failed to include that sequence when the programme was finally screened on the following Easter Sunday.

But who was this Musgrove recruited by Betjeman to supply him with such intelligence on the Irish Republican movement? I had indeed heard of a P.J. Musgrove as Editor of a controversial edition of Connolly's writings on the First World War which had been published in the second year of the Second World War. But the only personal reference to him I had ever previously heard was a mention by veteran Socialist John de Courcy Ireland (1911-2006) that Musgrove had been a close personal friend of his in the Northern Ireland of the late 1930s.

John Ireland had at that time been a member of the Executive of the Northern Ireland Labour Party, but was destined to be expelled from that Party in February 1941 because of his anti-Partitionist views. He had also been an employee of the British Naval Base in Derry, where he was sacked in October 1941 for organising that base's mainly-Downpatrick labourers into the ATGWU in order to fight for better conditions.

In early 1942 de Courcy Ireland took up a teaching post in Dublin and joined the Central Branch of the Irish Labour Party.

He became Secretary of the Party's Dublin Executive at a time when Labour was to become the largest Party on Dublin City Council in the municipal Elections of August 1942. John Ireland, as his Director of Elections, would also be responsible for organising Big Jim Larkin's successful return to Dáil Éireann in the General Election of June 1943.

After my father had told me of his January 2000 interview with Channel 4, and following the subsequent decision to edit out both that interview and its subject matter from the programme that was actually transmitted that Easter Sunday, I tried, not wholly successfully, to get to the bottom of the Mansergh/Betjeman/Musgrove story. But an interview which I had with the late John de Courcy Ireland—on 26th May 2000—did, at least, solve part of the mystery.

When the Musgrove-Betjeman Intelligence Report on IRA anti-Fascism was brought to his attention, and he was asked could this Musgrove have been P.J. Musgrove, de Courcy Ireland's initial reaction was shock that a former friend could have been a British Intelligence agent. But then other memories began to make sense to him. John Ireland recalled that, in the Summer of 1942, Musgrove had come down on a visit from Belfast to ask if he would like to meet Betjeman. Musgrove again came down a few weeks later for the meeting itself, of which de Courcy Ireland remembered little, except that it would have been a frank exchange of views between Betjeman and himself as to the progress of the War and how Irish public opinion was responding to it.

John Ireland also recalled that he would already have been made aware of the Republican manifesto of May Day 1942 by Seán Nolan, the leading Communist activist in Dublin, and now a fellow member of Ireland's in the Central Branch of the Labour Party. He also thought it possible that Musgrove might have learned of that Manifesto from him, and that this is what inspired Betjeman's hope that Musgrove might be able to get hold of an actual copy for forwarding to Mansergh. But this was a forlorn hope, as de Courcy Ireland recalled that Nolan merely informed him of the Manifesto's existence but never actually showed him a copy.

Seán Nolan was such a cautious individual, and highly suspicious of the possible intrigues of all others, that it was highly unlikely, in any case, he would ever have given Ireland a copy, even if he himself possessed the Manifesto. But my father was also of the opinion that Nolan did not in fact have a copy. Having been painstakingly hand-written, each copy had been intended to be passed around and shared among large groups of IRA prisoners, so it was highly unlikely that any copy could

go missing at that stage.

But there was another memory prompted in my father's mind by the Musgrove revelation. Shortly after the death in 1961 of Seán Murray, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland from its foundation in 1933 until the early War years, and thereafter Party President, Nolan mentioned in passing to O'Riordan that at some stage during those War years Betjeman had expressed a wish to meet Murray. This now, in a conversation with me on 29th August 2000, caused my father to speculate that it might have been Musgrove who would also have engineered—or tried to engineer—such a meeting.

It was through the militant anti-Fascist campaigns of the 1930s that John Ireland had first met Musgrove. In 1938 de Courcy Ireland had been appointed organiser for both parts of Ireland (as well as for the North West of England) of the China Relief Campaign being mounted in support of that country's anti-Fascist War of Liberation against Japan. It was the Belfast Communist propagandist, P.J. Musgrove, who proved to be of the greatest practical assistance to John Ireland in that campaign. And this was on top of Musgrove's energies being already fully stretched by his own campaign work on behalf of the Spanish Republic during the course of that particular country's Anti-Fascist War. Indeed it was Musgrove who in 1938 had organised the highly successful Concert appearance of the great African-American singer Paul Robeson as a Belfast fund-raiser for the Spanish Republic.

Neither the Communist Party of Ireland nor the Communist Party of Great Britain regarded the initial phase of the Second World War as an anti-Fascist one. Rather they viewed it as an inter-imperialist War between Britain and Germany. And a foremost propagandist for that viewpoint was none other than P.J. Musgrove who, in January 1941, edited and introduced a selection of James Connolly's writing for the British Communist Party's publishers, Lawrence and Wishart, under the title of *A Socialist and War 1914-1916*. In noting that "it is most significant that not even the 'imperialistic' Labour Party in Northern Ireland or the avowedly Fascist O'Duffy dare openly attack Connolly's memory", Musgrove went on to adopt the principle of the famous banner that Connolly had hung outside Liberty Hall—"We serve neither King nor Kaiser, but Ireland". He added:

"It is impossible to conclude this introduction without comment on the freshness, and indeed topicality, at the present moment, of these writings which were first published a quarter of a century ago. Connolly revealed and struggled against the impositions of the ruling class during the first Great War, as we must do today ... These injustices which Connolly

exposed are with us today in the midst of the second Imperialist World War. It is hoped that the lessons from Connolly's writings may play a part in removing their causes ... Connolly's articles in this book made clear his attitude to war. Although revolted by the physical barbarities of warfare, he did not hesitate to lead his Citizen Army into action when the moment came to strike. While *'the war of nation against nation in the interest of royal freebooters and cosmopolitan thieves is a thing accursed'*, he realised that the struggle of exploited nations and classes for freedom is *'holy and righteous'...* "

In a second interview with me—on 23rd August 2000—John de Courcy Ireland was to describe Musgrove as one of the best-informed analysts of international politics in the inter-war years that he had ever come across. Why, then, would Musgrove not have accepted at face value the view, held by some others in the British Labour movement, that the May 1940 replacement of Chamberlain by Churchill as British Prime Minister meant that Britain might thenceforth pursue that Second War with Germany as an anti-Fascist one? Because, having himself been such a determined anti-Fascist activist throughout the 1930s, Musgrove would have taken note of the fact that Churchill's track record had been the exact opposite.

In 1919 Churchill had been the chief British Government supporter of Denikin's White Army during the War of Intervention to overthrow the Russian Revolution. That October 7th, coming to the conclusion that Denikin's White Terror was getting out of hand, Britain's then Prime Minister, Lloyd George, raised with Churchill his concerns about the *"treatment of the Jews by your friends"*. To this Churchill offered the following excuse on October 10th: *"There is very bitter feeling throughout Russia against the Jews, who are regarded as being the main instigators of the ruin of the Empire"*.

Even though in that one year of 1919 more than 100,000 Jews were to be murdered by Denikin and his associates, anti-Semitism was to continue as a central plank in Churchill's anti-Soviet platform. In the *Sunday Herald* of 8th February 1920 Churchill denounced the Soviet Union as *"a world wide communistic state under Jewish domination"* and at a public meeting in Sunderland he went on to whip up his audience against *"the international Soviet of the Russian and Polish Jew"* (See *Churchill And The Soviet Union* by David Carlton, 2000).

It would not take many years for Churchill to also become explicitly pro-Fascist. Mussolini's Italian Fascists became his great heroes. At a press conference in Rome he told the Italian regime that he wanted to *"say a word on*

*an international aspect of Fascism", that "externally, your movement has rendered a service to the whole world" by providing "the necessary antidote to the Russian poison". Three weeks after Fascist Italy's invasion of Abyssinia, Churchill maintained in the House of Commons on 24th October 1935 that "no one can keep up the pretence that Abyssinia is a fit, worthy and equal member of a league of civilised nations". October 10th, 1937 saw him tell the News of the World that "it would be dangerous folly for the British people to underrate the enduring position in world-history which Mussolini will hold, or the amazing qualities of courage, comprehension, self-control and perseverance which he exemplifies" (See Churchill by Clive Ponting, 1994).*

And what of the Fascist aggression in the two countries whose solidarity campaigns Musgrove had been most concerned with—China and Spain? In an address to the Anti-Socialist and Anti-Communist Union on 17th February 1933, Churchill had not only applauded Japan's previous occupation of the Chinese province of Manchuria, but called for support for Japanese *lebensraum* and the impending extension of its aggressive war against China.

Referring to what he called *"the chaos of China, four or five provinces of which are now being tortured under Communist rule"*, Churchill expressed the hope that *"we shall try in England to understand a little the position of Japan, an ancient state with the highest state sense of national honour and patriotism and with a teeming population and remarkable energy"*.

As for Franco's Fascist revolt against the democratically-elected Government of the Spanish Republic, a revolt heavily supported by the military might of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, Churchill wrote to his wife from across the border in France on 5th September 1936:

"I am thankful the Spanish Nationalists (Franco) are making progress. They are the only ones who have the power of attack. The others can only die sitting. Horrible! But better for the safety of all if the Communists are crushed... Tender love, my sweet Clemmie" (See *Speaking for Themselves—The Personal Letters of Winston and Clementine Churchill*, edited by their daughter Mary Soames, 1998).

Furthermore, in a debate on the Spanish War in the House of Commons on April 14, 1937, Churchill nailed his colours to the mast when he declared: *"I will not pretend that if I had to choose between Communism and Nazism I would choose Communism"*. **So it was that in each of the wars that were raging across three continents during the 1930s, Churchill had opted to support the Fascist side.**

A long-standing anti-Fascist like

Musgrove only viewed Churchill as having joined the ranks of anti-Fascist struggle after his statement of 22nd June 1941 that he would now support the defence of the Soviet Union against Nazi invasion, with the objective of destroying the Nazi regime itself. A man of extremes, Musgrove now somersaulted from the role of anti-British propagandist to become a British Intelligence operative.

For other Irish anti-Fascists it was the emergence of Resistance movements across the Nazi-occupied countries of Europe that had begun to change the character of the War into an anti-Fascist one some months before Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union. This was the position of Michael Lehane, three times a volunteer in the Spanish Anti-Fascist War of 1936–1939, and as many times wounded. As he wrote to his now-interned comrade-in-arms of the Spanish War, Micheál O'Riordan, he was convinced that Hitler had to be stopped. Since he could never put on the uniform of British Imperialism, however, he would serve in the Norwegian Merchant Navy. And it was as such an anti-Imperialist anti-Fascist that Lehane gave his life when torpedoed by a Nazi submarine on March 11, 1943. (See <http://homepage.eircom.net/~sosul/page107.html> for "The War Hero From Morley's Bridge" by Manus O'Riordan, *Ballingeary History Society Journal*, 1999).

During the earlier phoney-war period Irish anti-Fascists had been no less intent on confronting those Republicans who were now arguing that *"England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity"* and that *"German aid"* would be the answer to their prayers. Some historians have, however, embellished the yarn that the IRA was unreservedly pro-Nazi during the Second World War by also charging that Irish Communists had been similarly implicated and tainted in 1940. For example, Mike Millotte wrote: *"Betty Sinclair and Billy McCullough were jailed (in Belfast) ... for publishing an article by Belfast IRA man Jack Brady which advocated 'enlisting foreign aid for our cause', taken by the courts to imply Nazi aid (Red Hand, August 24, 1940)..."* (*Communism in Modern Ireland* by Mike Millotte, 1984) What Millotte omitted to mention, however, was the fact that the article by Brady (Seán Mac Brádaigh) had been published by both the *Red Hand* in Belfast and the *Irish Workers' Weekly* in Dublin for one purpose only. This was to give CPI General Secretary Seán Murray the opportunity to write a further article in direct opposition to Mac Brádaigh's line of reasoning, with a banner heading expressing incredulity at the very thought of *"Freedom With German Aid?"* Murray argued:

"Seán Mac Brádaigh in his reply to my

criticism of Republican policy ... wants no truck with Fascism or Nazism ... (but) he supports the idea of aid from Germany. I wonder has he thought out the implications of such a course? Does he not see that this will inevitably mean Ireland being turned into a battle field for two contending imperialist powers?" (*Irish Worker's Weekly*, August 31, 1940)

This polemic mirrored the conflict going on among IRA internees themselves—the very issue that would become the subject matter of the British intelligence report of Musgrove and Betjeman to Mansergh.

**Manus O'Riordan**

(to be continued)

## Barack Hussein Obama And The IRA

One 'most read' item on *The Guardian's* website (week commencing Monday 23 November 2009) was on page 20 of the same day's 'hard copy'. *"The former British police officer who wants to bring down Obama"*, is a 'Birther'. These insist Obama is not of American birth, and thereby, is barred from being President. The fact that the rule is rubbish is not at issue in this environment. Nor is the fact that the accusation is inaccurate. The cop in question, Neil Sankey, implies, in Ed Pilkington's article, that he is not at the crazed end of the anti-Obama movement. He then effectively claims Obama is a Marxist.

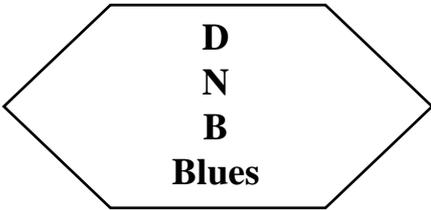
Sankey is a former member of *"some of the most elite police units in Britain"*. His area of expertise was on the relations between the IRA and *"leftwing political groups"*. The 'Official' IRA had contacts with the mainstream 'Left' in Great Britain, which was too respectable to engage in *"revolutionary criminality"*.

However, the Provisionals' attitude to the Left in Britain was that they provided bodies, banners and slogans for demonstrations. They came to fund-raisers. They wrote to the papers (and in their own papers) what Sinn Féin suggested. The Republican Movement didn't care what these groups thought about its strategy or tactics. When some decided to play with guns, they were dropped, on the instant. The Provis knew that the self-conscious 'British Left' ought not to be allowed out without at least one minder.

Five minutes' analysis would have demonstrated the above to a ten year old. Mr Sankey is now a Private Eye in California. Presumably he kept busy, in the 1970s, by forcing himself to take the drivel in the British Left press seriously.

Or he was genuinely deluded.

**Seán McGouran**



D  
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Blues

## Tom Barry

Tom Barry has been in the forefront of a debate on the War of Independence for over a decade, largely because of what Professor Peter Hart said about him in his much acclaimed 'classic' on the War of Independence in West Cork published in 1998. This was a most derogatory portrayal of Barry, with the main point being that he invented a 'false surrender' by the enemy at the Kilmichael Ambush with the object of justifying the wiping out of the Auxiliaries he had attacked. Hart was considered *the* authority on the subject of Barry by all the usual suspects for years. This was so, despite the fact that Hart's 'evidence' came from, *inter alia*, interviews with the dead and blatant abuse of sources. Barry and Hart were like Siamese twins among our academic historians, reviewers in the Irish Times and in other similar stables. And, as Hart's standing went up, Barry's went down.

But lo and behold! In the *Dictionary Of Irish Biography* entry on Barry, by Michael Hopkinson, Hart is not mentioned and his (in)famous book is not even included in the bibliography! Neither is Meda Ryan's thorough refutation of him. The bibliography reads a bit like Hamlet without the Prince with these missing. Hart is now clearly bad news for his former admirers and perhaps even for his mentor, Professor Fitzpatrick. Hart is not bad news because of what he said but because he was caught out.

He tried to ambush Barry's reputation and that of the Boys of Kilmichael but this provoked a spontaneous mini guerrilla war-type response, waged by all sorts—ranging from devout monks to devoted communists (and every political tendency in between)—that slowly but surely discredited him. His erstwhile supporters have crept away and left him to his fate. But they are like people who live off the proceeds of a crime while disowning the criminal. These people would probably style themselves rather grandly as 'post-revisionists', but there are much more appropriate names for them. But for Professor Hart, though the wheels of justice ground slowly, they did grind exceedingly fine!

Hopkinson tries to keep Hart's argument alive but is just a little more coy about it. After describing the Kilmichael Ambush, like the cuckoo, he lays the following egg in the nest built by Hart:

"Controversy has raged since over whether a false surrender by the British force caused the brutality of some of the deaths."

This is plain wrong. It's a *glugger*. There was no controversy or doubt about the 'false surrender' for about 80 years for the very good reason that all concerned accepted that it happened. And the first people to do so were the British!

Before Barry ever put pen to paper about the issue, Lloyd George's special, and very perceptive, advisor Lionel Curtis confirmed it at the time. So did General Crozier, O/C of the defeated Auxiliaries—and if anyone was in a position to know he was. So did all sides of the Republican division over the Treaty—Beaslai, O'Malley and McCann. So did participants Stephen O'Neill in *The Kerryman* in the 1930s and Jack Hennessey in the Bureau of Military History.

Other participants also confirmed it when they took the trouble to write or talk about it, but of course they did not keep rabbiting on about it for the same reason that every time they said 'good morning' or 'good night' they did not feel a need to explain the fact that the earth had gone around the sun in the previous 24 hours. If they had acted otherwise one would be entitled to suspect that they did protest too much.

So the DIB could mean RIP for Professor Hart. The mountain may not have laboured in vain and inadvertently brought forth at least one useful little mouse. It's nice to be able to conclude on a positive note!

Jack Lane.

## Religion and Nationality

I feel I must thank Wilson John Haire for his comments, in the March issue, on my February article. He suggests some interesting trails to follow: colonisation, intermarriage, Greaves and the Connolly Association, Marxism and its West European evolution, etc.

Let me try to respond with an integrated approach based on the expansion of my thesis that the Irish nation in the full sense does not exist, yet. It was beginning to exist in embryo by a process of evolution of the colonial nation, which spawned Swift, Berkeley, Molyneux, Dobbs, Prior and others who prepared the ground in Ireland, at the English imperial fringe, for the analogue of the subsequent American and French processes. Wolfe Tone tried to build on these, with the colonial nation embracing the native population (itself a mongrel mix of earlier colonialisms). Note that the (failed) American attempt to build a colonial nation embracing the native

population had an Irish influence via William Penn.

(It is interesting that de Valera was supportive of this process, and took an interest in Berkeley's *Querist* as a source of development economics ideas; he attended the Berkeley centenary event in 1953 at which my father gave the keynote paper; this is on record in the hypertext support system of my *Century* book, as outlined below; the print reference is J. Johnston, *Hermathena* LXXXII p76, 1953, *Berkeley's Influence as an Economist*. It is also perhaps worth noting that de Valera, with his background in mathematics, took an interest in all events relating to Hamilton, as well as acting politically to set up the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, as a haven for anti-Fascist scientific refugees including Schroedinger, Lanczos, Heitler *et al*. In this context his opposition to the Fethard-on-Sea boycott was not unexpected. The inclusive secular nation was there in embryo.)

This inclusive nation-building process was however subverted by the success of the British (ie English-imperial) response, which encouraged religious divisions under the Act of Union situation. They founded Maynooth College, staffed initially by French emigre priests, in 1793, long before there was Catholic Emancipation, laying the right-wing ideological basis for the character of Catholicism which emerged in the 19th century, and its pathological 'Catholic nation' concept.

While this process was going on, there were Protestant-rooted initiatives to rescue the Irish language, and make it the basis for an inclusive national identity; for example I am thinking of Mac Adamh, who ended up in the Royal Irish Academy editing the Irish Dictionary; his background was Presbyterian, and he was an innovative engineer, with his water-turbine powering the Ulster mills.

The inclusive secular nation concept persisted throughout the 19th century, not only in the Home Rule political leadership but also in the Fenian. However the Catholic-nationalist ideology was indeed lurking threateningly on the Right. In the 20th century there remained Protestant support for all-Ireland Home Rule; my father, Joe Johnston, wrote his *Civil War In Ulster* book in 1913 in an effort to resist the process that led to the April 1914 Larne gun-running and the Tory-Orange coup. (UCD Press re-issued this in 1998 with my introduction).

My father made his career via TCD in the Free State; in 1917 he was active against the Partition threat via the Convention, and subsequently he did his best to keep Horace Plunkett's co-operative movement all-Ireland; in the 20s and 30s he succeeded in keeping some areas of intellectual life all-Ireland (eg the SSISI,

later in 1938 the Irish Association), though in the partitioned Orange-dominated and Catholic-dominated environments these tended to be sidelined.

Attempts in the Marxist tradition to address the nation-building process were always all-Ireland. In our student-Left epoch in the late 1940s we tried to pick up echoes from the Republican Congress episode; the CPI had foundered in 1941 on the neutrality issue, but we had a hand in establishing the Workers' League in 1948, and in this there was a significant input from Dublin artisans of the Protestant tradition, whose background must have been rooted in the emergent 18th century colonial nation, whose Dublin Protestant artisans were an earlier spin-off from Lillburne's English Republic of Cromwell's time. (I don't give Cromwell credit for the English Republic; he subverted it in proto-Stalinist mode). The Workers' League set out immediately to re-establish relations with the CPNI, but ran into all sorts of ideological barriers rooted in the way Trade Union elitism that had evolved under religious influence. In this environment we encountered and interacted with Desmond Greaves.

I share Wilson's feel for the need of a critical evaluation of the Greaves legacy. While the Greaves contribution to the Marxist analysis of the Irish national question is undeniable, he underestimated seriously the need for critical evaluation of the role of the RC Church, and the nature of the Protestant distrust of it, and the related Catholic character of the Free State Government as it had evolved. He never understood the importance of the Contraception and Divorce issues, and avoided discussing them in the *Irish Democrat*. He was however beginning, at the end of his days, to come around to a critical assessment of the role of the USSR, and took a tentative positive view of what Gorbachev tried to do. His Marxism managed latterly to avoid any trace of Stalinist overlay, though in the 1940s, when he interacted with us as the student Left, he had tended to be uncritical of the (Stalinist) Lysenko process when we discussed science.

I have edited most of the Irish-related sections of the Greaves diaries into the hypertext support system of my *Century Of Endeavour* book; this system I make available to readers who contact me via my reference on page 1 of the book to my e-mail address. (Researchers have found this useful, as the many footnotes are hotlinked into the hypertext support from the e-version of the book, to which I can give a URL on request.)

The current problem is of course how to sell the idea to the Ulster Protestants that joining a new phase of the nation-building process could be not only good business (in the context of the need to

develop renewable energy systems and decouple food production from fossil fuels), but also interesting culturally, in a context where the RC Church is visibly in serious decline as a consequence of decades of covered-up child-abuse, both individual sexual and violent institutional.

The resulting process, if it is allowed to develop, could have useful repercussions in the context of the Israel-Palestine problem, which to my mind can only be resolved on the basis of a unified secular 'Palestine'. There is no way in which neighbouring religious-dominated States with overlapping populations can thrive, each having threatened minorities of second-class citizens.

Returning to the Irish context, I can see potential for some serious critical analysis of the overall scene by neo-Marxist scholarship with roots in the Republican,

Labour, Green and the various disparate Marxist political traditions, and in broad-based organisations having all-Ireland memberships (of which there are many). I call this the 'Left-Green Convergence' movement. I would be interested in discussing this in more depth with WJH, and anyone else interested, including IPR supporters. By 'neo-Marxist' I mean back to basic Marx, before the Stalin overlay corrupted it to Party-owned State monopoly capitalism. Bellamy Foster, who edits the New York *Monthly Review*, has some useful insights into Marxist environmentalism via his analysis of the Marx-Liebig interactions in the 1850s, on soil erosion and the fertiliser problem.

There are many interesting trails to follow, and I am open to contacts.

**Roy Johnston** 16.03.2010

(For 'Century of Endeavour' see <http://www.ioi.ie/~rjtechn/blurb.htm>)

## Report

# Gallipoli Cost Us More Than Soldiers

The *Irish Examiner* of 23rd March published a half-page feature article by Dr. Pat Walsh on Gallipoli. It is reproduced below

*As President Mary McAleese prepares to commemorate the Irish who died during the brutal Gallipoli campaign, Dr Patrick Walsh says it is time to reflect on the full significance of this terrible and costly battle*

President Mary McAleese will deliver a speech tomorrow at the site of the famous 1915 Battle of Gallipoli at which nearly 4,000 Irishmen were killed.

She will speak of Irish nationalists and unionists who fought and died side by side in a campaign which left over 150,000 allied service men and an estimated 80,000 of the Ottoman force dead.

But while commemorating all those brave men, how many will realise or question the cause for which they fought or the consequences at the time for Ireland itself?

Great numbers of Irishmen who responded to the call to fight 'Prussianism', and particularly to aid 'gallant little Belgium', found themselves instead shipped out to the Middle East to participate in the destruction of the Ottoman Empire, the consequences of which still reverberate through the chaos of the Middle East today.

The British invasion of 1914 brought Turkey into the war much against its will.

As Lord Kinross has shown in his book *The Ottoman Centuries*, the Turkish Government had made numerous attempts to establish a defensive alliance with Britain and France.

Rebuffed by Britain, it then attempted to remain neutral.

When an obscure incident in the Black Sea led to a Russian declaration of war on Turkey on November 5, Britain too declared war and launched an immediate attack on Ottoman territory.

Britain was acting on its 1907 alliance

with Russia. For the preceding century, Britain had done all in its power to deny Constantinople (Istanbul) to Russia, including waging a war against it in Crimea.

But, following its 1904 Entente with France, British strategy had changed to one of preparing to engage the new 'threat', Germany, in a war on two fronts, a strategy in which the Russian 'steamroller' was key.

Russia's price for the alliance was Constantinople and war with Turkey.

But Britain had its own imperial designs on the Ottoman Empire, and aimed to acquire some of the spoils from its destruction, notably Palestine and Mesopotamia, to secure the Suez Canal and the 'Road to India'.

Ireland's participation in the 1915 attempted invasion of Turkey proper at Gallipoli was regarded at the time as the price for Home Rule.

The Irish Home Rule leader, John Redmond, was an enthusiastic supporter of the war against Germany but was in no position to object to this being extended to Turkey.

To have done so would have seriously disadvantaged him in his competition of loyalty with the Ulster Unionists regarding the British state.

Redmond's followers—unlike the US which when it entered the war on Germany in 1917 did not join in Britain's war on Turkey—had to accept whatever enemy the British Empire chose to take on.

The failure of the British Gallipoli expedition seriously damaged the prospects for Irish Home Rule.

The successful Turkish resistance

lengthened the war, which the Home Rule leaders had banked on being over before the close of 1915.

Such an outcome would have enhanced the Home Rule position after the war—particularly in relation to the unionists. The defeat at Gallipoli instead led to the fall of the Liberal Government and its replacement by a coalition that included anti-Home Rule unionist ministers, including Sir Edward Carson.

The Home Rule Bill that had been placed on the Statute Book in August 1914, and which Redmond had treated as an act, was rendered still-born.

After the defeat at Gallipoli, Irish soldiers were transferred to take part in the Salonika expedition which was aimed primarily at pressurising the Greek Government to abandon its neutrality and join the war on Turkey.

This succeeded in that the Greek Government collapsed and was replaced by the pro-British regime of Eleftherios Venizelos. The new regime joined the war on the British side and attacked Turkey on the basis of British assurances that it could wrest great territories from the disintegrating Ottoman Empire. But Turkey survived and the outcome of the conflict between Greece and Turkey was to prove disastrous for the Greek population of Anatolia, which was expelled from the Turkish mainland.

Irish soldiers of the British Army also played a part in adding Iraq to the British Empire, taking part in the invasion and seizure of Basra, the capture of Baghdad and the seizure of Palestine.

The British Army's triumphant entry into Jerusalem in 1917 was celebrated by the *Irish News* as the final wresting back for Christendom of the Eternal City.

Peace was only finally reached with Turkey with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.

As the Dáil debate of that treaty shows, it came as something of a surprise to the Free State Government that Ireland was still at war with Turkey. Cumann na nGaedheal did not realise that when they had signed the Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921 they had, by remaining part of the Empire, inherited Redmond's war and its consequences.

The Lausanne Treaty—a triumph for the Turkish leader Atatürk—committed the British Empire to defend the settlement in the event of attack by any side, the most likely scenario at the time being war with Bolshevik Russia.

The destruction of the Ottoman Empire and its carving up by the western powers had catastrophic effects on the Muslim world and helped make the Middle East what it is today.

Those who gather at Gallipoli to hear President McAleese's oration should reflect on the full significance of this terrible and costly battle.

**Dr Patrick Walsh teaches at Assumption Grammar School, Ballynahinch, Co Down. He is author of *The rise and fall of Imperial Ireland: Redmondism in the context of Britain's conquest of South Africa and its great war on Germany 1899-1916* (2003) and *Britain's Great War on Turkey: An Irish Perspective* (2009).**

[The *Examiner* article can be viewed at: <http://www.indymedia.ie./article/96159>]

Mark Cronin replied to this article with a letter in which the title pre-judged the issue, '*Imperialist plot' theory dishonours Irish soldiers who died at Gallipoli* (25.4.10). Pat Walsh sent in the following response which, at the time of going to press, has not been published

Mark Cronin's response to my article about Gallipoli reveals that the propaganda constructed to justify England's invasion of Mesopotamia and Turkey during 1914/5 has done its job well in Ireland to this day. To get to the point, Mr. Cronin claims that, firstly, Turkey voluntarily and willingly entered the Great War on Germany's side and, secondly, that Britain actually desired Turkish neutrality in that war.

Of course, these two assertions were commonplace in British publications and statements during the Great War and they formed the 'official line'. However, the following British Foreign Office memo, written by the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, in October 1914, a few weeks before the Declaration of War on Turkey, gives the true facts of the matter. Grey writes, in outlining British policy toward war on Turkey that the policy was:

"To delay the outbreak of war as long as we could, to gain as much time as we could, and to make it clear, when war came, that we had done everything to avoid war and that Turkey had forced it..." (From A.L. Macfie, *The Straits Question In The First World War, Middle Eastern Studies*, July 1983, p49).

That tends to give the truth of the matter, from the 'horse's mouth', so to speak, that England had every intention of going to war with Turkey and it was just a matter of timing. But if Mr. Cronin does not accept the word of Sir Edward Grey he will find plenty of evidence contained within my book, *The Great War On Turkey*, of Britain's long term ambitions in the region to incorporate parts of the Ottoman Empire in the British Empire, like Mesopotamia, the Persian Gulf and Palestine. How would she have achieved such ambitions, one might ask, without a war involving the Ottomans?

My book also lists all the attempts Turkey made in the years and months before the war to form defensive alliances with England, Russia and France—the Powers that were intent on, and who made secret agreements to, divide up its territory! It shows how the Turks put their navy in the hands of the British Admiralty, had British yards build its battleships, placed a British Admiral in charge of the defences of the Straits, entrusted its main

armoury to the British Vickers Company and had the defensive plans of its capital drawn up by the Royal Navy.

Now, surely, if the Ottomans were intent on joining a war against the Entente Powers they were Turkeys voting for Christmas!

If Mr Cronin thinks that the obscure incident in the Black Sea that was used for the Russian and then British Declarations of war on the Turks was sufficient provocation for setting the Middle-East ablaze with war, then surely he must admit that the Austrians were justified in declaring war on Serbia, after the assassination of the heir to the Hapsburg throne. And that then really puts the cat among the pigeons with his argument.

In this country, nowadays, we are all too willing to accept England's version of history as fact when our history and experiences should tell us that we were, and are, fools to do so. Wasn't it that that led us to the shores of Gallipoli in the first place?

**Dr. Pat Walsh**

## And The Band Played Waltzing Matilda

by Eric Bogle (extract)

When I was a young man I carried my pack  
And I lived the free life of a rover  
From the Murrays green basin to the dusty outback  
I waltzed my Matilda all over  
Then in nineteen fifteen my country said Son  
It's time to stop rambling 'cause there's  
work to be done  
So they gave me a tin hat and they gave me a gun  
And they sent me away to the war

And the band played Waltzing Matilda  
As we sailed away from the quay  
And amidst all the tears and the shouts and the Cheers  
We sailed off to Gallipoli

How well I remember that terrible day  
the blood stained the sand and the water  
And how in that hell that they called Suvla Bay  
We were butchered like lambs at the slaughter.  
Johnny Turk he was ready, he primed himself well  
He us rained with bullets, he showered us with shells  
And in five minutes flat he'd blown us all to hell  
Nearly blew us right back to Australia.

But the band played Waltzing Matilda  
As we stopped to bury our slain  
And we buried ours and the Turks buried theirs  
Then started all over again

Now those that were left, well we tried to survive  
In a mad world of blood, death and fire  
And for weeks I kept myself alive  
But around me the corpses piled higher  
Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse over tit  
And when I woke up in my hospital bed  
And saw what it had done, I wished I was dead  
Never knew there were worse things than dying

For more I'll go waltzing Matilda  
All around the green bush far and near  
For to hump tent and pegs, a man needs two legs  
No more waltzing Matilda for me.

THE PETER HART SYNDROME

For some time now anyone reading the English media would have been acquainted with the name Kapuscinski. It has been namechecked by almost everyone who coyly seem to suggest that if you weren't in the know—well then you didn't really matter. In the *Guardian*, 6th March 2010, John Dugdale in his column 'The week in Books' outed the controversy in a wryly amusing way—noting:

"Authors blamed for being economical with the actualite have been in the spotlight, with coverage of a book alleging that Ryszard Kapuscinski's reportage was sexed up with invention, and the US publisher Henry Holt's decision to stop printing Charles Pellegrino's *Last Train from Hiroshima*, (which James Cameron still plans to film) following the author's admission that one "witness" hoaxed him, questions about other supposed interviewees, and doubts about Pellegrino's purported PhD."

Dugdale's take on this type of hoax writing, as befits his column, is humorous. Had it to do with the rewriting of British history, his views would be quite different I suspect. He then goes on to reference a well reported offence of this type. James Frey was feted by the hugely influential Oprah Winfrey for his "memoir", *A Million Little Pieces*. Gradually various people began to suspect Frey of invention and eventually he had to come clean. Four years ago, "Frey was forced to admit to an icy Oprah that his 'memoir' was full of fibs." Dugdale goes on to speculate that Frey "has switched to overt fiction and is reported to be working on no fewer than nine novels, all using pseudonyms".

But the *Guardian* wasn't finished with this story and its strong moral tale. On 11th March, none other than Timothy Garton Ash wrote under a heading: *To bear true witness to history's tragedy and triumph is a sacred trust*. And in a smaller side quotation stated: "Every writer of reportage ought to learn from the Kapuscinski controversy. Creative non-fiction is a slippery slope." Garton Ash is well known for popping up in various guises as a "well known scholar" writing in such diverse publications as *The New York Review of Books* where he seems to have a permanent place, *London Review of Books*, *The Guardian* etc. His compatriots seem to be Ian Buruma, Tony Judt, Neal Ascherson, and Francis Urquart, to name but a few. Garton Ash is supported by the kind of Foundations that seem to confer a certain status to those involved

It Is Time

with *their* endeavours whatever these might be. In 2003 for example, Garton Ash was "Director of the European Studies at St. Anthony's College, Oxford" while also being a "Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford".

In his critique of Ryszard Kapuscinski, Garton Ash makes the claim that, had he lived a few years longer, he might well have won the Nobel prize for Literature. Indeed he goes on to say that journalists in many countries would then have hailed him as the first "non-fiction" writer to win it since Winston Churchill in 1953. The row over Kapuscinski has not only embroiled his native Poland but "has already blown round the world. Because Kapuscinski's name is a global byword for a certain kind of literary-political reportage." The new book that has so debunked Kapuscinski's work is by a Polish journalist, Artur Domoslawski "to whom Kapuscinski has been model, mentor and friend". Garton Ash doesn't seem to mind the betrayal by Domoslawski—barely alluding to Kapuscinski's widow who called it "patricide"—but he thinks that the former's handling "of the many love affairs" a tad "insensitive", but as for Kapuscinski "communist past and occasional contacts with the secret police" well "I think he handles them well".

We are then treated by Garton Ash to a noteworthy talk given by him in 2001. Apparently, "to mark the 100th anniversary of the Nobel Prize for literature, the Swedish Academy held a symposium on Witness Literature, delicately indicating that prizeworthy Literature, with a capital L, was not confined to fiction and poetry". Garton Ash's talk—"now reprinted in my book *Facts are Subversive*"—marvelled at the way "Kapuscinski kept crossing from the Kenya of fact to the Tanzania of fiction and back again, but the transition is nowhere explicitly signalled".

That was same year in which anthropologist and writer John Ryle "wrote a coruscating review essay in the *TLS*, documenting numerous inaccuracies, exaggerations and mythifications in Kapuscinski's writing on Africa". Of course in any literary spat there are those who are for and against. Garton Ash finds himself surprised that his friend Neal Ascherson "himself the author of superb reportage from Poland and elsewhere" is with Kapuscinski on this one. Ascherson says that Kapuscinski "was a great storyteller and not a liar". Then Garton Ash goes on to quote "with surprise" what Ascherson says in full:

"Almost all journalists, except for a handful of saints, do on occasion sharpen up quotes or slightly shift around times and places to heighten effect. Perhaps they should not, but they—we—do".

"Really, Neal?" squeaks Garton Ash. "And how much, pray, is "slightly"?"

And how far may one go in "sharpening up"? (For those of us, in that now infamous Kilkenny 'Centenary Celebration of Hubert Butler', we well remember how Neal Ascherson fared when Brendan Clifford faced up to him regarding his reportage in the Balkans. By the time Clifford was done, poor Neal couldn't "sharpen" up even "slightly" his utterances on the subject.)

But back to Garton Ash, who believes—

"that there are few more responsible callings for a human being armed with a pen than that of being a veracious witness to great and grave events. ... But in recognition of that responsibility to history, as well as the "non-fiction" promise we make to our readers, we must stick to the facts as best as we can find them. We must not change the order of events even "slightly" nor "sharpen up" anything that appears between quotations marks. .... We must bear truer witness".

Are you reading this Peter Hart?

KENYA, THE MAU MAU AND BRITAIN

While the Irish media continue to howl with rage against the Catholic Church and historic wrongs, Britain acts with a certain contempt for those who say they are responsible for wrongs done in Kenya while they were the colonel power there. The Government is using an "old obscure legal principle" to dismiss claims of torture and rape by the British colonial administration in Kenya. The Foreign Office says that those seeking claims against the British State for "serious physical and sexual abuse at the hands of the British during the Kenyan "emergency" of 1952-1960 should not be allowed to proceed with their claim because of the law of state succession". The Government argues it is "not liable for the acts and omissions of the Kenyan colonial administration" claiming "the Kenyan Government was now responsible for events that took place while Kenya was a British colony".

It was only recently that Britain acknowledged that "suffering took place on both sides". The claimants describe "being castrated, sexually assaulted and beaten during their detention by the British and say they are still suffering consequences". According to the *Guardian*, 25th January 2010 (International Edition, Madrid):

"the government's decision to have the case struck out on technical grounds of state succession—the principle that countries assume liability for their own affairs after independence—has infuriated human rights campaigners, who accuse the UK of shirking its responsibilities for rights abuses in former colonies."

I would suggest that anyone interested in this subject would read Britain's Gulag: *The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* by Caroline Elkins (Jonathan Cape, London, 2005). Elkins' research is formidable and

her case for the native peoples of Kenya is insurmountable with its horrific images of the camps, the starving people and everywhere the dead—horribly mutilated. (And it is just not Kenya we are talking about—there is also the Malayan Emergency, Borneo, New Guinea *et al.*)

But wait—there is Neal Ascherson in the *Observer*, 4th April 2004 stating that compared to France, Britain managed "*decline and loss of Empire and world power status*" "*quite well*". "*Britain*," he intoned "*abandoned its empire skilfully, almost without conflict*". This is quite a "*sharpening up*" process in itself, as I think Garton Ash would agree. While William, the son of the Prince of Wales, was in Edinburgh University, one of his then close girl friends was Jessie Craig whose father owns a ranch in Kenya which has been visited by the Prince—the acreage is over 135,000 acres. The father himself runs his own tourist business, bringing in guests who pay him to *experience the ultimate African safari*. As far as I am aware, the Kenyan Government/people doesn't benefit from Craig's business.

#### SKY TV AND DISASTER NEWS

I was in Madeira when the floods and mudslides hit the island that killed 42 people—8 are still classified as missing—but it is generally accepted that they were washed out to sea. The island is Portuguese, but to see how all the islanders responded was quite astonishing. It seemed that everyone who could wield a brush and pan were trying to clean the mud away and there was no *cananing* about who would pay or who was responsible. The island depends totally on tourism and they were raging over the constant loop on some channels—especially Sky—which seemed to be heavily negative.

In fact there were three different rivers in "*livadas*", which ran from the mountain bringing water, mud and anything else in its wake and it was these that caused the trouble. But they were highly contained and the rest of the capital—Funchal—was just fine. The "*livadas*" are actually a system of distributing water from the rainier, northern side of the island to the drier, more fertile southern side of the island.

In our hotel there were the international editions of English papers, with German, French and Spanish being also available. The numbers of English tourists were greatest with Germans coming a close second. Therefore there was a lot of English spoken, but our tour guide Christina also spoke fluent German, Spanish and French. She told us that all children in what we'd call primary school had to learn at least two languages along with their native Portuguese. This bore fruit in that in every commercial transaction one had—one had access to one's own language.

I am forever stunned at the amount of

public monuments that are in every continental country. Madeira was no different in this regard. The public statuary was redolent of its history and was very fine. The newer public ones were modernist but it had been agreed that every roundabout should have one of these and after a while I realised that it was a pleasing aesthetic to have them set amongst the jacaranda trees and every flowering shrub known to man. The growth was so lush that one could speculate that if one dropped off to sleep for a few minutes, one would awake surrounded by quickly growing vegetation. The camellias, roses and giant ferns were a delight even for a non-gardening enthusiast like me.

The people were obviously in mourning until the Solemn Mass for the Dead was concelebrated with their bishop in the lovely old Cathedral. The readings were in three different languages—Portuguese, German and English. There is a lovely statue of our last Pope outside the Cathedral—Papa Ioannus Paulus II. And the size of the statue of Portuguese sailor Zarco, who founded Madeira, was all of twelve metres—right in the middle of the town.

The scenery is spectacular. Whether looking up from near sea-level at the primordial mountains disappearing up into the mists, or travelling by cable-car and looking down at the declivities of the city at the great ocean liners in the harbour, or seeing the red-roofed houses, and, as if the massive fronds, shrubs and trees were not enough, the people had several pot plants in every nook and cranny of their little gardens.

#### AFRICAN AID

Reading about the BBC programme and its questions relating to Aid was something of a *deja vue* moment for me. For along time I have been interested in the whole question of Aid and how much good it does. Bob Geldof may rage against the BBC but it is a telling rage. I have talked to people who know something about the 'Aid business', and it just never seemed to add up. I very rarely watch TV but one night saw an ad. for an Irish charity called 'Bothar'. The appeal was for Irish farmers to donate cattle and these would be taken out to Africa: what really appalled me was the commentary that went with the ad. Among the goats, cows and heifers, there was this little young voice who was asking for advice from his father and the latter replying that they—Bothar—would teach the Africans how "*to look after the animals and grow them eventually into herds*". Talk about Kipling and the white man's burden! This suggestion that the greatest herders in the world would have to be taught the whole idea of cattle husbandry had me seeing red.

And it wasn't just the Irish secularists. I saw a BBC documentary on Conservation

and the presenter put it across very successfully that the white community had "*to teach the Africans how that poaching was not good for them*". And the really appalling thing was that the tone of hectoring implicitly conveyed the idea that the Africans left to their own devices would act childishly and criminally but for the Whites in their Land Rovers policing them overtly.

I remember with shame, a former President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, going on a trip to Africa and being written up in *The Irish Times* as an angel of mercy. Robinson—a naturally cold person—actually cried and told the reporters that she saw it as her duty now to be the "*voice of these unheard Africans*". What was wrong with the Africans that they couldn't use their own voice? Why can't it be Africans who tell us how things are with them? But of course it is the like of Nelson Mandela that is feted because he is a patsy for the West. Well watch South Africa and see how the how close the place is ready to blow up—look at the pictures of the black township crowds already marching for such basics *still* as water, bread and sewerage. Then there is poor Somalia, whose seas have been so polluted by the West dumping their chemicals for just £2 per tonne whereas to treat the chemicals at home in Europe would cost £250 per tonne making the poor starving locals turn to piracy for self sustainability—that *noble tradition* which laid the very foundations for the British Empire itself. Who can judge them? Who dares?

In 2009, there was a book published called *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How There is Another Way for Africa*. It was written by Dambisa Moyo whose CV gave me—I admit it—pause for thought. She had worked for eight years at Goldman Sachs, having worked previously for the World Bank as a consultant. She has a PhD in Economics from Oxford University and holds a Masters from Harvard University Kennedy School of Government. She was born and raised in Lusaka, Zambia. After reading a little of this book—I can recommend it thoroughly for its bracing lack of sentimentalism and its thorough critique of all the players. Having briefed me well, she makes the following absolute statement of fact:

"The problem is that aid is not benign—it's malignant. No longer part of the potential solution, it's part of the problem—in fact aid *is* the problem."

In *Hello* magazine No. 1115, 22nd March 2010, there is an article titled *Kate Moss And Victoria Beckham Bitten By The Charity Bug*. If it wasn't so serious, one could just shrug it off and say—well they can't do anything wrong. But Dambisa holds no liking for what she calls "*the rise of glamour aid*". And in effect in this instance Moss and Beckham etc. are talking about mosquito netting and how that

material protects life against deadly malaria. The fashion set is using such netting for frocks to be auctioned for the charity 'Malaria No More'. Also another wheeze they have initiated is an 18ct white-gold ring in the shape of a mosquito set with rubies and diamonds by the jeweller Stephan Webster, who is expecting them to fetch £15,000 each. All the aid will go to send nets to families in Botswana. Dambisa goes on to tell what almost surely happens next. There are many little mosquito net makers all over Africa. "Say we have one who makes up to 500 nets a week. He employs ten people who (as with many African countries) each have to support upwards of fifteen relatives." He would also be able to have the skill in his workforce to mend nets as well. But enter the celebrity who collects enough money (burnishing their own halos all the while) to send 100,000 mosquito nets to the afflicted region. The local mosquito net maker, with his market flooded with foreign nets puts "our mosquito net maker out of business. His ten workers can no longer support their 150 dependents (who are now forced to depend on handouts) and one mustn't forget that in a maximum of five years, the majority of the imported nets will be torn, damaged and of no further use". By which time the local skill economy falls off—so please if you really want to help Africa, read this well recommended book.

Julianne Herlihy. ©

## BICO on Wikipedia

Readers should be aware that people associated with this magazine have had no role in writing the Wikipedia entry on BICO.

Wikipedia is a totally unreliable source. Indeed, journalists on *The Times* have been warned that they may not cite it as a sole source for any information in their articles.

It is essentially unedited, anonymous, and irresponsibly subject to the whims of eccentrics and the vendettas of coteries.

To illustrate the nature of Wikipedia, we reproduce below a *Sunday Business Post* item (21.3.10):

"....More evidence of the unbending reliability of Wikipedia, the online 'encyclopaedia', as a trustworthy source of information became apparent last week. Within minutes of the arrest of fabulously successful banker Seanie FitzPatrick in Greystones, the following thrilling account of the events was posted on Wikipedia:

"On 18 March 2010, gardai arrested Sean FitzPatrick at his residence in Greystones, Co Wicklow. After a ten-minute gunfight, which saw FitzPatrick clamber to the roof of his family home shouting 'Made it Ma, top of the world!', Garda negotiators enticed him down by announcing that 'a

On the Late Late show (19th March) there was an amusing exchange between Tubridy and the impressario Noel Pearson. Pearson was asked about the OBE that theatre director Michael Colgan had received. He said something like: "I am happy for him, but only a little bit"—and then asked rhetorically why Irish people feel the need to accept these things when even many English people don't. He also said that OBE stands for Order of the British Empire, but "Britain doesn't have an Empire". (Maybe so, but it still likes to keep its hand in). The audience was ready to clap, but Tubridy didn't pause and immediately asked the next question. The award provoked the following letters which appeared in the *Irish Times*

The Gate Theater director Michael Colgan justified his decision to join the Order of the British Empire (OBE) on an honorary basis (Irishtimes.com, March 18th). He said, "there can be no question but that this award should be shared by all who have worked with me at the Gate. I know that one person who would have been particularly pleased is my dear friend, the late, great Harold Pinter.

Harold Pinter turned down a knighthood on the basis that it was offered to him by the British government. He did later accept becoming something called a "Companion of Honour," on the basis that it was not in the gift of his government. It is also surely presumptuous to assume, without question, that all who have worked with Mr Colgan, OBE, would care to share his gong.

While Harold Pinter cannot venture an opinion on the subject, those who worked with Mr Colgan, OBE, can. However, they might be hesitant in including themselves out, in case they are not asked again.

Niall Meehan

Once again the British head of state is engaged in undermining the republican, egalitarian and separatist ethos of the sovereign Irish State. I refer to your report on the conferring of an honorary OBE by Queen Elizabeth II on the artistic director of the Gate Theatre Michael Colgan (Home News, March 18th). The intervention into our republican system by the British monarch to elevate chosen Irish citizens and to place them symbolically above their fellow Irish is an unwelcome intrusion into our political and civic space.

This is not a case of petty, mean-spirited anti-British rhetoric. It is an issue of fundamental political principle. We are a sovereign republic that has repudiated monarchy and imperialism. My views on these awards are no different to those of Canada, a country that has been a most loyal member of the Commonwealth. Because Canada is not a republic, Queen Elizabeth II is head of state. Nevertheless, when it comes to matters of citizenship and sovereignty, Canada takes a very firm line.

Despite the British ancestry of most of Canada's population, no Canadian may accept a British knighthood or peerage unless he/she first renounces their Canadian citizenship.

In the past 20 years, the British monarch has bestowed in excess of 50 titles/awards on Irish citizens resident in the republic, as if they were her own British subjects. By accepting these awards and titles, the recipients become, objectively speaking, part of the British establishment. Inexplicably, the Irish Government has remained silent on this issue throughout.

The Irish State should adopt the same policy as Canada in this matter, and any Irish citizen who accepts a British title should be denied the privilege of Irish citizenship and surrender their Irish passport. The esteem and affection of one's fellow citizens is the ultimate honour and accolade that can be bestowed on any person, for such an honour cannot be bought, sold or bartered.

Tom Cooper

three ball needs a fourth on the first tee at Druid's Glen'. Gardai threatening to 'Go Corrib' finally convinced FitzPatrick to cooperate. FitzPatrick was led away to a safe house in the K Club for intense interrogation."

Strangely, no other media outlets reported the dramatic confrontation. Which is surprising, as most of them repeat what Wikipedia says without question."

structure projects, to tackle the damage done by the economic recession, it has ceded its democratic role, to the unelected Strategic Investment Board. This body, established as a company limited by guarantee and sponsored by the Office of the First and Deputy First Ministers, represents the narrow interests of the private sector and remains wedded to the discredited dogma of Privatisation and the Public Finance Initiative/Public Private Partnership (PFI/PPP) approach to delivery of public services. Conference calls on the NI Assembly parties to re-examine the priorities in the Programme for Government in line with the particular demands of the current economic crisis and to implement the Investment Strategy in a manner that best benefits the local economy and which factors in the added value of elements such as ensuring sustainability by improving the skills base through apprenticeships and appropriate training."

Northern Ireland Constituency Council

## Labour Resolution

The following motion is being submitted to the Labour Party Conference, Galway 16th-18th April

"Conference notes with concern, the fact that despite the Northern Ireland Assembly having the opportunity to use the e 10 year Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-18 (ISNI), with planned expenditure of £20bn for infra-

Does  
It  
Up

Stack  
?

#### STROKE POLITICS

If Mr. Maurice Quinlivan had won his court case to injunct Willie O'Dea to stop him interfering in an election, the penalties which the Judge could have handed down to Willie O'Dea included a prohibition on being an election candidate and a prohibition on voting in an election for a period of years. It did not therefore suit Willie O'Dea at all for the Judge to reach a decision. Hence the untrue affidavit about matters which occurred only weeks prior to the affidavit. When the *Limerick Leader* went public with the true story, Willie O'Dea tells us he next went straight to his solicitor. Between them they decided to settle out of court with Maurice Quinlivan and decided not to tell the Judge about the untrue affidavit. The settlement was made. The fact that the case was settled was "mentioned" in court but the court was not told about the false affidavit.

What did the court do when the Judge, like everyone else, heard about the false affidavit? In a matter directly affecting the State elections? Well, the court did nothing that we know of. Are we surprised? We are not surprised because public ethics have sunk so low. Willie O'Dea said he changed his affidavit when he realised his mistake. This is untrue. Affidavits, once made cannot be changed. The oath once sworn cannot be unsworn and no one knows that better than Willie O'Dea who is a solicitor.

A whole pack of lies were reported as having been told to the Dail on the day of the "no confidence" vote. Not least by Taoiseach Brian Cowen who stated that the matter was a personal one and was dealt with and resolved in open court—two whopping lies. In his affidavit Willie O'Dea stated: "I was fully entitled to raise this issue as a public representative". And in affidavit he also said he was a TD and a Minister of the Government. This demonstrates it was not a personal matter only. Furthermore, the affidavit was made as a defence to a case under the Electoral Act, as the Taoiseach knows full well, and that case was very much a public and not a personal matter. The matter was not dealt with in an open court. It is a lie to say it was. The case was dealt with and settled outside the court.

Lies are being freely told to the Dail and in court under oath. Loss of memory is used as an excuse if an excuse is given. Mostly an excuse is not given at all. This sort of loss of memory has become the standard escape—but with the memory

loss of Bertie Ahern, before a Tribunal of Enquiry on several occasions; Jack Lynch suffered from it also, several other Government Ministers, and now a Minister for Defence. Is it any wonder the standard of government is so awfully incompetent? Eighty out of one hundred and forty nine TDs voted confidence in a Minister who—nothing having changed—had to resign the next day. What sort of blind party political hacks are they? Fianna Fail still doesn't get it. And there is nothing any more to be said about the members of the Green party. Green? Very Green!

#### SCAM ARTISTS

However, as we have noticed before now, it seems to be actually desirable for a politician to be an accomplished liar and swindler. Take Michael Clarke in Sligo, for example. In 2002, he was given a two year gaol sentence for conspiring to defraud us of tens of thousands of euros. He was getting and cashing Department of Agriculture cheques made payable to non-existent farmers under the dairy hygiene scheme. He was a Fianna Fail member—but Fianna Fail was so embarrassed that he was forced to go forward as an Independent candidate and as such he topped the poll in his area for Sligo County Council. He was triumphalist about his victory, "... peers have now spoken".

He went on at Council Meetings to propose and endorse re-zoning of land. His proposals were supported against the County Manager and against the County Development Plan by Fianna Fail and Fianna Gael Councillors who ensured that Michael Clarke's proposals were passed. It does not stack up unless something else is going on behind the scene-backstage. There is more than a suspicion that County Councillors are ahead of the developers in that, is there is even an indication that certain land should be zoned in a certain way for the good of the people then the Councillors will ensure the land is zoned for something useless in the County Development Plan and this ensures a sphere of influence for themselves over the next election or two.

Bad politicians thrive on confusion and chaos. They don't want peace and prosperity for all. Only for themselves. They want to be elected to get into the stream of money. The stream of money includes generous salaries and unvouched expenses and most pernicious of all, lobbying "fees" of thousands of euros per day for making introductions and using influence. Is the Black Economy bigger than the Real Economy? Very likely it is and so much for statistics.

#### NAMA

Nama just is to the public a bit like as if we are part of a theatre audience between Act 1 and Act 2. The curtain is down, so we do not know what is going on but we can hear a lot of noise coming from the

scenery being rearranged. Cork developer Mr. Michael O'Flynn—a Fine Gael supporter of longstanding—gave a press release to his local newspapers in praise of Nama and in which Mr. O'Flynn made a point of saying that Nama has taken over "performing loans". He is the first person to say this and his statement may have something to do with his company's while elephant 'Elysian Centre' of seventeen stories being taken over by Nama together with the loans which enabled the Elysian to be erected. The Elysian certainly has not been performing nor is it likely to perform any time soon. It has two of its floors underground and what is more important the two floors are below the levels of High Spring Tides. How did the Cork City Planners agree to this situation? Why did Bankers lend money for such a building? Greed, and Kierkegaard's "herd instinct", may have had something to do with it. No matter what way you look at it, it doesn't stack up. Once we had a fine post office sorting office there to meet the needs of Cork's citizens—now one has to travel by car somehow to get post some **six miles** down the road to Little Island. Why does it always mean that the little person has always to end up paying? And for our own discomfort to boot?

Michael Stack. ©

#### Israeli Diamonds Are Not Forever!

The following letter appeared in  
*The Southern Star*, 20th February

In recent years the romantic image of diamonds as objects of desire has been tarnished by bloody conflicts in central Africa that are often funded by the trade of locally mined gems. Human rights organisations have begun a campaign against "conflict demands", or "blood diamonds", and the ensuring global attention has forced the diamond industry to take action against the trade.

The Kimberley Process, introduced in a 2003 UN resolution, is a certification scheme designed to prevent rough diamonds used to fund conflict from entering the market. However, cut and polished diamonds, regardless of what bloody conflicts they may fund, do not qualify for regulation under the Kimberley Process. Israel's blood diamonds, are thus accorded a bogus legitimacy.

Israel, the source of the world's longest conflict, is also the world's largest producer of cut and polished diamonds. In 2006, Israel exported \$16.7 billion worth of diamonds.

The importance of the diamond industry to the Israeli economy can best be appreciated when one considers that the budget of the Israeli Ministry of Defence in 2008 was \$13 billion. Since Israeli cut and polished diamonds are not regulated by the Kimberley Process, jewellers continue to sell them to consumers who are, for the most part, completely unaware that the

## DESTINY continued

unlikely to recede in the short-term.

Sterling has been sliding since the beginning of the year and is the weakest of the main currencies this year, coming under fierce assault on money markets in mid-March, even against the Euro.

Speculators are betting against Britain's fragile economy, and the £23.3 billion bid by British insurer Prudential for AIG's Asian insurance operations. But it is the prospect of Britain's second hung parliament since the second world war, in the upcoming general election, that poses the main threat to the currency. (*Irish Examiner*, 11.3.2010).

The Farmers, in a sense, are their own worst enemy.

"It shows that Irish agriculture makes a negligible contribution to Irish GNP in the absence of EU support. Farming is profitable only because of the transfers it receives as a result of public policy. The contribution made by Irish consumers and taxpayers to farm incomes is increasing and now amount to over £900 million

annually [2000]—or half the income from farming. The cost to Irish consumers alone is equivalent to a VAT of 20 per cent on food.

"It is incredible that today the entire income from farming comes from public subsidies from Irish and EU taxpayers and consumers. Not only that, but the cost of providing this support now greatly exceeds the actual income received by farmers" (*Farm Incomes: Myths and Realities*, Alan Matthews, Cork University Press, 2000).

Matthews' presentation could be regarded as a "*business only*" analysis, but 10 years on, the farming community continue to behave as land monopolists. They are absolute owners of the land in a way that the landlords never were and that the farmer of other countries are not. And their behaviour has been characteristic of monopolists rather than of businessmen (not to mention husbandmen). They respond minimally to market pressures and opportunities. They consider that they are entitled, as the makers of the Irish state, as the true people of Ireland, to enjoy the full benefit of favourable commercial situations while being guaranteed

against commercial failure.

The Glanbia saga highlights this more than anything. The PLC is a world leader because its overseas operations in places like Britain and the US function on a strictly commercial basis; its home operation is a laggard, unconcerned about the demands or needs of the market place.

It is neither a Co-op in the true sense but yet it hasn't the courage to grasp full PLC status and make a fist of it.

"In Ireland, Labour waited patiently until the farmers became affluent. Then the affluent farmers decreed that they would keep everything that they got out of a very favourable market situation. They were rigorous free marketeers in those days. But now that the market is not so favourable to them, they demand immunity against it. Urban society, which did not benefit from their affluence, is called upon to suspend the laws of the market until the farmers are once again in a position to take advantage of them.

"Labour must not only wait, but must pay while it is waiting."

We expressed those words 20 years ago in this publication and we have no reason to change our opinion today.

gems were crafted in Israel, where taxes from that industry are used to fund the illegal occupation of Palestinian lands and the brutal subjugation of the Palestinian people.

Because the international community—western governments in particular—has long failed to protect innocent Palestinian civilians from constant attacks by the Israeli military, it is imperative that the concerned citizens of the world take action in defence of Palestinian human rights.

Diamond exports out-perform all other Israeli export commodities, which leaves its economy vulnerable to trends and public taste. Unlike other Israeli exports—technology, software, and armaments—diamonds are purchased by individual consumers, not companies or governments.

When buying a diamond, each individual consumer has the power to withhold the money that powers the Israeli war machine. By choosing a stone that is truly conflict-free, consumers will diminish funding for Israeli crimes against humanity—in Palestine and beyond.

In the interim, Israeli diamonds should remain . . . on our conscience.

**Daniel Teegan**

### IBEC Wrong On Public Sector Numbers

The text below is the complete version of my letter submitted to the *Sunday Business Post* on March 18. The version published in its March 21 edition was, unfortunately, so heavily edited that it omitted my critique of IBEC for attributing employment totals to public health and public education that were in fact in respect of private and public health combined and private and public education combined.

See <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs071/1102805358929/archive/1103190210248.html> for

the March 18 issue of *Liberty Online* carrying my more detailed assessment of other aspects of the March issue of IBEC's *Quarterly Review of Economic Trends*.

**Manus O'Riordan (22.3.10)**

### Original Letter to *Sunday Business Post*:

It is unfortunate that, through what no doubt was an unintentional statistical error, this past week's IBEC Quarterly Review of Economic Trends has published seriously misleading data which not alone inflates public sector employment numbers by as much as 50% above their actual level, but also maintains that such numbers were still climbing rapidly upwards over the past two years!

IBEC argues that "a further concern is that between public administration, health and education, public sector employment reached 458,000 at the height of the boom in 2007" and it goes on to claim that "by 2009, while almost all of the economy was shedding jobs, a further 29,000 were added to public sector employment".

But what are the actual facts of the matter? The Quarterly National Household Survey for July-September 2007 reported that 107,400 of its respondents were employed in public administration and defence, 132,700 in education and 217,600 in health. The figures from these three categories do indeed add up to 457,700. Now, if there were any truth in the statement that close to half a million were currently employed in the public sector, there would indeed be a case for at least paying attention to IBEC's genuine concerns about the resulting consequences for public finances, if not to any accompanying media frenzy. But this is decidedly—and demonstrably—NOT the case.

The unquestionable fact is that only two thirds of the total numbers claimed by

IBEC were actually employed in the public sector. In that particular CSO survey, the health and education categories embrace both the private and public sectors. The CSO, in a specific Public Sector Employment publication, has provided the true and exact totals for September 2007. Public administration and defence employed 100,700, public education employed 93,500 and public health employed just 112,800—the latter total being practically matched by the numbers employed in private sector health. And the sum total of those three public sector employment categories came to 309,400—a very far cry indeed from the 458,000 claimed by IBEC.

The latest published data in respect of September 2009 tell us that, in the intervening two year period, employment in public administration and defence actually fell by 2,400. It is true that public education did show an increase of 3,700, primarily due to a 2,100 increase in VECs and Institutes of Technology, but this amounted to little more than half the increase of 6,500 declaring themselves employed in the combined private and public education sectors. And when it comes to public health, the numbers employed actually fell by 2,600, which means that the 15,900 increase in total private and public health was far more than wholly accounted for by the private sector alone.

The sum total of these three public sector employment categories came to 308,100 in September 2009. Over the two year period concerned, this represented an actual decline of 1,300—a dramatic difference from the fictional increase of 29,000 claimed by IBEC!

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

## DESTINY continued

It is an ominous development when you see Irish food multinationals reducing their exposure to Ireland but what sort of a reflection is it on Irish agriculture, which is not only massively subsidised by the EU taxpayer, but equally by our own taxpayers: the PAYE sector.

### WORKER PARTICIPATION?

The Glanbia Co-op, under its society rules, will hold two votes to decide. There are 8,000 farmers in the co-op and around 4,000 of these are active dairy farmers.

You would have thought that over the years, the agricultural Co-op sector provided a unique opportunity to develop a worker/owner partnership, after all it is based on collective ownership and the cooperative use of the means of production and distribution, but then that probably says more about our Trade Unions than the farmers.

As it stands today, the Co-op movement in Ireland is little more than a tax avoidance exercise.

In Glanbia PLC we have a Co-op which sets up a PLC (public limited company), the PLC becomes a market leader, however, its Irish arm becomes its weakest link.

"Last year, the Irish dairy businesses had a turnover of just over €1bn, representing 56 per cent of Glanbia's total sales. However, it generated operating profits of just €24m—an operating margin of only 2.3 per cent.

"Meanwhile, Glanbia's US cheese and global nutritional arm had sales of €792m with operating profits of €90m—an operating margin of 11.4 per cent.

"The dairy markets have begun to pick up in recent months and farm-gate milk prices have risen about 25 per cent from their 2009 lows, but the European Union's CAP-related reductions in guaranteed milk product prices, the impending abolition of milk quotas and tough competition in the consumer food brands are likely to keep slim profit margins under pressure at the Irish division" (*Irish Independent*, 15.3.2010).

Struggling with low milk prices and feeling that the PLC model is hampering their growth, the farmer shareholders feel conditions are right to form a new Co-op, with co-operation, collaboration and collective interest at its core.

The Co-op owns over 158 million shares in Glanbia PLC, giving it 54 per cent of the company and it is anticipated that it may place 30 per cent of the company to finance the deal.

Shares are trading at about €2.55, so the placing could be at €2.20 or less. One source said the farmers could also seek the redistribution of cash to society members.

The co-op would end up with a smaller

holding of a better company which ultimately delivers greater profitability. So this might offset some of the risk associated with commodity volatility. Institutional shareholders would most likely be satisfied that the company is a more typical PLC with a better story to boot.

Farming insiders believe Ireland could be one of the most successful and lowest-cost producers of milk in the world, but needs to be reorganised.

The Glanbia break-up has been described as a win-win situation! It might be for the farmers and the stock brokers but does it really contribute anything to the advancement of a more productive farming sector and help advance Ireland's economic independence?

The farmers want it both ways: the comfort of their Co-ops and the profits of their PLC, with its efficient external operations raking in the Dollars for the Lords of the Land.

### EU MEMBERSHIP

Entry into the EEC provided a massive commercial stimulus to agriculture in the Republic with negligible effect. The money which poured in was not used to diversify the agricultural economy.

At the height of the EEC subsidies in the 1970s, their wealth increased enormously without any proportionate increase of effort or enterprise on their part. But as a class they did not even behave with the prudence or the public spirit of oil sheikhs. They spent lavishly and they invested badly. They went in for reckless land buying when there was still plenty of scope for developing production on the existing farms. They acted as if the bonanza would last for ever. Land came on the market because astronomical prices were being paid for it, and they mortgaged their undeveloped farms so that they could extend them. They demonstrated in the clearest possible way that land monopoly rather than husbandry was their thing. They behaved as owners rather than producers. Medium sized farmers became notional millionaires on the basis of property speculation.

And the good times keep rolling, well so far!

"Farmers get over 86 per cent of EU budget funds given to Ireland... Ireland will receive €6.2 billion from the Common Agricultural Policy between 2007 and 2013, accounting for over 86 per cent of EU funds received in this country" (*Irish Independent*, 17.2.2010).

Irish farmers, who receive 10 times more EU money than some of their Eastern European counterparts.

"New figures obtained by the *Irish Independent* show that Irish farmers receive nearly 50 per cent more in pay-

ments under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) than the average across Europe" (30.1.2010).

Irish farmers receive €308 per hectare in CAP funding compared to €31 per hectare in Romania. Irish farmers point out that they are faced with significantly higher production and living costs than Romania, for example.

Farmers, across the EU, received an average of €215 per hectare. Only five countries receive more money than Ireland—Greece, Belgium, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands.

But incoming Agriculture Commissioner Dacian Cioloş from Romania has vowed to reform the CAP so that all farmers get more equal levels of payment. Agriculture Minister Brendan Smith warned that support for the current system of CAP payments, that favours Irish farmers, was falling as more countries call for equal payments across the EU.

### HIGH COST ECONOMY

The Irish Farmers' Association (IFA) said there was a good reason why Irish farmers get more than those in Eastern Europe. "*The compelling reason for the differing level of payments is a different level of costs. We are a high-cost economy, everything is dearer and it costs more to produce here*", said IFA President John Bryan.

He said that farmers here stood to lose 20 per cent of their single farm payments under the proposal to move to an EU-wide flat rate payment. Based on a current average payment of around €10,500, that would mean a loss of over €2,000 each, even though average farm incomes, including these payments, was just €13,000 last year, meaning farmers could not survive without them.

### *The Farmers' Thanks to Europe!*

"The value of the Euro needs to fall 14% against sterling for Irish food exports to regain competitiveness.

Kerry Group Chief Financial Officer Brian Mehigan recently said the food industry needs the Euro to settle at under 80p.

The exchange rate was at about 87p for much of February, and Mr. Mehigan said, "*It is fair to say that maybe there is some optimism coming in with the weakness of the Euro. I think 87p for sterling is better than 94p, but it still needs to get down below 80p to be competitive...*".

The exchange rate had fallen from a peak of 94p last October. However, sterling weakened again in mid-March, returning the exchange rate to 91p, and the difficulties of the past two years for Irish exporters due to weaker sterling are

continued on page 22

## DESTINY continued

tend to shop around for the best value, while indigenous companies generally tend to stay put and retain employees. Furthermore, there is a compelling argument that Ireland should now start to wean itself off foreign direct investment.

### "A MODERN ECONOMY"

Speaking at a seminar in UCD just over a year ago, Robert Shapiro, a senior economic adviser to US president Barack Obama, said:

"FDI [Foreign Direct Investment] is a transition strategy, not an end-game strategy. The key to Ireland's next stage is to make the entire economy a modern economy—and not one that depends on the success of foreign companies" (See *Irish Political Review*, Feb. 2009, p30).

Shapiro had a simple message: promote local, rather than rely on global. In fairness to the Government, it has made efforts over the past two years to help develop an indigenous economy.

It has introduced tax holidays for start-up companies and is promising to restructure the banks—through Nama and a recapitalisation—in an effort to get credit flowing again through the Irish economy.

In the short term, some €135 million has been set aside in an employment subsidy scheme for struggling but viable businesses, while, through the Enterprise Stabilisation Fund, the Government has approved €44 million in funding for 98 businesses.

Meanwhile, in terms of policy, a report from the Innovation Task Force has been commissioned and will have much to say on developing indigenous enterprise. Sometimes, however, the rhetoric has not been met with action. The Government has been unable to convince any US venture capitalists to back a proposed €500 million fund—more than a year after it was announced as a cornerstone of Ireland's economic recovery plan.

The Celtic Tiger grew fat by attracting foreign direct investment to Ireland through our low-cost economy. The world has now moved on and it is impossible to recreate the dynamics of the early 1990s.

Foreign direct investment will play an important role in any economic recovery, but we have to wean ourselves off the idea that it's the 'be all and end all of economic policy' and begin to realise that a long-term recovery will rely on the strength of indigenous Irish companies, and the ingenuity of Irish entrepreneurs.

### FARMING POTENTIAL

A key player in breaking the overwhelming dependence of multinationals should be the agriculture sector.

Food and drink exports account for over €7 billion in food and beverage products, accounting for 50% of indigenous manufacturing exports.

It generates almost one-third of Ireland's net foreign earnings from manufacturing and has the capacity to grow and create employment.

The sector currently employs over 230,000 people, accounting for seven per cent of GDP, eight per cent of employment, 10 per cent of exports and a third of net foreign earnings from the manufacturing industry.

With a growing world population meaning more mouths to feed, there were also enormous opportunities in EU and world food and drink markets, Shapiro said. The problem here would appear to be that the Irish PLC with the overseas operations will be the greater beneficiary and not the indigenous sector.

Minister for Agriculture Brendan Smith has set up a top-level review of the food sector. How much impetus a new analysis of the sector will generate remains to be seen. On past performance, it is far from encouraging.

### GLANBIA: CO-OP V. PLC

A case in point is Glanbia PLC (public limited company) with more than 70 per cent of its earnings generated outside Ireland. The overseas profile of the largest food PLC, the Kerry Group, is close to that figure too.

Both companies have proved the point that export-led growth has to be the way forward for Ireland's economy.

In early March, Glanbia PLC announced that it is prepared to back the proposal by the Glanbia Co-op, a 54 per cent shareholder in the PLC, to buy back the public company's Irish division.

Glanbia PLC ranks among the world's top dairy processors, has annual sales of €2 billion, with operating profits in 2006 €88.4 million and in that year employed approximately 4,400 staff. Apart from Ireland, it has operations in the EU, the US, with international joint ventures in the UK, US and Nigeria.

### FARMERS WANT IT BOTH WAYS!

The farmers have been complaining about the price Glanbia PLC is paying them for their milk. They may even have wished they could get rid of this PLC altogether and run and own the company themselves, as opposed to owning 54 per cent of the bigger stock market-listed company.

The PLC is all for shafting its Irish operation. It is making better profit margins on its foreign businesses and they have greater growth potential.

The Irish business is dragging down overall margins and presents a massive headache, given that the Co-op behind it

has 8,000 farmer members.

The Glanbia situation throws up a much bigger question about the future of Ireland's food industry.

Built on the back of Co-ops or state ownership in Ireland, the country produced four Irish multinational food companies, Kerry Group, IAWS (Irish Association of Wholesale Societies), Glanbia and Greencore.

IAWS has morphed into Aрызta, and while it retains extensive operations in Ireland, it is now headquartered and listed in Switzerland.

Greencore, which closed down the Irish sugar industry in 2005, and last month sold off its malting operations to a French company, has no remaining food operations in Ireland. It continues to be Irish registered and is headquartered here, mainly for tax reasons.

Kerry Group has kept its head office in Ireland and while it has scaled back on food production assets in Ireland, it has nevertheless continued to acquire businesses here, for example, Breeo foods from Dairygold, which is the state's largest farmers'-owned company. It is currently attempting to acquire the Newmarket, Co. Cork Co-op.

Now Glanbia is looking at jettisoning its Irish food operations. It would probably continue to keep its headquarters in Ireland, but in the future there would be no logical reason for it to keep its main listing in Ireland. It could even switch its main currency of operations to dollars at some point in the future, given the enormous contribution to profits that will come from the US.

So, if four of Ireland's very small number of genuine multinational companies are pulling back from their presence here (with the exception of Kerry Group), what does it say about the future of the food industry which should be the gem in Ireland's export crown?

The 2008 Forfás employment survey showed there were 39,500 people working in the food industry for firms supported by IDA or Enterprise Ireland. That figure was down from 43,500 in 2000. So, despite the enormous boom and the apparent growth of the sector, it is employing even fewer people now than it was ten years ago. That situation can only get worse.

There is a potential to create some high-end food sector R&D type jobs, but it isn't at all clear where the big job numbers in the industry will come from. Having our most successful firms in the sector scale back their presence here is a worrying trend.

Unfortunately, it may simply be a logical consequence of the international success of these companies and the globalisation of the food sector.

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## DESTINY continued

period, which assumed that the market is always right."

"The challenge for Western thinking now is to create a fourth version of capitalism that builds on the best elements of the classical, Keynesian and Thatcher-Reagan models, but adapts to the needs of the 21st century, and specifically to the rivalry with China's dynamic and self-confident authoritarian system. Whether this is possible is very much an open question.

"Some of the changes required are obvious, and are happening already. For example, governments and central banks are accepting much more explicit responsibility for managing economic growth and employment, as well as inflation." (*Irish Independent*, 4.2.2010).

### EGGS IN ONE BASKET

In a St. Patrick's Day message to the world (*Irish Times*, 13.3.2010), Taoiseach Brian Cowen wrote:

"People say the best way to predict the future is to invent it. One of Ireland's best attributes is our ability to be agile and to make quick decisions to get ahead of the game. We need to use that quality now, as we have in the past. I will be working with my colleagues in Government to take forward the taskforce's recommendations as we seek to make Ireland a global innovation hub . . . a smart, high value, export-led economy" (*Irish Times*, 13.3.2010).

There was not a single mention of agriculture. The thrust of what the Taoiseach proposes for his "smart economy" doesn't exist within, it is overwhelmingly dependent on external forces : multinationals.

In the boom days of the Celtic Tiger, it was anathema to refer to self-reliance or self sustainability as an economic policy for the state : the whole world was going 'global' and Ireland was at the cutting edge.

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"But the day when we could import the next wave of industrialisation through the mid Atlantic back door appears to be over. The American empire is in retreat, at least for now" (Kyrán Fitzgerald, *Irish Examiner*, 20.3.2010).  
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The Finance Bill, published in early February, offered a clear indication that the Irish Government is still pinning its hopes for economic recovery on the twin pillars of foreign direct investment and financial services and largely believes that it will only be a matter of time before the Ameranglo economic model will come good again.

"Ireland's hedge fund industry breathed a sigh of relief yesterday after draft EU

rules were put on ice following opposition from Britain and fears of a trade war with the U.S.

"The draft had been intended to curb pay and borrowing at hedge funds and usher in an era of transparency for a secretive industry that many politicians said exacerbated borrowing difficulties in Greece.

"The draft rules would require hedge funds, private equity groups and others to register and disclose trading information to supervisors.

"The main bone of contention is a suggestion by France and Germany for an EU 'passport' to give European funds and managers free rein to tap investors across the bloc without having to re-register in each of the 27 member states. Foreign-registered funds and managers would be denied the passport under the current compromise.

"We could not sign up to something that we regarded as excluding properly supervised firms operating out of London," Mr. Darling said last night.

"Ireland has also voiced problems with the draft which is based on a text penned by then-internal market commissioner Charlie McCreevy last April. Many Irish banks act as custodians or administrators for funds and managers based in other financial centres and the banks could be left liable if incorrect values are placed on assets under their custody.

"The Irish Funds Industry Association estimates around 6,000 funds worth €689 billion are administered in Ireland" (*Irish Independent*, 17.3.2010).

As the Finance Bill worked its way through the Dáil, a US multinational announced that it was shedding 175 Irish jobs, while a leading high-street bank declared that it was shutting down its Irish retail network, with the loss of 750 jobs.

In isolation, the moves by Boston Scientific and Halifax were not entirely unexpected. Combined, however, the two announcements represented a blow to Ireland's enterprise and job creation strategy. The 950 jobs that were lost last February were not low-grade, minimum wage positions. Nor were they construction, building or property jobs.

On the contrary, they were exactly the sort of positions that the Government is now so desperate to create: professional jobs in finance, and research & development.

Undoubtedly, the Government is right to try and secure foreign direct investment and to attract large financial institutions to set up here. But the struggle is becoming harder, and the Government needs to fight the jobs battle on a number of fronts.

### INDIGENOUS INDUSTRY

Attracting multinationals is all well and good, but the Government should not forget about small and medium-sized enterprises.

The importance of this sector cannot be overstated. Multinational job announcements might garner the headlines, but it is worth remembering that 63 per cent of all workers in Ireland are employed by a small or medium-sized company.

Furthermore, official figures show that companies with fewer than 50 employees—the Government classification for a small business—employ more than half the workforce.

It is also worth noting that the Finance Bill did little to stimulate indigenous economic activity. The changes to the R&D scheme were minimal, and there was no headline boost for small and medium sized Irish enterprises. Instead, the Finance Bill focused on luring foreign companies and investors back to Ireland.

For example, the decision to extend the remittance tax regime for foreign executives working in Ireland was clearly aimed at multinational bosses.

Having previously been scrapped, under the stewardship of Mr. Cowen, when he was Minister for Finance, the scheme was reintroduced last year for certain highly-paid executives, and it has now been extended to cover European executives.

Likewise, changes to the Corporation Tax regime will make it easier for multinationals to locate their headquarters, research departments and patents here. A range of initiatives aimed at the Financial Services sector, particularly the IFSC (Irish Financial Services Centre), was also included in the Bill.

The Government has moved to appease international pressure by introducing transfer-pricing legislation, a move which prevents multinationals cutting their tax bill by transferring profits between jurisdictions.

In the current regulatory climate, this move is welcome, as it brings Ireland into line with international regulatory norms without really hampering our competitiveness.

Significantly, the Government has also targeted the Islamic world, by legislating for Sharia finance. More than \$1 trillion dollars is tied up in Sharia finance, most of it in the Middle East. By introducing a tax structure to deal with the complexities of this form of finance, Ireland now has an opportunity to become a European leader in this area.

There is a serious argument that these initiatives should have been introduced years ago, when it became clear that the property bubble was not going to expand forever. Indeed, many of these initiatives will take a number of years to reap returns and are not a short-term fix.

The next step, however, is to look hard at Irish-owned companies. Multinationals

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**LABOUR**

# Comment

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*"The first essential for the success of any party, or any movement, is that it should believe it carries within its own bosom all the material requisite to achieve its destiny. The moment any organisation ceases to believe in the sufficiency of its own powers, the moment its membership begin to put their trust in powers not their own, in that moment that party or that organisation enters on its decline." (James Connolly, April, 1908).*

## Moment Of Destiny?

Anatole Kaletsky is the Principal Economic Commentator of *The Times*, London.

"Kaletsky believes that Gordon Brown saved the UK economy by squandering all the money away. He believes that savers should be punished by zero percent interests rates, inflation and a tax on capital. His mother was a communist,"

—according to the *Wikipedia*, all in the same breath.

Mr. Kaletsky was born in 1952 in Moscow, USSR and also spent his childhood in Poland and Australia. He has lived in England and the US since 1966. Mr. Kaletsky was educated at King's College and at the University of Cambridge.

Many of his economic predictions have been proven wrong by subsequent events: for example, Kaletsky wrote, "... *I am one of the few economic commentators who has consistently made light of the anxieties about a 'day of reckoning' for British homeowners and consumers ...*"

Predictions include that "*the credit crunch seems to be ending*" (June, 2008) and that "*there will be no US recession*" (January, 2008). His latest prediction is that in the United Kingdom General Election, 2010, the Liberal Democrats may displace the Labour Party as the "*dominant party of the Left*" (*Private Eye*, 2.10.2009).

But, like a stopped clock, which is correct at least twice in the day, Kaletsky hit the nail on the head in his syndicated column in the *Irish Independent* (4.2.2010). His prognosis is one which should be considered carefully by the Irish Government when they hanker for the bygone days of the Celtic Tiger:

"If the West wants to avoid sliding into irrelevance, governments must be much more active in taking control of the economy, writes Anatole Kaletsky.

"After the crisis of 2007-9, the global capitalist system is in a period of transition, comparable to the great transitions of the 1930s and 1970s.

"The question that nobody wants to raise is whether the new model of capitalism that emerges to dominate the world will be a radically reformed version of the Western democratic system or some variant of the authoritarian state-led capitalism favoured in China, Russia and many other emerging economies.

"As a leading US diplomat told me: 'Since the crisis, developing countries have lost interest in the old Washington consensus that promoted democracy and liberal economics. Wherever I go in the world, governments and business leaders talk about the new Beijing consensus—the Chinese route to prosperity and power. The West must come up with a new model of capitalism that's consistent with our political values. Either we reinvent ourselves or we will lose.'"

Kaletsky attacks those who—

"pretend that the Chinese and Western models of capitalism are not really very different. Everyone, after all, is in business to make money, so on the issues that really matter, there is no great rift. This is the standard view among all businessmen with big investments in China, especially those like Bill Gates, of Microsoft, who

enjoy seeing their rivals politically squeezed by Beijing.

"It is also the official line of Chinese and Western governments. Our two models can prosper in peaceful co-existence and mutual respect."

He claims this is an illusion!

"Whether we look at business practices, economic policies, political and human rights or geopolitical interests, it is clear that China and the West are on a collision course. Serious collisions may not occur for decades, but the two models of politico-economic development are incompatible in the long term."

"On human rights, far from confirming the naive slogan of the Thatcher-Reagan period that free markets create free people, China is becoming more adamant in its rejection of Western-style democracy. Perhaps most seriously, China's growing confidence in its authoritarian politics and government-led economic development is creating inevitable frictions with the West, from Korea, Iran and Tibet to Sudan, Zimbabwe and Venezuela.

"We in the West have a choice. Either we concede the argument that China, in the 5,000 years of recorded human history, has been a much more successful and durable culture than America or Western Europe and is now reclaiming its natural position of global leadership.

"Or we stop denying the rivalry that exists between the Chinese and Western models and start thinking seriously about how Western capitalism can be reformed to have a better chance of winning."

"We must stop pretending that minor reforms to banking will restore the performance of the Western system, and focus on the deeper lessons from the financial crisis and the years before. Outside the echo chambers of the US and Britain, it is obvious that what went wrong in 2007-09 was not just a lapse in bank regulation. It was a failure of the entire market fundamentalist model of capitalism created in the Thatcher-Reagan

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