

IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

August 2010

Vol.25, No.8 ISSN 0790-7672

and **Northern Star** incorporating **Workers' Weekly** Vol.24 No.8 ISSN 954-5891

Not To Reason Why

This is the season of Sommetry, when the mindless Great War slaughter on the Somme is glorified as heroic. The Irish Government has for many years been feeling its way towards full participation in the annual glorification of the slaughter without saying what the purpose of it all was. To glorify the Somme without showing that it was necessary to the achievement of some admirable political aim—and that is what the Irish Government has been doing—is to hold up abstract militarism as an ideal.

In recent years Martin McGuinness too has been praising the Somme. He has been praising the courage and bravery of the hundreds of thousands who took part in the blind assault on the prepared German defences. They kept it up in the course of a long Summer day, with each fresh wave from the British trenches walking over the bodies of the previous wave in No-Man's-Land.

By praising the Somme without reference to its purpose he debases the purposeful War in which he himself played an active part. The soldiers of the Provo IRA had some reason for what they did. If they saw no reason for doing it, they were under no necessity to do it. But for the soldiers in the British trenches at the Somme it was a matter of "*Theirs not to reason why, / Theirs but to do and die*". Even if they did not think it was a reasonable thing to do to walk slowly into German machine-gun fire all day long—and that is what they were ordered to do—the only alternative open to them was to refuse to leave the trenches and be shot by their own officers. The chances of survival were better in the walk into machine-gun fire. A decision to leave the trenches and take part in a futile assault on the enemy was reasonable to that extent.

But why on earth was the thing being done at all? That is not something which the nationalist Sommeteers—Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, Labour, and Sinn Fein—do not care to discuss. Since they do not discuss it, the evasive mode of their participation in the celebrations imply the view that war is a good thing in itself.

The German philosopher of the late 19th century, Nietzsche, was presented as the evil demon of Prussianism by Tom Kettle in his Redmondite war propaganda in August 1914. Nietzsche, who was praised by James Connolly in *The Workers' Republic* in 1915,

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EU: Action Stations!

The European Council of Ministers in 2008 commissioned the Reflection Group to look at what the Union would need by 2030 and to produce a report on the future of Europe. This has now been issued and is called "*Project Europe 2030*". Mr Sarkozy's brainwave, the Reflection Group is described as a collection of experts in their fields. It reported in May this year.

It begins with a most intriguing but inadvertently damning comment on the Lisbon Treaty affair when it says that "*The successful ratification of the Lisbon Treaty allowed us to end a long period of introspection which had distracted the Union from the major challenges affecting our future*". So the whole Lisbon affair was a distraction from the real issues. The Report did not intend to convey this idea as it is a wholeheartedly supports the Treaty, but it is so obvious they could not help themselves in saying it. The very need for this type of Report showed from its terms of reference that the whole Treaty issue was a waste of time.

The usefulness of this Report and how serious it should be taken can be illustrated

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Brian "the deposit King" Lucey

A quite extraordinary debate took place on the irisheconomy.ie website on a thread about NAMA. In the course of the discussion some participants became irritated at the pot shots that the TCD Associate Professor of Finance Brian Lucey was taking at Alan Aherne, the economics advisor to Minister of Finance Brian Lenihan.

The discussion turned to Lucey's own record and in particular his belief that

Anglo-Irish Bank could sell its customer deposits of 28 billion Euros for 21 billion (i.e. turn a liability into an asset!). The full debate is on:

<http://www.irisheconomy.ie/index.php/2010/07/06/nama-business-plan-2/>

Below are extracts from the debate—complete with typos—in which the present writer participated.

John Martin

EXTRACTS FROM BLOG:

John Martin Says: July 7th, 2010 at 6:27 pm

Is it really possible that Brian Lucey still thinks that Anglo-Irish can sell 28 billion euros of customer deposits (i.e. the banks liabilities) for 21 billion and thereby make a profit of 49 billion on the transaction?

Brian Lucey Says: July 7th, 2010 at 6:49 pm

Why not email and ask John? Or do you prefer anonymity?

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Labour Comment, edited by Pat Maloney:

The Politics Of Virtue

(back page)

aspired to tell the truth about the workings of human affairs. In his long poem in Biblical mode, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, he has these verses:

"Do you say that a good cause hallows
even war? I say to you a good war
hallows any cause... You shall love
peace as a means to new wars...
Rebellion—it is the mark of the slave.
Let *your* distinction be obedience..."

This passage was naturally singled out by the British war propaganda to show how evil Germany was. But what does the Sommetry of Fianna Fail and Sinn Fein (and of everything in between) say if it is not that war is a good thing if it is really extreme and an awful lot of people are killed in it in mindless obedience to commands?

Although Nietzsche took part as a stretcher bearer in the 1870 war of defence against the French invasion, he did not admire the German Empire (ie, the united German state) that was formed as a consequence of that war. He much preferred the old Germany of poets, musicians and philosophers in petty states. His observations on war were applicable

to England rather than Germany. And he was immensely popular in England during the generation before 1914.

Nietzsche did not admire the German Empire: he was not a Socialist. Connolly did admire the German Empire, and he made a strong socialist case in support of it in 1914-16.

Much of what Connolly wrote about has been superseded by the course of events, at least in Ireland and Britain. But what has been superseded is what the established order prefers to remember. Syndicalism did not develop in Ireland or Britain. Workers were not willing to make themselves the controllers of the industries they worked in. The line of development here was pressure on the Government for legislation to improve the condition of wage-labour in the capitalist system. But in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* published recently by Cambridge University and the Royal Irish Academy, Connolly's advocacy of Syndicalism is what is mentioned.

The most important decision of Connolly's life, and the one which has the greatest relevance today is his decision to

launch a bid for Irish independence, in alliance with Germany. His support of Germany was not an opportunist alliance with England's enemy.

Nietzsche did not admire the German Empire. Connolly did. In his writings of 1914-16 he looked to Germany as the state in which socialist development was taking place. And it was in Germany that a degree of Syndicalist development occurred—and continued until the EU under British inspiration made an assault on it as being incompatible with the freedom of capitalism.

Connolly is a historical icon because he was the military commander of the Rising. His relationship with Germany is dealt with by being deleted from the historical record. The main work of falsification of history in this matter has in the past generation been done by Ruth Dudley Edwards and Desmond Greaves, and it is continued in the DIB by Fergus D'Arcy. The Great War is still too live an issue to allow some things to be said.

It is too much to expect that Fianna Fail should deal with the reality of these things. After all, their big man today, Brian Lenihan, who has put the capitalist economy (the only one we've got) on life-support in NAMA to enable it to survive, is a product of Cambridge University. And Cambridge, since the days of T. Desmond Williams (MI6 Professor of History at UCD) and Nicholas Mansergh has specialised in getting the Irish elite to think only thoughts that are advantageous to Britain. (Lenihan seems to be an earnest Somme-ter who sees Irish history as ancillary to British, with any *contretemps* between the two being 'misunderstandings'.)

But will Sinn Fein, after making headway in difficult circumstances, through a war that had at least a conceivable purpose, lose itself in the vacuous ideology which sanctifies the carnage of a thoroughly bad war?

It was at least a bad war for the nationalist Irish who were lured into it by delusions spun to them by their leaders.

For the Unionist Irish it was a different matter. For them it was not something utterly exceptional, to be justified by a miraculous transformation that had come about in the British Empire. That is how it was for their Irish enemies. But for them it was just one more incident in the life of the Empire. They were a people of the Empire. Imperial war was a matter of course for them. They did not go to war to make a point against the Home Rule Irish. They went to war because they were an Imperial people.

In the conflict between Unionist Ulster

and nationalist Ireland there is argy-bargy in which debating points are made. On the nationalist side it is sometimes taken that the division rests on these debating points, and will vanish if they are removed.

We concluded long ago that the ground of division was independent of the debating points. We described it as national, and can still think of no better way of putting it. And we thought a frank acceptance of national difference was a pre-condition of any kind of *rapprochement*. And we have not yet been proved wrong.

When a Unionist sees a nationalist working on the debating points, with a view to catching him, his hostility is reinforced. He will not be caught by new debating points any more than by the old.

The approach of Fianna Fail etc. is possibly not the same as that of Sinn Fein. There are signs that they are using the conciliation of Ulster Unionism as cover for breaking free of nationalist parameters which they have made increasingly intolerable to themselves by their own mode of development within them.

Why is the Department of Education attacking the Gaelscoils?

Some years ago on the radio Roy Foster—remember him?—was asked what Britain had ever done for Ireland. He said it had given it "*the priceless gift of the English language*".

Is that now the view of the Department of Education? and is it afraid that, if it does not curb the development of Irish language schools, that *priceless gift* will be lost?

But surely the insistence of the Government that English must be taught in Irish schools must be in breach of the Constitution, which still says that Irish is the first language of the state.

We can see that a tendency towards actual restoration of Irish, as manifested in the Gaelscoils, is in conflict with the tendency of dominant political ideology seen in recent times. It is unlikely that Irish speakers emerging from these schools will be recruitable as cannon-fodder into the British Army, in the way that Irish speakers were after Gaelic society had finally been broken by British pressure in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Michael MacDowell (grand-nephew is it of Eoin MacNeill of the Gaelic League and the Volunteers?) has proposed that July 12th be made a national holiday. Would an increase in the use of Irish be compatible with celebration of the event which led to the systematic destruction of the society in which Irish was the general language.

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Settlers And Natives

I'm surprised, after all these years when I've been educated and entertained by the sophisticated *Workers' Weekly* and *Irish Political Review* analysis of national issues on this island, to be propelled back into the world of planters and natives, as set forth by your latest Editorial Digest. This is a somewhat reductionist approach to a complex and many-sided problem. If the Unionists aren't natives of Northern Ireland, where are they natives of?

It occurs to me that the peoples of the North of Ireland have ended up there "at divers times and in divers manners", and I'm sure our genes if they could talk would tell an interesting tale. I for one wouldn't like to have to tell the "natives" of Donegal or Antrim that many of them aren't natives at all, being descendants of 15th century Scottish mercenaries, or to advise Gerry Adams and John Hume that their ethnic origins are suspect.

Conversely, if you're a Protestant and Unionist with a native-sounding name, will that give you a better residence qualification in the new Ireland? I'm not sure where you're going with this.

The logic of this *Blut und Boden* approach to politics would suggest that much of the population of the Central Belt of Scotland, descendants of 19th century Protestant and Catholic settlers from Ulster, should reconsider their perceived status as bona fide Scots. And maybe the descendants of the southern Irish who migrated northwards in the 19th century to get jobs in the new industries in Belfast should think about moving back.

The problem with the so-called planters isn't that they're planters, as most of them aren't (Antrim and Down weren't included in the Plantation), and it isn't that they're not Irish: it's just that they're the wrong sort of Irish, who give the wrong answers to the exam questions. Unionists can't "become" what they already are. But it's a shared future, isn't it, where we're supposed to celebrate our diversity, so **vive la difference**. I hope you agree.

Stephen Richards.

Éamon Smullen

Manus mentions Éamon Smullen in his article *Jack Jones Vindicated* (*Irish Political Review*, July, 2010). I first met him in the 1950s on a building site in London. Éamon at that time was writing a novel. A couple of us had writing ambitions so we were impressed that he had written 200 pages and was aiming for 300, whilst we could scarcely manage 10 pages before giving up. He casually mentioned that he had shot an informer in Dublin sometime in the past. I didn't take it in at the time, maybe seeing it as part of his novel.

Years later I read he had been arrested in England in a sting operation while attempting to buy arms. I kept up some correspondence with him when he was in prison.

In 1973 I had a play produced by the Abbey Theatre in Dublin and came to the attention of the Irish Times for interviews. A Irish Times journalist was getting together a letter asking for the release of Éamon from prison on the grounds that he would now no longer use physical forces as a political solution and would pursue constitutional politics. This journalist had at one time been in Cuba with him for few months as a volunteer building worker. I signed the letter, which appeared in the Irish Times because he was a fellow carpenter I had once worked with in the building trade.

At a press conference at the Abbey I was asked by the Irish Times drama critic why I was voicing Worker Association propaganda. This sounded like a witch-hunt so I ignored him. I had said in an Irish Times interview that I believed there were two nationalities in the North and gave examples of other countries with twin and multi-nationalities. But in the Irish Times the next morning this part of the interview was garbled beyond understanding in what looked like a printer's error. I protested to the Irish Times editor who told me the printers probably had had too much to drink that night.

On his release from prison I met Éamon at a social function in London at which there were a number of journalists like Mary Holland and one future editor of the Irish Times. Later I learnt Éamon was back in Dublin and on the wrong side, as far as I was concerned.

Wilson John Haire

But MacDowell's proposals are no more than a development of what Bertie Ahern started. There has been a commemorative stamp of the Plantation. And it came to Bertie in a moment of revelation that the contemptuous *Tipperary* was a patriotic Irish song:

"Paddy wrote a letter to his Irish Molly O
Saying if you don't receive it, please write
and let me know...
It's along way to Tipperary..."

Forty years ago, when we were roundly denounced for saying that the Ulster Protestants should be treated with respect as a distinct Irish nationality, we responded by saying that the nationalist configuration that was denouncing us was brittle and was likely to collapse first in the confrontation with Ulster Unionism that it was embarking upon. Were we wrong?

We can appreciate that Sinn Fein—a product of the atrocious 'Northern Ireland State', whose insoluble contradictions made it viable—should be feeling impatient and restricted by the situation resulting from their success. But the way out of it is not to take part in Sommetry gimmicks in the hope of undermining Unionism.

Why should Unionists be impressed by these gimmicks when they see nationalist Ireland intent on making nonsense of itself?

*

One thing which we established through twenty years of persistent political activity is that Unionist Ulster is not British in any politically viable way. We brought it to the point, around 1990, of being confronted with the decision whether to be British in a functional way or not. It decided not. But that decision did not make it Irish in any way that can be got at by nationalist propaganda.

To be British is to participate in the political life of the British state. British 'identity' detached from British politics is a will-o'-the-wisp. There are many thousands of people who dress like nuns who are British, and there are increasing numbers who wear burkas and who tell off critics, who want to ban them, for being un-British.

Britain, because of the Empire and the way it handled the ending of Empire, lives off the world to an extent that no other state does. Because of this, and of the effect of imperialism on its internal life, it is supplied with people and food from all parts of the world. It is above all else a State. And, as alien peoples come into it, its political system actively draws them

into its functioning. So, if you go up to the wearer of a burka and remonstrate with her because of her alien appearance, she's likely to look you straight in the eye and give you a lesson on the British Constitution.

She is part of the Constitution and she knows it. She votes in the election of the Government. Northern Ireland is not part of the Constitution. It is an Annex. And that is what it chose to be twenty years ago when, by pressing for it, it might have become functionally British.

Protestant Ulster has now been cut off from British political life for a century and a quarter. British politics stopped there in 1886, when an all-party alliance was formed against the first Home rule Bill. Party-political life within the state might have been restored in 1921, but Britain preferred, for reasons of its own, to cut the Six Counties off from Britain as well as Ireland, and the Protestants put up with it. As a result Northern Ireland is something left behind by Britain—and there are those in Britain who appreciate it as a reminder of the good old days: a kind of essential Britain, proof against the ravages of time, in which old-time values are preserved in aspic.

BRITISH-STYLE DEMOCRACY

A letter has recently been put in the British Public Record Office which, among other things, demonstrates the Constitutional absurdity of Northern Ireland. It is an Ambassadorial report by the British Ambassador in Northern Ireland, Oliver Wright, at the end of his posting, written on 6th March 1970.

A British Ambassador to a region of the British state!! Well, it isn't actually called that, but Wright is aware that that is what he is:

"Today I leave Belfast after rather more than six months as the representative of the United Kingdom Government in Northern Ireland. The appointment was the first of its kind; it followed the rioting and mayhem which characterised the province from October 1968 to August 1969... In nature rather more than ambassadorial and rather less than gubernatorial, it represented the increased concern which the UK Government had necessarily acquired in Northern Ireland through the commitment of the Armed Forces..."

Paragraph 3 begins:

"Ulster is a land inhabited by two minorities each with the defensive attitude of a minority. It is a tribal society and the two tribes, the colonists who did not want to be absorbed by the natives and the natives stranded by partition on the wrong side of the border, like and trust each

other about as well as dog and cat, Arab and Jew..."

When Britain denied the possibility of Irish independence, the argument was that those who wanted it were a very small minority of the electorate of the unitary British state. The Ulster Unionists were part of the vast majority in the state. Part of Ireland was let go in 1922. The Six Counties remained within the UK, in accordance with the will of the Protestant majority in them who were part of the vast majority in the UK state which desired its continuation. But, two generations later, the Ulster Protestants have somehow become a tribal minority.

Wright does not explain this miracle. But he comments:

"ironically enough, it has been the existence of British-style democracy based on universal adult franchise which has guaranteed and perpetuated a most un-British-style injustice towards the Catholic minority..."

So the Partition that let most of the nationalists in Ireland go their own way while allowing most of those who declared they were British to remain in Britain, somehow excluded the latter from British democracy and allowed them only a "British-style" democracy.

But did not Edmund Burke, the greatest influence on British political philosophy, show that functional representative government is not a "style", but a combination of particulars? The Six Counties were excluded from the particulars and allowed only the empty style.

Paragraph 4 tells how the two tribes enjoyed provoking each other in this British-style democracy.

Paragraph 5 tells how this mutual tribal provocation got out of hand in August 1969, and how "*Protestant blood is still simmering under the humiliation of seeing a government of the Protestant ascendancy dispensing justice to Catholics at Westminster's insistence in the name of equality of citizenship*"—the equal citizenship of British democracy and British-style democracy!

Paragraph 6 says: "*When the Army moved in, Ulster was on the brink of civil war*", but it is now settling down.

Paragraph 7 says that street politics is "*giving way to the politics of the ballot box*"—the ballot box of British-style democracy. But the ballot-box is being supplemented (subdued?) by "*Nominated bodies... representative of the whole community*", which are "*being set up to*

redress the built-in injustice of undiluted democracy as it works out in practice in this province".

The "nominated bodies representative of the whole community" are of course entirely unrepresentative bodies imposed in British-style democracy by the actual British democracy which had excluded the Six Counties from its sphere of operation two generations earlier.

The over-riding of British-style democracy by British democracy is cooling down the Civil Rights agitation. Its recent demonstrations were flops. *"The Opposition has returned to Stormont. But in winning its cause it has lost its former purpose and now seeks a new role"*. It is trying *"to form a united opposition"*, from various groupings, which is encouraging though the prospects are slim. A

"non-nationalist opposition... could give a lead in breaking down the sectarian divisions in Ulster politics. It deserves support. The decision of the Northern Ireland Labour Party to seek affiliation to the British Labour Party is rather at variance with this trend..."

The NILP was trying to get into the actual British democracy. Wright does not indicate why that was wrong. He only indicates that *British-style* democracy must continue.

In Paragraph 8 he says that, with the abolition of the B Specials and changes to the police: *"Physical power will have shifted from the Ulster Police to the British Army, political power from Stormont to Westminster."* But he does not see this as a reason for moving from British-style democracy to actual British democracy.

Paragraphs 10 to 14 have to do with the shepherding of British-style democracy by actual British democracy, and are sheer fantasy.

The final Paragraph, No. 15, breaks new ground:

"Since the partition of Ireland has produced a border and not a frontier... no report from Northern Ireland would be complete without reference with the South. I agree with Sir Andrew Gilchrist [Ambassador in Dublin] that to-day the North acts: the South re-acts. So long as we keep the North quiet, the South will give us no trouble, for Mr. Lynch also went to the edge of disaster last August—and stepped back in time. His courageous speech at his Party Conference in January marked a change from fantasy to realism about the Irish question. If he recognises, as he now does, that force cannot be used to solve the problem of partition, he must come to realise that the only prospect of Irish unity lies in the seduction of the North. The South will, I suspect, be a

long time a-wooing, if they ever start: the Irish tend to marry late, I believe..."

It is pleasant to find something to agree with after all that criticism. The Ambassador agrees with us that Lynch changed course in 1970—and who was better placed to know?

This view is completely at variance with the view worked up retrospectively by Lynchologists like Professors Keogh and Murphy.

We do not agree that the course of action set in motion by Lynch in August 1969 was necessarily disastrous. The way he changed course in 1970—with groundless prosecutions in a show trial—was certainly disastrous, and contributed to the emergence of the Provisional IRA as a force for the Northern Catholic community to rely on under the trauma of Dublin betrayal of what it had been encouraging for eight or nine months. But that was not the Ambassador's business. It happened two months after he left his colonial positing in the North. And Lynch's change of course was still cryptic in March 1970.

Editorial Digest

The Riots over the 12th July holiday certainly made the headlines. First it must be pointed out that there are riots or battles almost every night in Belfast—especially at "interface" points like the Short Strand. Still this latest lot were something special. (Though nowhere near as special as those orchestrated not so long ago by Sinn Fein—and long after the IRA ceasefire and the Good Friday Agreement.) The trouble started in front of the Ardoyne shops and spread to Broadway (between the Falls and the Village), the Ormeau Road, the Short Strand, and eventually to the Markets and the New Lodge.

It started as a most British of protests—a sit-down in Ardoyne, organised by the Greater Ardoyne Residents Collective (GARC), associated most famously with Republicans Martin Og Meehan and Paul Carson, with the aim of stopping an Orange march. The police dragged the protesters away over about a three-hour period and let the small group of marchers through. That was when the real trouble flared—especially when water cannons were seen—they are extraordinarily big and ugly things. Rioting continued for four nights with the police using their water cannons and plastic bullets. (There is another group led by Sinn Fein called the Concerned Ardoyne Residents Association (CARA) which put on a token protest and dispersed. It held an anti-violence protest

some days later, but hardly anyone turned up.)

As the police dispersed the protesters, several were arrested, and some have been charged with *"obstructive sitting"*! One outcome has been the attempt to involve social workers, not to tell people to behave themselves, but to help the police to arrest people and/or to get the parents of younger rioters into trouble. This seems to have been the brainchild of Sinn Fein's Carol Cullen MLA.

Martin McGuinness denounced the rioters from a height, describing the rioters as *"bogus patriots"* and *"rooted in the past"*. Local Sinn Fein MLA, Gerry Kelly, however, said it was wrong of the media to *"tar all the groups involved with the same brush"*. There have been many media claims that armed paramilitary groups were involved in the trouble. They have yet to present any evidence for that. We have no evidence, nor has anyone else so far as we can see, that the GARC or Mr. Meehan's political group, Network for Republican Unity (NRU), are involved in any armed activity.

Sinn Fein said that the (very impressive) rioting in Broadway was organised by Republican Sinn Fein. If so RSF has a far better organised operation in the Falls than anyone had guessed. Rioting (and the odd shooting) extended to Derry, Armagh, Lurgan and Coleraine—though with Coleraine who can tell if it was a riot or a normal night! In Lurgan the Belfast to Dublin train was attacked (not for the first time) and petrol bombed by about 30 men from a nearby Catholic estate. Sinn Fein made the, possibly inadvertent, admission that this estate was a *"dissident"* stronghold—something that is not supposed to exist! Though one is tempted to suggest to the people involved to question why someone might think that attacking the train was a good idea.

One thing the riots showed beyond doubt is that all talk of *"unrepresentative groups"* and disaffected gunmen is so much hogwash. Many of the Sinn Fein leadership are returning to Hibernian comfort zones, especially Adams and McGuinness, and are ceasing to be Republicans. But the Provos did seriously revive Republicanism in an area where most Catholics were Hibernian after many years of deliberate neglect by the establishments in Britain and in the South. The Sinn Fein leaders seem incapable of remaining Republican now that the Catholic people are in the ascendant and they themselves are in power. But many of those who fought and suffered as Republicans in the war are not prepared to subordinate themselves to a modern form of Redmondism. These are the so-called *dissidents*. Doubtless they know that the Irish

Volunteers were the "dissidents" when Redmond took the great majority with him, and sent them to France to kill Germans, when he split the Volunteers.

The Belfast papers responded to the riots as one would expect. The *Irish News* had pages of horror and called for support for the PSNI. The *Belfast Telegraph* was horrified about "our" image abroad and the effect this would have on the economy. The *News Letter* generally ignored the thing and printed page after page of happy children, good-natured dogs, bands, picnics and a general carnival atmosphere—all decked out in red, white and blue. The dozens of photos were from readers and a competition was arranged.

Martin Óg Meehan told the Belfast Telegraph, under their heading "Apologist for the Rioters" on 15th July:

"I was caught with guns and served a twelve-year sentence. I'd be an absolute hypocrite if I went out and criticised somebody for going out and using guns against state forces. I'm not going to put myself out there and say I condemn this because because I would be an absolute hypocrite. That's me personally. But as a group we have spoken to everyone who is concerned about this community, that we do not want any violence whatsoever and that's why we organised a peaceful and dignified protest which we carried out to the letter."

It is interesting that one of the places that missed out on trouble was Portadown. The local Drumcree Orange march (a week before the 12th, and to do with the Somme rather than the Boyne) is an annual festival of fighting as the march insists on going the Catholic Garvaghy Road. This year there were talks with both Orangemen and Catholic leaders, and the Parades Commission re-routed the parade and there was no bother. On the other hand, the Parades Commission insisted that the Orangemen be allowed to wind up the Catholics in Ardoyne. As Mr. Meehan said:

"I just bring it straight back back to the Orange Order's door. They are the people who applied for the parade past Ardoyne through the Parades Commission, who subsequently permitted it. The Parades Commission are totally detached from the reality of living in Ardoyne, as are the Orange Order."

Mary McAleese In the last issue we printed a comment from Tom Cooper about President McAleese not attending a ceremony commemorating Irish soldiers killed in Lebanon, the Congo, etc., while going out of her way to turn up at anything to do with the Irishmen who went to kill Germans and Turks in 1914. Never mind the Germans and Turks had never done them or us any

harm. Indeed, they had never done the English any harm either. And she referred to her favourite themes of "historic baggage" and "the oppressive weight of history". Well, she's been at it, or not at it, again.

Lieut. General Dermot Earley, recently in charge of the armed forces in the South, was buried with full military honours in Newbridge, Co. Kildare. The Taoiseach, lots of Ministers and army brass attended. Earley was not only a senior officer, but a very popular one. He was also a good footballer and played for his native Roscommon with distinction. And so attended all the senior GAA officials as well as those from his own county. But Mary McAleese couldn't be bothered to spare the time and sent her *aide-de-camp*! One has to wonder what it is she thinks she is president of.

Then on July 23rd a ceremony was held at Casement Aerodrome to remember those soldiers who served with the United Nations in the Congo 50 years ago, about 40 of them died there. A thousand veterans turned up, again along with the Taoiseach and senior ministers. But the President had better things to do. She was the guest of honour at a passing out parade for PSNI officers and had her picture in all the Northern papers, and interviews on local TV as well as RTE. (She also took part in a similar event last January.)

She spoke about the PSNI as "the sacred custodians of the present and the future". She talked about the unprecedented co-operation between the Guards and the PSNI. Unfortunately it was there in the past also, resulting in the 'success' of the British bombings of Dublin and Monaghan. She denounced paramilitarism saying that this was "the source of killings in the past"! And she referred to her favourite themes of "historic baggage" and "the oppressive weight of history". She is the President for the Redmondite tradition in Ireland.

Mrs. McAleese pointed to the "completion" of devolution as the main factor in making a visit by Queen Elizabeth now possible. The crawling attitude by politicians like Brian Cowen and the leadership of the Guards towards Britain may be a much greater factor. In a recent speech, British Foreign Secretary, William Hague, talked about protecting Britain's interests by forming close relationships with other states rather than by getting involved in conflicts. In the course of this he seemed to take for granted that Ireland would be a "partner" in all this.

All this coincided with this columnist's talk with a Protestant working class Trade Unionist. He stated that, if dynamic people like Charles Haughey were about the place, even at the time

they didn't hold office, the British Government would never have allowed something like the Good Friday Agreement to happen. But now they saw Irish politicians of any stature as being in their pockets. Who is to say that that analysis is wrong?

In an interview with RTE's Tommy Gorman she spoke extensively about the forthcoming visit of the Queen of England—an event that both of them took for granted would happen, and conveyed that certainty to the people of Ireland. It's going to happen and there is nothing you can do about. We will return to that matter next month.

The Royal Irish Regiment is at the moment in the final phase of training for yet another posting to Afghanistan. It is the last Northern Ireland regiment. Its 1st Battalion (full time) is based in Wiltshire and its 2nd is part-time and based in the North. The *News Letter* ran a series of interviews with the soldiers. The Battalion has had to top up with 70 reservists and recruits from all over the world, especially it seems from Fiji, a place where recruiting sergeants are very active these on behalf of all regiments.

A striking thing that emerges is the number of soldiers whose fathers and grandfathers served with the regiment and its predecessors. Something that Protestants have told this columnist was normal. One man said that he is the first member of the family not to wear the uniform going back at least to the Boer War. This goes to explain the reverence in Protestant Ulster, and indeed until thirty years ago in Catholic Ulster, for the British armed forces. It doesn't explain why there is no enthusiasm at all for "joining the colours" these days.

It's Only Money: Newton Emerson (Irish News, 17th June): "It's (Saville's cost) seems almost reasonable. The final bill after 12 years is less than Invest Northern Ireland now spends every year. Last September an independent review found that Invest Northern Ireland (compared with the IDA, etc., in the South) delivered no net jobs increase or other economic benefits since its creation. Where is the outrage at that." Mind you, Invest Northern Ireland is a misnomer. Its purpose was not to benefit the people or the economy of the North, but rather to prepare the functional state industries for privatisation—to feather nests.

The head of Invest Northern Ireland is one Stephen Kingon, past President of the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry and former Managing Partner of Pricewaterhouse Coopers in Northern Ireland. He is a non-executive director of Allied Irish Banks, Milvan Ltd., Baird Group, Anderson Spratt Group, and other

companies and associations of businessmen too numerous to mention. His main role at INI, to which he has been recently reappointed, is the development of the private sector. But it is far easier to turn companies such as the Water Board, which the State has developed, into private companies for the benefit of his mates than to seriously redevelop the private sector.

For instance, there is still plenty of capacity for development at Harland and Woolf at a time when the world, especially China and India, is crying out for ships. In spite of the recession, the Industrial Development Agency in the South is still beavering away at attracting investment—China, for example, looks like it will develop a multi-billion commercial European hub in Athlone. But that kind of thing would be a bit too much like hard work for the boys from the North.

Army Council: Fine Gael leader, Enda Kenny, visited Stormont on 21st June. Kenny is noted in the South for saying some daft things. But his insistence at Stormont that Fine Gael could not work politically with Sinn Fein until the IRA Army Council was disbanded takes the biscuit. (Not that Sinn Fein is exactly enthusiastic about working with Fine Gael!) But, of course it's OK for the poor Northern Unionists and Loyalists to share power with Sinn Fein.

But that's not the main point. The existence of the Army Council is what keeps the whole thing together in the North, no matter that it has no obvious public face. The 'Independent' Monitoring Commission (in practice the voice of MI5, the PSNI and the Garda Special Branch) has said the Army Council was *"no longer operational or functional"*. Indeed! It just keeps an eye on things—and someone has to. Lord Alderdice of the IMC said disbandment was like *"waking somebody up to give them a sleeping tablet"*.

Responding to Kenny, Gerry Adams said:

"This has nothing to do with the IRA. The IRA has long since left the stage. So quite frankly, and I told Enda this, most democrats, nationalists and republicans don't trust Fine Gael on the national question or on the North... We are pleased to have Fine Gael here. They're not here often enough otherwise they wouldn't make such silly statements. For the Fine Gael leader to say such silly things on a visit to Parliament Buildings and at a meeting in which the only government Ministers present are Sinn Fein Ministers, only feeds into those on the unionist and on the fringes of the nationalist side who are opposed to the peace process."

Then nine days later Mr. Kenny changed his mind. On the basis of what Gerry Adams said, and backed up by

Martin McGuinness, Mr. Kenney decided that the Army Council issue did not, after all, get in the way of dealing politically with Sinn Fein. Nothing in particular happened during those nine days.

The Celtic League is from the same stable as the anti-revisionist Finsbury Communist Association. Its June/July, 2010, issue had the following heartwarming story:

"births, deaths and marriages were registered in England and Wales after 1st July 1837, they were not registered in Ireland until after 1st January 1864. The Irish, up to then, were not worth counting.

"...However, England was to pay for its refusal to register Irish people until 1864. The British government brought in an old age pension of five shillings a week in 1909. Although only those over 70 were entitled to the pension, there was no registered evidence that anyone actually aged only over age 45 was not over 70.

"Thousands of Irish people said that they were over 70 and collected their five bob. If they survived another 30 years the President of Ireland gave them a bounty of £5 in cash for apparently reaching 100. The truth was not to become apparent until the death statistics emerged for the period from 1950 onwards. (Annals of Actuarial Science, Volume 4, Part 1)"

Greenhouse Gas Emissions! The Government in Dublin is committed to reducing greenhouse gases by 20% by 2020. At a recent conference by the environment agency, Teagasc, it was pointed out the Irish agriculture sector was the only sector on target. Furthermore, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation has said that Ireland's grass based production has one of the lowest carbon footprints in the world. Yet the sector is under pressure to reduce further.

The problem seems to be that farm animals will insist on farting and belching! Dr. John Gilliland of Teagasc has recommended genetic breeding to reduce the time between birth and slaughter. God knows what else it will reduce (or increase), but that he would not regard as his business.

Farmers, at least at the moment, would not be averse to reducing beef output since most of them are making a loss, at least that is what they say. But there would be an inevitable knock on effect for those who work in the slaughter, meat production and processing industries. Most of these are rural based and there would be unemployment and yet another blow to the rural economy.

Sinn Fein Cllr. Cora Harvey has been elected Mayor of Donegal. In the 2009

local elections she topped the poll in Stranorlar with 2,226 first preference votes.

Fianna Fail opened an office in Crossmaglen's North Street on 22nd July. Addressing 120 people in a local hotel, Brian Cowen said that he did not rule out his party contesting elections in the North. Earlier Margaret Ritchie, leader of the SDLP, when asked about a possible merger with Fianna Fail said: *"not on my watch"*. Many SDLP members, insofar as there are many SDLP members, are in favour of a merger, if for no other reason than this is the only way they can think of bashing Sinn Fein. But if Fianna Fail does properly organise, it is likely that they will heed the advice given at their Newcastle, Co. Down, recent meeting by the sympathetic former leader of the Ulster Unionist Council. He advised them not to set up in competition with Sinn Fein, but to plow their own furrow, and relate their position to 1798 Republicanism.

Local Fianna Fail activist and former IRA prisoner, Martin McAlister, said: *"We wanted the Taoiseach up here because he is our Taoiseach too."* He said that Fianna Fail had 70 members—*"It is a growing membership in the area."*

Mr. Cowen was joined by Minister for Justice, Dermot Ahern; Minister for Social Protection, Eamon O Cuiv; and Cavan-Monaghan TD, Margaret Conlon. Fianna Fail now has Cummain in Queens and Magee colleges, and 'forums' in counties Armagh, Fermanagh and Down.

UDA commander, Jackie McDonald, is the most coherent of the Loyalist leaders. He is, miraculously, a survivor of the old school. He is currently seeking regular meetings with Republicans and was instrumental in getting loyalist support for immigrants when a rogue leader of the UVF in South Belfast was organising attacks on them. He has banned the British National Party from organising in Belfast. He is now an advocate of a total amnesty following the war. He doesn't have a lot of time for the victims' industry.

Gun Deaths. To get things into some perspective, there have been 200 people killed in the South since the time of the Good Friday Agreement—mostly in gang wars in Dublin and Limerick. For these there has been a total of 24 convictions.

32-COUNTY 12th. At the McGill Summer School in Donegal on 21st July Michael McDowell, former leader of the Progressive Democrats, advocated that the 12th July, Orange Day, be made a public holiday in the South as it is in the North. *"Are we in the South warm*

towards the Orange tradition? Do we respect it? Have we created a society and a culture in which the Orange tradition finds itself in a cold place?... You don't have to be an out and out revisionist to start to doubt the truth of everything we value."

Mr McDowell used to be described in Leinster House as someone who could start a row even if he was all by himself in a room. But our favourite memory of him is his behaviour when he lost his Dáil seal. He marched straight out of the count and announced he was leaving politics (again!). Never mind consulting his PD colleagues. Never mind that he was the Party leader. Never mind that the results for the rest of his Party were not yet in. His Party is no more and that is to a large extent his fault.

We do not have the relevant issues of the papers to hand, but the columnists in the next day's unionist papers, the *Belfast Telegraph* and *Belfast News Letter*, rejected Mr. McDowell's proposal. One of them testily pointed out that a whole lot of Unionists were not great supporters of Orange day or of anything to do with the Orange Order. For the record, the Orange Order was formed in 1795—long after the Battle of the Boyne and all the other great occasions it affects to commemorate. The Orangemen were the stormtroopers of the Anglican Irish Parliament and worked to suppress any movement for democratic reform of the aristocratic Irish Parliament and the granting of freedom of religion to Catholics.

They took part in the reign of terror against reformers, especially against Presbyterians—in or out of the United Irishmen. They opposed the Act of Union as they did not trust the British to continue suppressing the Presbyterians and the Catholics. That is the "Orange tradition".

Mr. McDowell nevertheless has his supporters. Fine Gael, seems to be taking up his case. A spokesman for Fine Gael told the *Belfast Telegraph*, 26th July, that it was an idea his party would consider. "We are very committed to ensuring that all the traditions of Ireland are respected... This is one of the ideas that should be considered in that context." Actually the Orange Order is in terminal decline and that is a process that should be allowed to take its course.

Roy Garland took up the matter in his *Irish News* column on the same day, railing against single identities saying that this was the NAZI way. He waxed lyrical about the freedom-giving legacies of the Glorious Revolution and the Williamite victory at the Boyne. In fact, the Glorious Revolution gave us all the penal laws and slavery and the Boyne led to the Treaty of Limerick which promised religious freedom but was torn up as

soon as the ships carrying the Irish Army were out of sight across the horizon. Roy Garland seemed to be broadening his mind over the last year or so. But he has fallen into bad company. Along with Robin Bury of the Reform Movement (who hates everything Irish), he is advocating Ireland's return to the British Commonwealth. Still it's a step up from his old Tara days when they advocated driving Catholics across the border.

Victims: The Eames/Bradley proposals had all but been forgotten about by mid-June. But the publicity around the Saville Report seems to have given the former Bishop Eames a new lease of life and he reckons that he is relevant again. Denis Bradley seems to have gone off and become sensible, making proposals about the right of Northern MPs to sit in the Dail and about the right of Northerners to vote in Presidential elections.

The main victims body, The Commission for Victims and Survivors, is a bit worried. This body was set up and funded by Stormont. They are apprehensive that Saville could result in a general amnesty and that all families of people killed in the war may be given £12,000 as proposed by Eames/ Bradley.

That, coupled with a few high-profile enquiries such as Ballymurphy or Pat Finnuccane, could bring the whole investigation programme to a halt. Plus the Historical Enquiries Team is to be taken over by the police who can probably be relied on to do little or nothing, as usual. Then the otherwise thriving, and often lucrative, victims industry could come crashing down. That, as they say in Belfast, could give everyone's head peace.

Brian Lucey's Deposits

continued

John Martin Says: July 7th, 2010 at 7:21 pm

John Martin is my real name.

Why can you not reply to my question on this site?

Brian Lucey Says: July 7th, 2010 at 8:03 pm

So you say. email me...

John Martin Says: July 7th, 2010 at 8:33 pm

I didn't think this was a social networking site. You still haven't explained why it is necessary to have private email correspondence nor—more importantly—have you indicated if you still believe that Anglo could sell its 28 billion deposit book for 21 billion.

Brian Lucey Says: July 7th, 2010 at 9:33 pm

John

No, its not. Heres the thing. I have

explained, time an again, that sales of deposit books are possible. What can one get from them? Another question. More than zero anyhow. I have explained time and again that the anglo-philes assert without figures or consistency in those they give while the anglo-phobes put the analyses out there. Tull [a blogger] and his minions clearly have some sort of jones for me—which means im winning! So, no, i cant be bothered giving them more troll bait. anyhow im off on holidays tomorrow.

So, tull and all the rest reading from the FF "what to say when challenged on Anglo—Ch 3 : Dig up old stories and latch on like a rotter" playbook, if you are genuienly interested in the academics of this issue, email. If not, stop amending a new anglo version of Godwins law.

Later....

Gavins Says: July 7th, 2010 at 10:04 pm

Really does sound like you believe the government are out to get you Brian. I am astounded that you still honestly believe Anglo could still sell it's deposit book. No-one on this site, the majority of whom you can't accuse of being Nama or ff supporters have backed you up on this. It really does begger belief but I am not wasting my time debating it anymore. People can make their own minds up.

Gavin s Says: July 7th, 2010 at 10:05 pm

P.s. Enjoy your holiday.

John Martin Says: July 7th, 2010 at 10:20 pm

In your article of April 1st in the Irish Independent you clearly said Anglo could sell the 28 billion in customer deposits for 21 billion. You've avoided my question regarding whether you've changed your position on this with some childish bluster.

Of course, deposit books have some value. But you are, in effect, valuing the Anglo deposit book at 49 billion. You are expecting the prospective buyer to take on the liability of the 28 billion and then pay an extra 21 billion for the pleasure. A prospective buyer (i.e. another bank) might be interested in the 28 billion in customer deposits. It gives such a prospective buyer new customers which will enable it to lend and therefore generate new interest income. But such a prospective buyer would expect Anglo to take care of the liability.

I think it is best to break the deal into two steps. In the first step the prospective buyer would expect Anglo to give it 28 billion in exchange for taking on the liabilities of the customer deposit book. In the second step the buyer would pay Anglo an amount for taking over the customer deposits. I doubt if this amount would be much more than one billion. It would certainly not be anywhere near 49 billion.

Enjoy your holiday.

Eoin Bond... Says: *July 7th, 2010 at 10:22 pm*
@ Brian Lucey

is the key to selling a deposit book for a material amount of money some sort of third-secret-of-fatima type riddle that can only be discussed in private? Jesus man, stop digging, and stop 'disappearing' whenever people ask questions about it...

Btw, as regards your earlier contention, essentially, that the Sun-day Ind-ep-end-ent was full of shizzle, wasn't it their sister paper the Ir-ish Ind-ep-end-ent that published your opinion piece about selling on deposit books for fantastical amounts of money? Was that the reason we shouldn't have paid any attention to your nonsense back then? Unfortunately none of us on here have a newspaper opinion page as an outlet to tell people that you can't sell a deposit book in the manner you have suggested, and that's probably the reason a lot of people "latch on like a rotter". Ask the Indo for a spot to correct your error and all will be forgiven.

[There followed a post from someone defending Lucey's record on other subjects and then:]

tullmcadoo Says: *July 7th, 2010 at 10:37 pm*

Ironically, a deposit taking franchise is extremely valuable if it can collect cheap and sticky deposits in a cost efficient manner either through branches or the internet and grow that deposit base steadily. But it must be able to deploy those deposits into higher yielding assets to yield a steady spread.

But Anglo had none of these features. The deposits taken in by Anglo were not cheap, not particularly sticky and as we now know earned no steady spread. So there was no annuity income that could be present valued that somebody would pay for.

It is the deptsoti gathering institution that has the value not the deposits per se. I was merely trying to establish how you got to your numbers.

I was also disappointed at the the attitude towards Alan Aherne. The guy is a valuable resource to have in the DOF and I hope played a key part in improving NAMA from the original iteration where the govt and banks appeared ready to connive at 20% haircut to the current version of a 40-50% haircut. If you could only realise that the constant forensic analysis of KW and others all on this site has resulted in a better outcome for the taxpayer.

Anyway enjoy your holidays. Perhaps you would like to come along to the next Dail CC meeting.

Eoin Bond... Says: *July 7th, 2010 at 10:47 pm*
@ BOH

there's a difference between having an opinion and it turning out to be incorrect, anyone is capable of and allowed to do that. And as you say, Prof Lucey has added at other times some very valuable

analysis to the debate. However, the deposit selling concept is complete fantasy, based in little or no reality, and there has yet to be a proper correction of this issue. Even today he seems to suggest that he was only a little bit off on his figures, or that there is some missing academic context that can only be discussed in private which will clear it all up! Unfortunately there are probably still people out there saying "why the hell have we not sold the deposits like that Lucey fella suggested!". It belongs in a skit on Apres Match (regular watchers will understand!), not in the Irish Indo, Irisheconomy.ie and on Newstalk.

@ Tull
+1

Alan Ahearne "made his choice"??? Jesus, the guy tried to honestly help the country out at a time of crisis and he's painted out to be some sort of academic turncoat or mercenary. Depressing stuff.

[EDITORIAL NOTE:

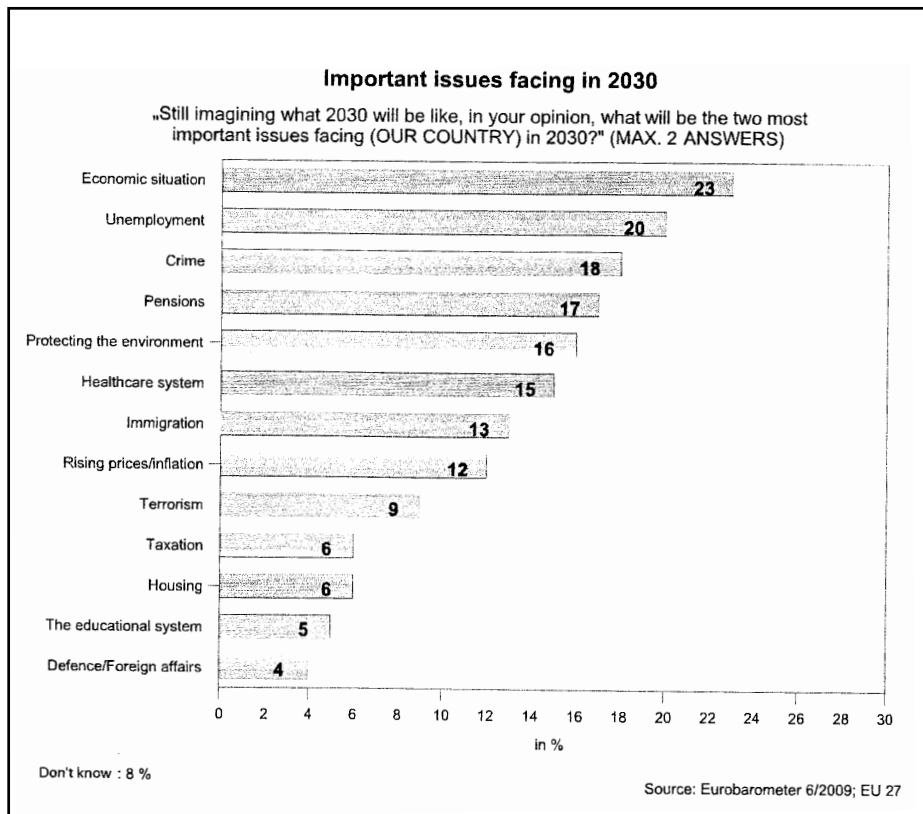
Deposits cannot in fact be "sold" *per se*. In common law jurisdictions each deposit holder has a contract with the bank. That contract cannot be overridden. However, deposits can be valued in the context of one bank taking over another. It is in only in this sense that deposits can be "sold". In other words they can only be "sold" as part of the overall assets and liabilities of a bank.]

EU: Action Stations! *continued*

by two extracts from it.

It provides the following table of a survey on the priorities of the citizens of the EU, a table which speaks for itself—economic issues are top of the list and defence concerns bottom of the list. And

this does indeed confirm what anybody could guess who had spoken for about two minutes to half a dozen people anywhere in Europe. After all, there is no prospect of any military assault on Europe in the near future.



However the Reflection Group knows better and it reverses the concerns of the citizens as follows:

"Overall, the EU suffers from one overarching structural limitation: the fundamentally national nature of European defence systems. Without military resources of its own, the EU depends on the voluntary contributions of its Member States and these are often

inadequate. National military resources are still often based on territorial defence against a land invasion, even in Member States where such an invasion is improbable. In general, there is insufficient investment in the type of capabilities needed to respond to new security situations (rapid deployment forces, strategic air transport, helicopters, communications, military police). With 1.8 million soldiers under arms—half a

million more than the US—the EU is not capable of deploying a 60,000-strong rapid intervention force and it finds it hard to deliver a 5,000-strong force for a Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission. In fact, 70 per cent of European land forces are unfit to operate abroad, when nowadays conflicts require deployable and sustainable expeditionary forces. In general, the nature and scope of CSDP missions have tended to be piecemeal and forced by exigencies rather than responding to an overarching plan or strategy. Furthermore, the EU has no common funding for its missions. Among the Member States there is no fair burden-sharing, leading to disincentives against participating in military missions."

Where does this come from? It reads like an arms industry PR handout—once issued in a hurry. A man from Mars could easily wonder about this overwhelming need for Europe to send armies all over the world and he might ponder why. He would not find the reasons for this alarming aspiration in this Report or in anything the EU has actually issued.

The Report does not attempt to give a rationale for all these new military arrangements. It does not even try to give an example of the EU's necessary and successful intervention anywhere so far. For the very good reason that none could be found.

Yet this is the mindset of the great and the good in Europe at the moment. What planet are they on? And what sort of planet would they create here?

And at the same time they can go on to sound the most benign people in the world as if they were group monks in a monastery. The Report concludes with something that's almost a prayer:

"The EU is more than a common market. It is also a union of values, embodied in a commitment to human rights, peace, freedom and solidarity. These values have universal significance. With the support of European citizens, scientists and politicians at all levels, the EU can lead international efforts to address major global challenges, including social cohesion, climate change, sustainable development, and peace between nations."

Now, where exactly does the new model army of the EU come into all this? The only value it could possibly relate to is the last item. The fact is that, wherever the EU and its members have become engaged, the military intervention has exacerbated war, not peace between nations. It has not helped with peace in the Middle East, the Balkans or Afghanistan. By action and inaction it has exacerbated all these situations. And if the US engages with Iran it will go along with that as well.

Peace between nations" is a hollow, hypocritical value as far as the EU is concerned at the moment. And all the high sounding proclamations of think-tanks such as the 'Reflection Group' cannot obscure this basic fact. The EU has become a source of conflict and war between nations. That is what it now has to offer the world.

The real peacemakers in this world at present are states such as Turkey and Brazil. And they are so without any need to make plans for intervention anywhere and everywhere at the drop of a hat. And they are also among the most rapidly growing economies in the world, also without any military plans for the world. These countries seem to have the now weird notion that the vast majority of states in the world can get on with each other, given half a chance.

The EU badly needs a Dwight Eisenhower who knew something about war, enough to warn against it as he did the US 50 years ago:

"In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals so that security and liberty may prosper together" (17.1.1961).

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE RANCH....

"European Commission president José Manuel Barroso says the future of the European project is at stake as EU leaders debate measures to toughen its budget rules. Casting the discussion on the union's economic governance in historic and moral terms, Mr Barroso said the commission would advance legislative proposals in early September to strengthen the rule book.

"The proposal will be published the month before a group, chaired by European Council president Herman Van Rompuy, finalises its own governance plan—an apparent reflection of the commission's concern to avoid any undercutting of its right to initiate EU law.

"Mr. Barroso was addressing the European Parliament yesterday at its monthly plenary session. MEPs are discussing plans for the EU's new diplomatic service and proposals to introduce pan-European regulators to oversee banks, insurance firms and financial markets....

"In his question-and-answer session with MEPs, Mr. Barroso said it was important the commission, the parliament and the council of EU governments worked "consistently and in a spirit of close co-operation" to approve the new governance proposals. "What is at stake is the future of the euro and you could say to some extent the future of our European project", he said." (Irish Times, 7 July 2010).

I doubt if Mr. Barroso has a sense of irony. A short time after he and others were talking and writing to promote the Lisbon Treaty as if they had swallowed a thesaurus of positive ways of putting their case to show that the Treaty would do wonders for EU unity and integration, here we have him saying that the EU could possibly collapse over a plan for greater co-ordination to oversee banks and other financial institutions. What a fragile structure it turns out to be. If he is crying wolf his credibility will simply evaporate—even more.

He also implies that the Commission might lose its right to initiate legislation. If that is a possibility and if it happens the European Commission has lost its only real *raison d'être* and might as well pack its bags. Mr. Barroso seems to imply that the way of coping with that possibility is 'to get in first' with Commission proposals. That is pathetic as it is effectively accepting that such will happen.

No doubt Mr. Barroso would agree with the great military plans for Europe outlined in the Report described above. And these plans are to be based on an EU that he thinks might collapse if these mundane bank regulations are not agreed!

IRISH TIMES DISPLAYS ITS IGNORANCE

The *Irish Times* editorialised as follows on 15th July:

"The most important founding principle of the European Union, indeed, its *raison d'être* from the outset—the common market—is about to be broken by the European Commission's decision on Tuesday to allow each member state to go its own way regarding the cultivation of genetically modified (GM) crops."

This assertion displays total and comprehensive ignorance of what the EU was about. If its *raison d'être* was simply about a common market, why was the great promoter of markets and the single market, the UK, excluded from it when it was set up? This great promoter of common markets was not only excluded, it also set up another market in opposition to it in 1957, the European Free Trade Association. The latter was set up to destroy the EU! Why was one market set up to destroy

another market if it was all about a common market?

And why does this particular common market need the whole paraphernalia of the EU—Commissions, Parliament(s), several presidents, a Foreign service, an army as outlined above, a Lisbon Treaty etc etc. in order to function? These are questions that never occur to our present day Euro-philes.

Common markets have existed ever since the first tribesman in the proverbial jungle saw the point of exchanging some of his particular goods (or services) with

his neighbour(s) and will continue if and when there is an intergalactic trade in goods and for the same obvious reasons. Common markets exist wherever and whenever people see the need to exchange goods. Was it necessary to set up the EU in 1956 to facilitate this being done across Europe?

This is the absurd logic of the *Irish Times* view of the EU. They would be right if they said that this is what the EU has *become*. But there is world of difference between what was and what is: but to a wordmonger there is no apparent difference.

And the difference between what was and what is has made nonsense of why the EU was set up in the first place. It was set up like all political projects to deal with a particular political issue which in this case was to save Europe from the consequences of any more interference by the UK, in pursuit of its balance of power game in Europe, after that strategy had led to the destruction of Europe—twice. Once that *raison d'être* melted away, the need for the European project has done likewise, and we are left with the haggling and huckstering of the market place.

Jack Lane

August 27th/30th

Féile Dúthalla 2010 Celebrates Heritage Week 2010

Friday, August 27th

Book Launch 19.00

An Argument Defending the Right of the Kingdom of Ireland (1645)

by **Conor O'Mahony**

First Publication in English
Introduced by **John Minahane**

This unique work is a translation from Latin for the first time of the first case made for Irish Independence - in 1645.

Venue:
**Bob's Upstairs Bar, Percival Street,
Kanturk, Co. Cork.**

Time: 19.00

Admission is free & everyone is welcome to attend

followed by

Famine or Holocaust? How Many Died?

Jack Lane of the Aubane Historical Society will give a talk on this subject on the opening night of the Féile Heritage Weekend. It will be followed by a chaired Q&A session.

Venue:
**Bob's Upstairs Bar, Percival Street,
Kanturk, Co. Cork.**

Time: 20.30 to 22.30

Saturday, August 28th

Canon Sheehan - A Turbulent Priest

Brendan Clifford will deliver a talk on the famed and celebrated writer, the Doneraile Parish Priest **Canon Sheehan**

who was born in Mallow in the 1850's.

It will be followed by a chaired Q&A session.

Venue:
**Bob's Upstairs Bar, Percival Street,
Kanturk, Co. Cork.**

Time: 19.00 to 21.00

Admission is free & everyone is welcome to attend

followed by

The Soul of the Songsmith

A musical celebration of the ancient bardic tradition of folk songwriting and musical composition. This acoustic music concert with singer/songwriters & musicians **Eugene Brosnan, Searlais Ó Bhriain & Gearóid Ó Duinnín, Eoin Jordan, and Tadhg de Brún** will feature the contemporary work of some of our foremost local songsmiths & musicians and will also include compositions from local songwriters/poets Edward Walsh, Dan Sheahan, Bill Flynn, Bill Cody & others from the Duhallow district covering the past two hundred years or so.

Venue: Bob's Upstairs Bar, Percival Street, Kanturk, Co. Cork.

Time: 22.00 / 00.30 (doors at 21.30)

Admission is by ticket only available from the box office (tel: 087 9484169 / email debrunts@iol.ie) priced €10.

Please note that this venue is small and intimate so advance purchase is a good, no great, idea. Tickets are currently available from the box office.

Thanks in advance for your co-operation and support for this event.

Sunday, August 29th

Guided Bus Tour of Clara Mountain

Fr. Seán Tucker, author, antiquarian and historian from Ballydaly, Co. Cork, will lead this bus tour commencing at c.14.00 hrs in Millstreet Town. Seán has an in-depth knowledge of his homeplace as is well documented in his two recent publications - *The Origin and Development of the Parish of Millstreet & A View from Clara Mountain* - *The Poetry of Geoffrey Fionn Ó Dálaigh* (tbc).

**The tour commences at 14.00 at
Millstreet's Carnegie Hall**

The tour ticket is €10 per person which includes bus, handouts and the complimentary light picnic and refreshments. However donations and/or sponsorship for the event, which is costing in the region of €500, are encouraged and gratefully accepted. Tickets are currently available from the booking line at 087 9484169 087 9484169 or email debrunts@iol.ie

Please book your seat as early as possible as there are only a limited no. of seats available (35 seater bus) on a first come first served basis.

Monday, August 30th

Traditional Music Session

A session of traditional music celebrating the music, song, storytelling and dance of the Duhallow & Sliabh Luachra districts with some of the areas leading local musicians, singers, storytellers & dancers.

**Venue: Scully's Bar, Newstreet,
Newmarket, Co. Cork**

Time: 20.30 to 22.30

Tá an cead isteach saor agus tá ceád míle fáilte de gach duine. Admission is free and all are welcome.

The Madam With A Record And A Retractable Minister

For a brief moment in June it looked like the Fianna Fáil Minister for State Martin Mansergh was determined to take his courage in his hands and call a spade a spade when—as the *Irish Times* itself headlined (while suppressing the most dangerous example he had given)—he called it "*a dangerous paper*". This occasioned the following letter, which I emailed on 15th June:

"The report (June 14th) of the reasons advanced on RTE radio (June 13th) by Minister of State Martin Mansergh, as to why he regarded the *Irish Times* as '*quite a dangerous paper*', omitted any mention of the third example he cited: '*I well remember the article on the 6th of December 1994 which scuppered the Fianna Fail—Labour Government, which was all about ...*' At this point Dr. Mansergh was interrupted, hauled back into a polemic about the 1990 Jim Duffy press conference, and not afforded any opportunity to elaborate on his 1994 charge. Since the Minister of State was referring to your own lead story of that date, it is only appropriate that he should now be invited to provide an opinion piece so as to explain himself."

While following the convention of addressing my letter to "*Madam*", it was not, of course, sent to her, but to her Letters Editor for publication. This, the latter refused to do, but instead passed the letter to Madam herself, who sent me the following extraordinary email on 16th June:

"Thank you for your email. I had already spotted the inadequate reporting myself and the reporter has been spoken to. I am very conscious that we should report accurately criticisms of ourselves."

When the *Irish Times* not only persisted with its refusal to print Mansergh's most serious charge, but compounded the offence on 19th June by once again headlining, without any elaboration, his apparently gratuitous namecalling, I thought it only fair to draw his attention to Madam Editor's response. Accordingly, on the morning of 19th June itself, I emailed him:

"As you can see from the attached, I have received a most bizarre email from Geraldine Kennedy [to which I've no intention of replying]—a case of the Boss shooting her [non] messenger subordinate. If Madam Editor was sincere about wanting criticisms reported accurately, one or more of the

following should have transpired:

[1] My letter—submitted to the letters editor for publication—should have been published;

[2] A correction, to complete an accurate report of what you had said, should have been published;

[3] You should have been invited to submit an opinion piece.

Clearly, neither [1] nor [2] have occurred, and I'm assuming the same re [3]. But as I do not wish to do her an injustice, please correct me if I'm wrong re [3]. Madam has surely compounded her sin of omission this morning by highlighting your description once again in 'This Week They Said', without alluding to ANY of your supporting evidence. "

Unknown to myself, Martin Mansergh was about to give his own response that same Saturday, by caving in to Madam and playing her game. Obviously panicked by her repeated use of his description—and "*dangerous*" is indeed a dangerous word—instead of insisting on accurate reporting of his justification for using it, Mansergh sought to take the harm out of the word by explaining it away. "**Mansergh clarifies 'dangerous' paper remark**" was Madam's headline on 21 June, as Michael Parsons reported:

"Martin Mansergh has said his description of the *Irish Times* as '*a dangerous paper*' was intended as a warning to political colleagues rather than a criticism of the press... Speaking to the media in Tipperary on Saturday, Dr. Mansergh said while he was very glad to have been a contributor to the *Irish Times* for four years and still enjoys reading it, there were times when the paper printed stories '*that have a potentially explosive effect*'. He believed the opinion poll was one of those."

While it was the opinion poll leading to the Fine Gael leadership challenge that had occasioned Mansergh's radio charge, the three further examples he gave shot rapidly up the danger scale to the most dangerous. In their 2007 book *Shaping the Future: How Social Partnership Shaped Ireland's Economic Success*, former *Irish Times* journalist Pdraig Yeates, with co-authors Tim Hastings and Brian Sheehan, established the context for Mansergh's third example, now being suppressed by Madam herself as far too dangerous for further scrutiny:

"SIPTU's Jack O'Connor, provides an

intriguing perspective on the Labour Party, which he believes made 'a disastrous decision' in 1994 not to go back into government with Fianna Fáil under Bertie Ahern. The Taoiseach Albert Reynolds (1992-94) had insisted on appointing the former Attorney General Harry Whelehan as President of the High Court. Whelehan had been attorney general when that office had made a botched effort to extradite a paedophilic priest to the North. Reynolds resigned. Bertie Ahern, who succeeded Reynolds as leader of Fianna Fáil in 1994 and looked on the verge of becoming Taoiseach, tried to mend the coalition, but was unsuccessful. Labour decided to form an alternative 'rainbow' coalition with Fine Gael and Democratic Left. For O'Connor, not going into government with Bertie Ahern was a huge missed opportunity: 'I would say it was one of the two worst decisions the Labour Party made in its history.' Many trade union leaders like O'Connor were Labour supporters, but, unlike their colleagues in the UK, they were guided by pragmatism more than ideology. Most of them saw no difficulty in doing business with Fianna Fáil, in fact some preferred it."

As Mansergh had been about to say on radio, it was the article penned by Madam Geraldine Kennedy herself that had scuppered that Coalition Government, and it was to have blood on its hands as a consequence. Had not John Bruton and his advisors been given the opportunity to scupper the Haughey-Reynolds-Ahern peace process strategy, in which Mansergh himself had played an honorable role, the temporary derailing of the IRA ceasefire, with its Canary Wharf fatalities, would not have occurred. Mansergh's decision to play Madam's game and retreat is as much a failure of civic duty as it is an unedifying example of a collapse of political nerve.

Manus O'Riordan

THAR SHE BLOWS!

In the Gulf of Mexico bad blood leaks over a mile deep from the ocean floor. Now the US Government is in uproar. Obama four times there to have a peek. So, send in the marines with blazing guns or how about those drones to kill B.P. (if nationalised and globalised free) In the Niger Delta oil runs and runs for forty years through rusting broken pipes. Illness, death, but no clean-up undergone. Rise, a shining mountain of blame-game hype. And what continues are those guilt-edged bonds. Eleven dead workers in the recent plight. The Boston Tea Party dumps black blancmange.

Wilson John Haire
15th June, 2010

Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

ANGLO IRISH BANK LEGACY

The new Chief Executive of Anglo-Irish Bank, Mike Aynsley, painted a grim picture for the Oireachtas Committee on Finance and Public Service. The State has already made a capital commitment of 14.3 billion Euro and will make another contribution of 8.0 billion. This will bring the total amount of capital invested in the bank to 22.3 billion. Aynsley thinks that the "lion's share" of this is gone forever.

Last month the *Irish Independent* announced breathlessly that the State (through the Central Bank) has lent another 11.5 billion to this institution. This information was already available in March of this year and was discussed in this column last May. The fact that a national newspaper considers that this is news in July is an example of how superficial the media's reporting of the financial crisis has been.

The taxpayer has a total exposure of nearly 34 billion to the bank. This is an enormous figure when it is considered that it equals just over a quarter of Ireland's Gross National Product for 2009 (131 billion). But the State has not yet handed out all the money. Most of the capital commitment has been in the form of a promissory note which will be paid over a ten year period. However, there is no doubt that the commitment has adversely affected the State's credit rating.

The financial statements of the bank are contained in a report of more than 180 pages but the horror story can be told in a few sentences. The bank has assets or loans to customers amounting to about 72 billion. At the end of September 2008 the financial statements indicated that all but 0.9 billion would be repaid. 15 months later the view had changed. The provision had risen to 15 billion euros plus another 1 billion for other assets, even though the loan book had not changed significantly in that period.

FUTURE OF ANGLO-IRISH BANK

The increase in provisions for bad debts of 15 billion completely obliterated profits. As was pointed out in the May issue of the *Irish Political Review* the bank would have made a profit of 2.4 billion if it had not been for these provisions.

It would be good to report that there

will be no more dramatic increases in provisions and that the bank will return to profitability this year, but Mike Aynsley offered no such comfort. There may be extra provisions of 9.5 billion this year.

This has prompted increased calls for Anglo to be closed down. However, closing the bank will not stem the losses, indeed quite the opposite. The increased losses are not caused by the actions of the current management they all relate to lending decisions made by the *ancien regime*. The winding up of the bank followed by a fire sale will reduce the value of its remaining assets (i.e. its loans to borrowers) by even more as well as crystallising the liabilities.

It has been suggested that Anglo should shaft some of its creditors but the scope for doing this is limited. The value of subordinated debt 'only' amounts to 2.3 billion.

The accounts show that the costs in terms of the reduced value of the bank's assets in the event of a liquidation will exceed any benefits from shafting Anglo's creditors. On this basis the bank should remain as a going concern.

SEAN FITZPATRICK

The Long Fellow experienced neither pleasure nor regret on hearing the news that Sean FitzPatrick was declared a bankrupt. But it appears that the former Chief Executive of Anglo Irish Bank has accepted his fate with fortitude.

In the past decade or so there has been an enormous amount of capital that has been swirling around the global financial system. There was a very widespread view in Ireland and the rest of the world that the more of this capital that a bank obtained the greater its profits would be. It was believed that the interest banks earned from passing on this capital would always exceed the cost of accessing it. The possibility that the debtors might not repay their loans was not considered in this brave new world.

FitzPatrick may have been in the vanguard, but he was not alone. We will never know the true extent of the losses suffered by British Banks operating in this country because their loans were consolidated in the books of their parent companies. But a recent report in the *Sunday Business Post* (11.7.10) indicates that the British taxpayer through Royal Bank of Scotland recapitalised its Irish subsidiary (Ulster Bank) with 3 billion euros. Ulster Bank showed a loss of 400 million in 2009 but this figure did not take into account 17 billion euros of risky loans it transferred to its parent company to avail of the UK's bank scheme.

NAMA

NAMA's new 10 year business plan is less optimistic than its original projections. It originally envisaged a profit of 4.8 billion but this has been downgraded to 1 billion. These profit figures are after discounting for future earnings because economists consider the value of 100 euros in 1 year's time to be less than 100 euros today. The longer a given level of profit is deferred the greater will be the discount.

The reason why the profit figures had to be downgraded was that the original plan assumed that 40% of loans transferred to NAMA were performing whereas in fact only 25% are.

The current plan assumes that NAMA will obtain the "long term economic value" (LTEV). This is defined as:

"the value that such asset (i.e. the loan) can reasonably be expected to obtain in a stable financial system when the crisis conditions prevailing are ameliorated".

In the first tranche of loans NAMA paid 3.2% above the Current Market Value but 7.5% less than the LTEV.

NAMA has been subject to much ridicule in the media. But what is the alternative? Keeping the loans with the banks? It was precisely because nobody believed the banks were giving a truthful valuation of these loans that they were taken away from them. The scepticism surrounding the banks has been proven to be well founded.

There is a philosophical view that the world is more complicated than it seems. On this basis one should act to fix problems but only in a way that gives the maximum room for manoeuvre in the event that one's assumptions should prove faulty. So, while the Long Fellow is of the opinion that the market should be abolished in the financial sector, he can recognise the merit of the Government's approach. By keeping the market on a life support machine it has not ruled out the possibility that the banks will be able to access capital in the form of shares and thereby transfer some of the risk to the private sector. It is also attempting to put clear water between the State's debt and the Banks' debt in such a way that a default by the latter will have limited consequences for the former.

IRISH ECONOMY.IE

The [irisheconomy.ie](http://www.irisheconomy.ie) website had an interesting article last month on the most recent NAMA business plan (<http://www.irisheconomy.ie/index.php/2010/07/08/nama-profit-projection-due-to-faulty-haircut-calculation/>). The first tranche of loans transferred to NAMA had an overall discount of 50% therefore NAMA in its

business plan assumed that this will be the discount for the full 81 billion in loans. On this basis NAMA calculates that it will have to pay 40.5 billion for the total amount of 81 billion in loans.

But Karl Whelan in irisheconomy.ie makes the point that in the first tranche of loans the proportion from Anglo Irish Bank was greater than would be the case for the total value of loans to be transferred. Therefore the discount percentage in the first tranche is likely to be greater than what one would expect from the total. Accordingly, the calculation of the total cost should have taken account of the over-representation of Anglo's share of the loans in the first tranche.

In his own calculation Whelan assumes that the discounts applying to the individual institutions in the first tranche will apply for the 81 billion (a not unreasonable assumption). So instead of a total cost of 40.5 billion he arrives at a figure of 41.7 billion for the amount NAMA will have to pay.

Unfortunately, when *Sunday Independent* columnist Gene Kerrigan read this he assumed (11.7.10) that NAMA was going to make 1.2 billion less than it says it will. But such a conclusion is unwarranted. Indeed the opposite is the case. The greater the cost of the total amount of the loans transferred the greater will be the expected net present value of receipts (i.e. profit) since Anglo's share of the total loans is less than the first tranche.

DEPOSIT SELLING MOMENTS

The Long Fellow wonders if the high-powered academics in irisheconomy.ie know the difference between an asset and a liability (see the article on Brian Lucey elsewhere in the magazine). On the following thread <http://www.irisheconomy.ie/index.php/2010/07/20/no-frank-nama-is-not-being-funded-by-the-ecb/>) Professor Karl Whelan of UCD begins by criticising the Galway Fianna Fáil TD Frank Fahey for saying that NAMA is funded by the European Central Bank (ECB) and urges action against Fahey along the following lines:

"It is long past time for government politicians to stop misleading the Irish public that NAMA somehow involves the state getting money from the ECB. I would plead with any journalist interviewing Deputy Fahey or any other commentator making this claim in the future to point out to them that it has no grounding in fact."

But, as the discussion developed on the thread, it emerged that Fahey was at the very worst guilty of an oversimplification. A rigid technical view would be that the

participating banks are funding NAMA through holding bonds (i.e. loans owed by NAMA). The banks, in turn, can use these bonds to obtain funding from the ECB. So in substance Fahey is correct. The ultimate provider of the funds is the ECB.

In the course of the debate Whelan became frustrated and accused one of his critics of having a "*deposit selling moment*" (see article on Brian Lucey to understand this joke).

Eventually he decided to close down the thread because of all the people twisting the meaning of what Fahey said. Whelan seems to think that Fahey is being disingenuous and that the ordinary understanding ("*what everyone at home believes*") is that funding means providing funds with no obligation on the recipient to repay. But the dictionary definition clearly indicates that the source of funding can be credit as well as donations or grants.

In the current environment obtaining credit is not to be taken for granted. The ECB is providing credit at a far cheaper rate than the State could obtain on the open market. Also, by routing the funding through NAMA, the State can avoid including the liability in the National Debt.

The more the Long Fellow learns about NAMA the more impressed he becomes by its ingenuity.

GERRY ADAMS

The Irish Times since independence has regarded the emerging State in the 26 Counties as a failed State. With the partial exception of the era in which Douglas Gageby was Editor, it has never hesitated to sneer at independent developments within the State. The newspaper's contempt for the South has been matched by its contempt for Northern politics. It regarded Carson as having betrayed Southern Unionists and, on his death in the 1930s, it regretted that he had not been more like Hitler or Mussolini with the ability to take the Irish nation in hand.

It appears that Gerry Adams has much in common with *The Irish Times*. In an article published in that newspaper (22.6.10) the first sentence says:

"Both North and South have failed miserably as separate entities."

One might find the politics of *The Irish Times* repugnant but at least there is coherence. If the two entities on this island have indeed failed, it is logical to believe that independence was a mistake because the South has proven itself incapable of running its affairs in a competent manner. This in turn implies that the island of Ireland should return to closer union with Britain.

But Gerry Adams seems to believe that combining two "*dysfunctional*" entities independent of the United Kingdom will somehow result in a progressive and economically successful, united Ireland.

According to Adams Ireland has failed to live up to the principles of the 1916 proclamation:

"The two states imposed by the partition of Ireland have failed to deliver these principles. Both have been characterised by economic failure, by emigration, by backwardness on social issues, by inequality and by the failure to protect the most vulnerable of our citizens."

It is interesting that he regards Northern Ireland as a "*State*". The role of Britain in the failure of the Northern "*State*" does not feature.

Adams does not give examples of Irish "*backwardness on social issues*". But the Long Fellow does not remember Sinn Féin in the South having any involvement in campaigns for liberal reforms.

Apparently, the South fails "*the Good Friday Test*". And:

"A republic—a real one—is based on citizenship and citizens' rights, so we also need to discuss the type of rights and responsibilities we would expect for citizens in the new republic. But the realisation of these rights cannot wait until then.

"Legislative rights should be introduced now".

This is a rather naive and individualistic approach to politics. All that is required is legislation to protect the rights of individuals? And how will these rights be vindicated? It could only be through the courts: a state run by lawyers.

There is no mention of Social Partnership or the role of collective institutions such as Trade Unions. Nor is there any sense of an historical understanding of how the State in the South developed. Gerry Adams's article is a perfect illustration of why his party has made little impact in the 26 Counties.

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sales.org](https://www.atholbooks-sales.org)

Rhetoric Versus Reality

Gerry Adams and his supporters showed amazing political acumen in achieving 'a place in the sun' for Northern Nationalists. They realised some time ago that this was the substance of the demand from the nationalist side. However, the only effective and sustainable ideology available to fight for this was the Republican one of a United Ireland. But the two did not automatically complement each other and were not interdependent. There have been, and always will be, such 'contradictions' in real life as perfect political situations never exist. But a problem does arise when one object is realised and the other is not. Then the ideology that sustained the valid conflict can seem redundant and there are inevitable questions marks about it and the natural tendency is to find a new valid basis for the useful ideology that sustained the successful effort—a case of finding new wine for old bottles.

Adams was asked by the Irish Times to give his thoughts on its 'New Republic' series and he responded with "*New Republic not possible without a united island—both North and South have failed miserably as separate entities. The best way forward is to avoid the wastes and inequalities of partition, writes Gerry Adams*" (22 June 2010).

Here he immediately asserts something that needs to be proven and makes claims that are clearly wrong and gratuitously insulting to all in the Republic who have helped make it an independent state. It is plain wrong to equate the Republic and the entity known as Northern Ireland in terms of failure. One sought, and achieved, independence and the other sought the very opposite. One is an actually functioning state and the other is not—it is a detached type of internal colony of another state. One has had a political system based on the terrorising of a minority by official paramilitary bodies. The other has not. One's political system has collapsed—the other has not. One is functioning by normal political standards and the other is functioning on the basis of an ongoing experiment hitherto untried and untested. To seek to override these essential differences is plain silly and is an automatic disqualification from taking seriously any proposals on the basis of this flawed analysis about future relations between 'the two entities'.

The entities then became "*The two states imposed by the partition of Ireland (that) have failed to deliver...*" Partition imposed two states? This is a curious way of explaining things. Partition is never a political agency. It is an effect, a consequence of some political reality, act or decision. And it does not exactly make sense to claim that Partition was imposed on the North. True, it was not the original motivation of Unionists but the majority were certainly happy with it as an alternative to any form of unity. It is odd to read the President of Sinn Fein not mention Britain at all in this context.

It is also odd to read such a person not mentioning the fact that it is the British State and the Irish State we are talking about. Surely Gerry recognises that elemental fact. And how could 'partition' have imposed something on the British state?

Gerry is now a 'two Irish states' man and the British state consequently fades away. He then lets rip at the shortcomings of these 'two states': "*The political establishments which emerged in the aftermath of the partition of Ireland—the senior civil servants, the judges, the politicians of Cumann na Gael, Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil, and the Ulster Unionist Party, created systems that entrenched their own privilege.*"

This type of criticism could be said of every state in the world, they could all be so accused—it is sheer demagoguery to suggest that such behaviour was unique to establishments in Ireland north and south because of Partition. And, if these were the crucial facts about 'the two states', why did one of them need a 30 year war to reform itself? Surely the little fact of such a war is proof positive that there is no valid political comparison between the two. Adams is giving us primary school sociology—at best—rather than politics or history.

The first question that needs to be addressed in this context is what exactly is wrong with the existing Republic.

Any reader of the *Irish Times* will see, every day, a host of shortcomings and things that are wrong with the present Republic and the clear theme and inspiration of these reports is to illustrate that these are inevitable and unique in this

Republic, with a clear subliminal message (and sometimes explicit) that it would be better if it never existed.

Adams' analysis feeds into this scenario. The state is wrong from the start. There is not a positive note struck about the Republic. There could not be as it is really an abortion of a state: "*In the South, the idealism of the aborted revolution waned as they (the establishment) put their own interests first and prospered at the expense of ordinary citizens*".

So we are an abortion which means we were never really born, never politically born. Ninety years of efforts at independence got us nowhere? Who is he trying to kid, or impress? Only the *Irish Times* will be impressed by this type of rhetoric. And simple minded Unionists. But it is a gratuitous insult to everyone who has done their best to make the country what it is for 90 years. Thanks, Gerry.

He continues his tirade of insults:

"While we have to deal with all of the legacies of two dysfunctional states, we also have to deal with the immediate disaster of Government policies which encouraged over-borrowing by homeowners, and increased unemployment and cuts and threatened cuts to public services."

By what standard is the Republic a dysfunctional state? Because it has the problems that every single country from the USA to Japan has today? Gerry should really know that at present the Republic is coping with the problems of *success*, not of failure or dysfunction. If he cannot see that he is blind. But he cannot resist more demagoguery. By this logic most states in the world are dysfunctional. Maybe he should go the whole hog, if he dares, and treat the Republic as a 'failed state'. We all know where that might lead if his friends in Washington looked at it that way.

"*Many of the social and economic problems now faced by citizens north and south are symptoms of partition.*" Another piece of glibness. I would not have been surprised if he had come out with that old trite Trotskyite slogan—"Tories out, North and South." He must know that no thinking person in the south could possibly relate their major problems to partition. The vast majority of the Republic's problems at present are the consequences of globalised capitalism. Strangely, he appears not to notice this.

"*Laws which have their foundation in the outdated 1937 Constitution do not protect the rights of children nor the socio-economic rights of any of our citizens.*" Every Constitution in the world is outdated

as soon as it is enacted or altered. For instance, the US Constitution is a case in point, but change is gradual: it is never dismissed as 'outdated'. Even the EU Constitution, the Lisbon Treaty just passed, is already out of date because of the Greek bailout—but nobody talks of scrapping it. It is sheer glibness to criticise a Constitution in these terms. But any old crap seems to do for the audience in the Republic.

"Those who built the State turned their backs on the North. They turned their backs also on the ideals of independence and a genuine republic. As James Connolly predicted, a carnival of reaction followed partition. The southern state that developed was in hock to the Catholic hierarchy while the six counties became a "Protestant state for a Protestant people". Two conservative states ruled by two conservative elites."

Was it all really as simple as that? Did Collins, for example, turn his back on the North? Adams knows very well he did not and he did not do so even after he signed the Treaty. He escalated his involvement in the North after that. He was a gun-runner, supplying arms to the nationalists and for good measure arranged for the assassination of the man who was setting up the B Specials, Sir Henry Wilson. Hardly a turning of his back, or a standing idly by! And why did he compromise on the Republic? Did he just decide to turn his back on independence? Did Britain and its 'threat of immediate and terrible war' not have anything to do with it? Adams' glib accusations are nearly enough to make one defend the Free State!

One thing Collins and later Fianna Fail were quite clear about and agreed about was that, as regards the North, they were dealing with the British State and not another 'Irish state'. The very idea would be preposterous to both of them.

Fianna Fail fought and succeeded in achieving practical independence from Britain—not exactly a walk in the park. The reality of their situation meant they had to choose between achieving and maintaining that independence or an ongoing conflict with Britain for a United Ireland. Their strategy was to make the Republic a success and base a United Ireland on that. They put a United Ireland on the long finger for practical reasons on the basis that a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush. And they did not do it lightly.

But Adams has done the very same in his context. He has accepted a reformed North and put a United Ireland on the long finger and also chosen the bird in the hand. So he has no moral right whatever to

lecture the South on not achieving a United Ireland.

He should also recall that the party that became the dominant party of the South, Fianna Fail, were all excommunicated by the Church at one stage. How could these people be simply described as being in hock to the Church? This is more insulting glibness.

Adams deliberately or otherwise downplays the scale of the issue he raises. He seems to want to give the impression that there can be a united Ireland as easily as there was a united Germany. The dogs in the street are aware that the way Germany was united overnight showed that the nation was divided artificially and that such is not the case here. *The New Republic* that he talks about means political convulsions. A new Republic means a new state. He blithely assumes these are created easily. It took 30 years of war and all Sinn Fein's talents to get this so-called second 'Irish state' reformed and it is difficult to accept that Adams really believes that major state changes can come about with lesser convulsions. He did not rely on rhetoric to pursue his aims over 30 years in Northern Ireland yet rhetoric seems sufficient to do a much bigger job in uniting Ireland.

The fact is that the sort of convulsion that would make people seriously consider the prospect of a United Ireland or a new Republic would probably come about if one or both of the existing 'entities' collapsed, failed or was destroyed—if it was a source of ongoing trouble, rather than a solution to people's needs.

The most realistic scenario for constitutional change is that Northern Ireland would choose incorporation into Ireland in a Border Poll, rather than people deciding to embark on the unknown journey to an 'ideal Republic'.

With his descriptions of the Republic as being dysfunctional and a political abortion, etc., I could easily imagine Adams being offered a permanent column in the *Irish Times* to complement the existing stable of whingers, carpers and denigrators of the Irish state and its very existence. He could add to the cacophony and easily outdo them all in the insult stakes. He would be music to their ears.

AND MCGUINNESS GENUFLECTS

At the Patrick McGill Summer School (July 18) Martin McGuinness genuflected to those who split the Irish Volunteers in 1914 and who conned and who were conned into joining the carnage of World

War I for the lie about the '*freedom of small nations*'. The barbaric logic was that those Irishmen who killed together would stay together. All the fine sounding words cannot air-brush away that essential fact and its patently obvious failure.

His genuflection shows that the Hibernian streak in Irish Nationalism is alive and well. This is the nationalism that has always been happy within the UK. The UK sets the parameters for its political morality and behaviour. It can be the most purely Catholic and the most purely anti-Protestant side of Irish nationalism but also the most pro-British, as it regards British as the only force that would ever be able to put down the Protestants for it. And that is its only vision. By comparison Irish independence is a mirage. Britain will always pander to this nationalism in order to have it on board for its own grander purposes. Thus McGuinness did his duty some time ago in visiting Baghdad to blather on about reconciliation there. Another genuflection to a current imperialist adventure. Sad to see a Republican bend the knee.

Jack Lane

Letter To Editor

Visiting The Six Counties

The last thing I want to do is ruin the Six-County tourist trade. When I thought Julianne Herlihy should not give up on visiting the North in a previous letter to the *Irish Political Review*, I wasn't saying she should visit all areas there. I go to the Six-Counties on visits to relax other than just going to funerals. My extended family seem to live in hard-line areas which I don't normally visit. I can't say I feel more comfortable in Andersonstown, because of my Catholic background, than I would on the Protestant Shankill Road. Many Catholics in the Diaspora also don't feel comfortable in the Catholic ghettos because of their close-knit families and suspicion of strangers. Being brought up in Protestant areas I probably would feel more comfortable on the Shankill Road but the Shankill Road may not feel comfortable with me.

The Six-Counties do have quite a number of visitors from the Republic. You can easily go to the beautiful Glens of Antrim and stay in their towns of Cushendun and Cushendall without any problems. Ballycastle in the very North is also worth a visit, with a run out to Rathlin Island. Bushmills is also another excellent town with its whiskey industry and nearby Giant's Causeway. In Belfast itself there is the Stranmillis area with its museum and botanical gardens and of course the old Linenhall Library going back to the 18th Century. This library faces Belfast City Hall, a colonial reminder of India if ever there was one. Take a run-up to the Stormont building and look at what the old Latin American dictators would build for themselves as a presidential palace. They say the driveway up to is a mile long. Hopefully, Julianne, you will not forever desert the Northern reaches of your country.

W.J.Haire

Reactions, Flawed And Otherwise

As I pointed out last month, the euphoria of having the innocence of the 13 innocent people shot dead by the British Army in January 1972 vindicated in an official British report has eclipsed the important issue of how this episode could come to happen. The Report blamed the soldiers involved, though it is inescapable that the killing spree was ordered by the Premier, Ted Heath, for reasons of state. In this article I will review some of the responses to the Report, to see to what extent this essential message has been grasped.

PURPOSE

The *Irish Independent* carried an editorial, 17th June, about the "peace leaders" in the North:

"Their work is helped by the positive influences such as the honesty of Saville, the sincerity of Cameron and the selflessness of (Protestant) churchmen who held out the hand of friendship in Derry. In truth, if the Saville report can set in train a process that may, some day, eliminate sectarianism, it will have been worth every penny."

Saville cheered up many Catholics who wanted recognition that those killed on Bloody Sunday were murdered by the British Army. But what most Catholics will think on reflection is anyone's guess. Perhaps, given their dramatically improved status in the society since the war, they will want to let bygones be bygones. On the Protestant side, at least the political leaders have clearly smelled a rat. They see Saville as being anything but honest.

Sammy Wilson (DUP) is Stormont's Finance Minister. His response was:

"The most common reaction I have had from ordinary unionists is the disgust at the attention, resources and political support which has been given to the investigation of this one tragic incident, whilst the murders by the IRA of 211 policemen, 18 soldiers at Warrenpoint and hundreds of civilians, are still unresolved and in some cases have received the most cursory investigation. The question asked is what is so special about the cases in Londonderry that £200m can be spent investigating them whilst others are ignored." (*Belfast News Letter*, 21st June.)

Others are ignored largely because we know precisely what happened and who was responsible. The IRA blew up the soldiers at Warrenpoint, for example. There can be differences of opinion as to the rights and wrongs of the matter, but we

know who did it and why.

Widgery knew who was behind Bloody Sunday—the State and its servants and agents. Urged by Ted Heath's explanation of the importance of the propaganda surrounding the events, he set out to absolve the State and its agents by concocting a fairy tale about the Paras firing in self-defence. The problem was that this explanation flew in face of the facts and the people of Derry were not going to have it stand.

Saville, had he been so disposed, could have demolished Widgery's report in, at most, a few months. But that was not his purpose. Widgery had failed to protect the reputation of the State and Saville (along with Cameron's supposed reaction) set out to restore that reputation by disentangling the State from the killings on Bloody Sunday. The Paras, he agreed, had killed civilians in cold blood. Indeed, their commander, he claimed, had sent his men into the Bogside in defiance of orders from the local Brigadier.

Will Saville be believed? On the Protestant side, probably not. But for many of the wrong reasons. Here's Wilson again:

"The Saville report will not be the end, regardless of what David Cameron may have been hoping for when he made his statement to the House of Commons. Any hint to putting soldiers in the dock 30 years after the event against a background of terrorist murderers having been let out of jail and no indication of action being taken against Martin McGuinness who was also named in the report, would set Northern Ireland back by years and quite rightly cause outrage in the unionist community. I am not sure how we deal with the legacy of the terrorist campaign in Northern Ireland but the Saville approach is definitely not the way to do so."

Saville was not about dealing with the legacy of the war, the troubles, the terrorist campaign, whatever you want to call it. Except that bit which concerns the British State. As long as the Protestant leadership believes and talks otherwise, they will play right into Saville's hands. Saville does not care if he is seen as over-favourable to Catholics or if he antagonises Protestants. That all helps his particular purpose.

Sammy Wilson and his colleagues make a lot of "terrorism" by which they mean the IRA. The notion that terrorism in the

20th century originated in their community with the UVF in 1913 seems beyond their comprehension. So is the notion of state terrorism. That, for example, the two bombings of Dublin, the bombing of Monaghan and the massacre of the Miami Showband, were all carried out by soldiers of the British Army, both regulars and UDR, is something they seem unable to deal with.

Well, they had better start dealing with all these matters and come to an understanding of the British State. Above all the fact that the British State will hang the Protestants of Ulster, or anyone else, out to dry anytime it suits it.

DRAWING A LINE

Gregory Campbell (DUP) is the Westminster MP for East Londonderry. He says:

"When the then Prime Minister Tony Blair announced the Bloody Sunday Inquiry in 1998 he said that there were two aims; '...the truth is established and told' and; 'It is also the way forward to the necessary reconciliation which will be such an important part of building a secure future for the people of Northern Ireland.'

"The truth will not have been established and told because of the flawed human recollection of witnesses from 30 years previously, the deaths of others, the unwillingness of some to reveal all they knew (such as Martin McGuinness), missing records, and contradictory evidence on crucial issues as to who fired the first shot. [Mr. Campbell might also have mentioned the destruction by the military, almost immediately, of most of the rifles used on Bloody Sunday.]

"...While some declare there is no hierarchy of victims, Nationalists, Republicans and the Human Rights industry consciously and actively created such a hierarchy with the Saville Inquiry. The differential treatment is clear when you examine the Historical Inquiries Team, the mechanism for investigating the past and the one available to all victims.

"...In Londonderry, the continuing Saville saga has done nothing to positively impact upon the relationships between the two communities with the Unionist minority having been more marginalized since Bloody Sunday than before. Neither will it bring closure with some relatives already making it clear that they will seek criminal prosecutions...

"...Other countries across the world now examine the politics of Northern Ireland and how we have come to where we are. They are looking for lessons. The Saville Inquiry, like the Eames Bradley report on victims, will provide other countries with very useful lessons. The lessons are how NOT to examine the past!"

The DUP did indeed fully support the Historical Enquiries Team, even though

much or most of its work has had to do with Protestant paramilitaries, and particularly with the sectarian killings, and the collaboration and cover-up on the part of the police and the military, by the Mount Vernon UVF. But now the HET is about to be absorbed by the police. The DUP is worried that Saville may result in the prosecution of soldiers. Is there not a case for admitting that the Good Friday Agreement should be the point where a line is drawn, and all those involved in the war are regarded as retired soldiers and left alone.

SINN FEIN

Michelle Gildernew (Sinn Fein MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone and Agriculture Minister in Stormont) gave the oration at the annual Wolfe Tone commemoration in Bodenstown on 20th June. She said:

"...let there be no mistake about it, Bloody Sunday was not some aberration by rogue soldiers. Just a few months earlier, 11 innocent civilians were shot dead by the British army in the greater Ballymurphy area of west Belfast.

"The Ballymurphy massacre and Bloody Sunday exposed the malign role of the British army in Ireland and contributed in a major way to the unfolding conflict in Ireland."

Will her first sentence be a guide to Sinn Fein's take on the matter and develop a sense of skepticism about Saville? Probably not. That would take them outside their comfort zone of vague Troops Out sentiment. There is, of course, another position from which to demand the withdrawal of the remaining British forces. But this involves Sinn Fein admitting the British Army now has little or no role in suppression in the North, but is primarily using the place as a training ground for the invasion of other people—Iraq and Afghanistan—and very possibly Pakistan. But it is hard to see Sinn Fein going near that argument.

EXONERATION

To return to the *Irish Independent*: Saville was not honest. His job was to exonerate the State and this involved giving a hard time to the Paras and an easy run to Martin Mc Guinness. The Protestant politicians got it half right. It will be quite a wrench for them to admit to the reasons behind Saville's dishonesty. It certainly was not any bias in favour of Catholics or any bias against Protestants.

Cameron's "*sincerity*" was simply Cameron playing the role he had in the game. He certainly played it very well. He may even have neutralized the Catholic politicians. As for the "*selflessness*" of the

Protestant churchmen, the devil himself could have gone into the Bogside or in front of the Guildhall on the day that Saville reported and have been assured of a warm welcome. One has to ask, however, what these clergymen were doing over the last 40 years as the Protestant communities were falling apart at the seams.

The Southern Government has been accused by David Simpson, DUP MP for Upper Bann, of funding, arming, training and sheltering hundreds of IRA members, and he says that there should be a Saville enquiry into this matter.

Lynch and Heath: In the *Irish Independent*, 19th June, Diarmaid Ferriter, Professor of Modern Irish History at UCD, quoted Jack Lynch, Edward Heath and others following the Bloody Sunday killings. Lynch, phoning Heath, apologised for ringing at a late hour (!) and continues:

"...from reactions received around the country it looks as if a very serious point has now been reached and the situation could escalate beyond what any of us would anticipate at this stage. I am told that, according to reports I received and checked on the spot, the British troops reacted rather beyond what a disciplined force might be expected to, and, as you know, there were 13 killed and as many again injured."

Is this the Premier of an independent country talking? Heath responded:

"Well now, as far as any accusations are concerned I obviously cannot accept that... I must also point out that this arose out of a march which was against the law. Now the people therefore who deliberately organized this march in circumstances which we all know in which the IRA were bound to intervene, carry a heavy responsibility for any damage which ensued."

Heath then pointed out that in the previous summer Lynch had asked him to ban marches!

The conversation continued:

Lynch: "There is no indication at all that the IRA intervened before shots were fired from the British side."

Heath: "I am not going to prejudge that."

Lynch: "...the whole thing arises as a result of the Stormont regime."

Heath: "It arises as a result of the IRA trying to take over the country."

EQUIVALENCE

Many commentators, especially in the Northern unionist newspapers and among Northern unionist politicians, have talked about the unfairness of people talking about punishment for the soldiers involved in Bloody Sunday while there is no major investigation into killings by the IRA.

One such voice was that of one Niall Ginty in the *Irish Times* on 18th June. Mr. Ginty is a prolific writer of letters to the papers offering an anti-republican viewpoint. Danny Morrison of Sinn Fein replied to him on 24th June:

"...I'm not sure where Mr. Ginty has been living and whether he has heard of Mountjoy, Portlaoise, Crumlin Road or Long Kesh. Several thousand republicans served lengthy sentences in prison for IRA activities, whereas the British state protected its killers and continues to do so and not just by granting the paratroopers anonymity.

"...It is clear that the UDA and UVF were little more than armed wings of British forces. The numbers they assassinated, added to those killed by regular forces, is a higher figure than that killed by the IRA.

"But to argue in this way, as Mr. Ginty does, is fallacious. If Vietnamese insurgents killed more people than US forces that still would not have made the US morally superior in that conflict.

".. Had the British government on February 1st, 1972 admitted what Saville in 2010 declared really happened on Bloody Sunday then Ted Heath's government would have fallen, there would have been a crisis in Britain, paratroopers would have faced life imprisonment and, in all likelihood, Britain would have been propelled much more quickly down the road of negotiation instead of fighting a dirty war. Thousands of lives might well have been saved.

"... Here, still no inquests have been held into those victims of RUC shoot-to-kill in 1982. Judge Peter Corey's recommendation of a transparent enquiry into the assassination of human rights lawyer Pat Finucane 21 years ago has been set aside and the British government has legislatively re-written the terms of any future inquiry to its advantage.

"Perhaps that explains why Mr. Ginty only wants to talk about the IRA."

Furthermore, as Danny Morrison pointed out on Radio 4 in response to some hostile questioning, members of the IRA have served time in jail on account of their convictions: at issue here is a crime that has been covered up and for which no body has hitherto been held to account.

LOW INTENSITY OPERATIONS

Joseph Sheehy, Newtonabbey, Co. Antrim wrote in a letter to the *Irish Independent*, 17th June:

"The truth about the role of British troops (and specifically the Paras) during the 'troubles' is that they were following a systematic programme of harassment of Catholic areas sanctioned by the highest echelons of the British establishment. The strategy was outlined in Brigadier Kitson's 1971 'Low intensity Operations', which became the standard text for operations here. The British army turned

its back on one half of the population here, now deemed innocent of any crime (the Loyalists) and focused on the 'real enemy': the IRA and the communities 'harbouring' them—the Catholic ghettos ...

" Brig. Kitson put it like this: 'If a fish has got to be destroyed it can be attacked directly by rod or net... but if the rod or net cannot succeed by themselves it may be necessary to do something to the water... All the political, economic, psychological and military means must be marshalled under centralized co-ordination and direction.':

Justice was to be suspended in the interests of 'operational necessity', 'national security' and 'getting results'. The 'enemy' must lose all rights: rights were for law-abiding citizens only. The white man's burden was taken up once more—of bringing civilized values to warring, ungrateful natives.

"The smooth, humane and sensitive officer fronting the British army version of any incident was seen as typical of the men he commanded: there were no thugs or psychos among them. No matter how often it was shown that the army's version was a tissue of lies and cover-up, it made not the slightest difference.

"Brig. Kitson claimed that the authority for his operations came from the highest level in the Ministry of Defence, therefore the Cabinet."

REPUBLICAN SINN FEIN

"The long-awaited Saville inquiry acknowledges for the first time that the 14 people killed on Bloody Sunday were innocent Civil Rights marchers, however, it fails on the crucial question of the responsibility of the British state for the deaths.

"The belated acknowledgement of the innocence of those killed and injured on Bloody Sunday is welcome for the families of the victims but the inquiry fails the critical test of identifying and admitting the responsibility of the British state for the deaths of unarmed Irish people on the streets of their own city.

"...This is a cop-out and ignores the chain of command, both political and military, which pitted assault troops such as the British army's Parachute Regiment against a peaceful anti-internment march..." (Letter to the Irish News, 24th June)

HISTORY IRELAND

The editorial in the July/August issue of *History Ireland* seems to have been a rare coherent voice in its assessment of the Saville Report. It would be hard to improve on its analysis; here it is in full:

"Bloody Sunday: Who Was Responsible

"On the face of it, the Saville Report into the events on Bloody Sunday, 30 January 1972, and the apology and statement endorsing it by British prime

minister David Cameron, is a complete vindication of the victims and their families who campaigned long and hard for the truth to be told: 'What happened on Bloody Sunday was both unjustified and unjustifiable'. Cameron also stated that 'the government is ultimately responsible for the conduct of the armed forces'.

"It's a pity, then, that this fundamental principle of any society that claims to be a democracy is not borne out in the report itself, which found that neither the British government (led by Edward Heath) nor the Northern Ireland government (led by Brian Faulkner) could be held directly or indirectly responsible for the deaths and injuries caused. Also exonerated is the commander of British land forces in Northern Ireland, Major General Ford, although acknowledged by Saville as the driving force behind the operation, who was on the ground on the day exhorting his troops: 'Go on the Paras. Go and get them!'—the same man who, shortly before, wrote a notorious memorandum advocating the 'shooting of selected ringleaders of rioters'. Instead, the Paras' direct commander, Lieutenant Colonel Derek Wilford, takes the rap. This raises two equally 'appalling vistas': either it was planned from the top or the Paras were an undisciplined—and lethal—rabble.

"We've been here before. In this special issue on Ireland and India we have an

article on the Amritsar massacre of April 1919 when, in a ten-minute shooting spree, 379 Punjabis were killed and c.1,500 wounded by British forces led by Brigadier General Reginald Dyer. At the subsequent Hunter committee of enquiry Dyer was condemned for his actions and later dismissed from the army. His immediate superior, Tipperaryman Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer of the Punjab, was exonerated. But O'Dwyer's record finally caught up with him. In London, 21 years later, he was shot dead by Udham Singh, who had been wounded at Amritsar, just as eighteen Paras were blown to pieces at Warrenpoint, Co. Down, on 27 August 1979 in revenge, according to subsequent graffiti, for Bloody Sunday (and at almost the same moment as Lord Luis Mountbatten, last Viceroy of India, met a similar fate at Mullaghmore, Co. Sligo.) From such massacres of innocent civilians grow dragons' teeth.

"At least in the case of Bloody Sunday 1972 the issue of political responsibility can be revisited. The Saville enquiry has generated a massive and invaluable historical archive of testimony and documentary evidence that will allow historians now and in the future to interrogate and to qualify Saville's questionable conclusion that primary responsibility lies with the soldiers on the ground."

Conor Lynch

Jack Jones Vindicated

Part Two

Cambridge University's M15 Professor Christopher Andrew writes of that British intelligence service's telephone tapping:

"The telecheck on the Communist leader of the Scottish miners, Mick McGahey, revealed that he spoke freely, if not always comprehensibly over the phone about the strike plans and tactics of the Scottish area NUM... The bugging of the CPGB's King Street HQ revealed that McGahey was in close touch with the Party's industrial organiser Bert Ramelson. As well as having a 1st class degree in law, the Ukrainian-born and Canadian-educated Ramelson had an engaging manner. Even the *Sunday Times* called him 'a charming and erudite man with a keen sense of humanity'. The sympathetic history of the CPGB by Francis Beckett, published in 1995, concludes, like Secret Service reports in the 1970s, that Ramelson, rather than any of the Party's general secretaries, was its most influential post-war member, becoming 'the face of British Communism in the only place after 1956 where it really mattered, the trade unions'..." (*The Defence Of The Realm*, 2009, p592).

Bert Ramelson was the CPGB's National Industry Organiser from 1965 to 1977, coinciding with the period that Jack Jones served as TGWU General Secretary from 1969 to 1978. They had one very definite thing in common; they had both been International Brigader volunteers who fought in the battle of the Ebro of the Spanish Anti-Fascist War in 1938, although Ramelson was in the Canadian Battalion while Jones was in the British Battalion. As we will see, the period of any shared purpose in Trade Union politics was quite brief, and Ramelson remained vehemently opposed to the efforts of Jones to move the movement forward.

But, while Ramelson was undoubtedly a CPGB schemer, I do not for a moment accept the M15 Andrew charge that he was also a KGB agent. Still less, of course, was this in any way true of Jack Jones, as Part One of this exposure of Andrew's book set out to demonstrate. One of Andrew's 'tricks of the trade' entails blurring

the distinction between Communist Party activism and being a Soviet intelligence agent. A review of Andrew's book in the London *Observer* last 11th October similarly had a blurred-meaning reference to Jones as a "communist agent". On 18th October it evoked the following response from Jack's son Mick Jones, under the heading of "These lies about my father must cease":

"In his review of *Defence of the Realm* by Christopher Andrew, Robert McCrum repeats a notion from that book that my father, Jack Jones, the former Transport and General Workers' Union leader, was a 'communist agent'. There is, however no substantiated proof offered for this totally fictitious allegation other than the highly dubious reports of that notorious double agent, Oleg Gordievsky. The book also states, as if it were somehow accepted fact, that Jones was an 'open' member of the Communist party between the years 1932 to 1941. During that period, my father was a Labour City Councillor in Liverpool and it was against all Labour Party rules, with the threat of instant dismissal, for any Labour councillor also to be a member of the Communist Party. My father was never a member of the Communist Party at any time, nor, as is most shamefully and ludicrously implied, a 'communist agent'. I challenge anyone to provide unassailable proof otherwise."

Andrew's M15 'thesis' is that Jack Jones was a "paid agent" of the KGB from 1964 to 1968, and again from 1983 to 1985. This slander has been refuted in Part One. But the M15 Professor also has a parallel 'thesis', designed to bolster his KGB one, but which nonetheless needs to be scrutinised in its own right. The M15 allegations are that Jack Jones was

- (1) An open member of the CPGB 1932-1941;
- (2) A secret member of the CPGB 1941-49;
- (3) Drifting from the CPGB 1949-54;
- (4) Disassociated from the CPGB 1954-69;
- (5) A fellow-traveller of the CPGB 1969-76.

There have been three great James Larkins in the Trade Union struggles of these islands, and all three of them born in the city of Liverpool: (1) Big Jim Larkin, born in 1874; (2) His son, James Larkin Junior, born in 1904; (3) Jack James Larkin Jones, born in 1913 and named after Big Jim. There is no denying the fact that the first two had been Communists before they embraced Social Democracy. As Sean Nolan wrote in *Communist Party of Ireland—Outline History* (1975):

"In the years from 1938 the Dublin Branch of the CPI had to contend with serious difficulties and setbacks... (Some

leading members) retired from active involvement in the Party without indicating any political disagreement. This was the case of Jim Larkin Junior. He never expressed disagreement with the Party, but ceased to play his part as a member at any level; he became involved in the affairs of the Workers' Union of Ireland and played the principal part of the next few years in transforming the organisational structure and democratic functioning of the union. The loss of Larkin Junior to the Communist Party was a grievous blow, as was the departure of Larkin Senior ten years earlier" (p29).

Larkin Junior had already been twice elected to the Dail when, in the course of the 1948 General Election, Fianna Fail Minister Sean MacEntee launched a vitriolic 'red-baiting' attack, published by the *Catholic Standard* that 30th January and supplemented by that newspaper's own set of questions to Larkin:

"(1) Were you at any time prior to its dispersal a member of the Communist Party of Ireland? (2) Did you at any time hold office in the CPI? (The honest answer to either of these questions is a simple 'Yes' or 'No'). (3) If the answer to either of these questions (1 or 2) is in the affirmative will you here and now issue a statement repudiating Communism?"

Larkin replied:

"The moral courage of the writers of anonymous letters and articles is proverbial, the journalistic standards of a journal which resorts to them also hardly merit comment, and the coincidence of putting forward questions such as those of your anonymous querist three days before polling day clearly reveals that concealed motive. To the queries I reply: I was a member of the CP, a fact publicly known, and which I never attempted to cloak or evade; I was not an official of the Communist Party."

Since Larkin no longer subscribed to Communism—either organisationally or ideologically—he might have been tempted to consider it reasonable to now repudiate such beliefs in replying to question (3) and gain some electoral advantage as a result of such a repudiation. But Larkin's integrity was of too high a calibre for him to ever become an ex-Communist of the 'God that failed' breast-beating variety. He effectively told the *Catholic Standard* to get lost:

"As to the remaining query, from past experience I reject the alleged disinterested concern of your journal and its anonymous writer in the welfare of the Labour Movement, and am fully aware that a repudiation of 'Communism' as defined by your journal and its writer would exclude any and every form of

belief or activity which would be of any real or lasting benefit to the working class."

Larkin's reputation for integrity was more than enhanced and his vote rose from 3,600 in June 1944 to 4,500 that February 1948, as it would rise still further to 5,700 and then 5,900 in the May 1951 and May 1954 General Elections respectively.

But what of Jack James Larkin Jones? I served as Head of Research at Liberty Hall from March 1971 until my retirement this past May, and from 1972 onwards it became clear to me that the Trade Union perspective I shared with Jones was opposed by both the CPGB and the CPI. But I also knew that, while not a Communist himself, Jack had forged unbreakable bonds with fellow International Brigaders who remained life-long Communists. See, for example, www.irelandscw.com/org-ITOct-Nov05.htm to see him spring to the defence of my own father in response to a vicious 'red-baiting' attack which the *Irish Times* published in October 2005.

What, then, to make of the wire-tap that recorded Bert Ramelson saying in 1969 that "the only dishonest thing about Jack was that he gave the impression that he was never in the (Communist) Party". Perhaps the problem was that Jack was never directly asked the obvious question!

I myself missed a golden opportunity to ask such a question in 1993. As that year was the 80th anniversary of both the epic 1913 struggle led by Big Jim Larkin and Jack Jones's own birth and naming after Larkin, I was successful in my request that Jack be invited to address the SIPTU Delegate Conference in Galway. I first brought Jack and his son Mick to visit Dublin's Kilmainham Jail, where they were both profoundly moved in the prison yard where the 1916 leaders had been executed. The next day, having driven to Galway, I also brought them to visit Pearse's cottage in Rosmuc.

Long aware of Jack's Irish enthusiasms, and not least his singing of "Kevin Barry", I asked when had he first met Frank Ryan, of whom he spoke with such personal affection. I had assumed it was probably 1937, before Jack himself went to Spain, but when Ryan, having been wounded, was on recuperative leave in both Britain and Ireland before returning to Spain again. "1931" was Jack's reply. This flummoxed me. Jack, I knew, had been a Labour Party member of Liverpool City Council since 1937. Frank Ryan did not split from the

IRA to set up the left-wing Republican Congress until 1934. In 1931 Ryan was still an IRA leader, and Editor of its newspaper *An Phoblacht*.

"How come?" I asked.

"Leo McGee sent me over to Dublin to meet Ryan."

"Who?"

But Jack only smiled enigmatically. I concluded therefore that Jack was no mere Labourite. He must have had some involvement with the Liverpool IRA, notwithstanding the fact that he himself was not ethnically Irish.

This was not too unreasonable a conclusion, even though it took me by surprise. Jack's own account of the first time he stood as a Labour candidate in 1936 portrayed a Liverpool of that period that was more akin to an Ulster rather than an English city:

"Labour politics in Liverpool were different to those in the rest of the country in the 1930s. What was called 'religion' had a big influence because of the mixed nature of the population. There was a separate Protestant party represented in the City Council, known as the 'Protestant Reform Party', and a Catholic party to balance it called the 'Centre Party'. If that wasn't enough, the Labour Party itself was pretty well divided. Sections of the party were strongly influenced by the Catholic hierarchy, especially on issues affecting Catholic schools. For years the Scotland Road area of Liverpool was represented in Parliament by an Irish Nationalist MP, T.P. O'Connor, and when he died and was replaced in 1932 by a Labour MP, David Logan, there didn't seem much difference in outlook. In my early twenties I was selected to stand for the Labour Party as the candidate for Breckfield Ward in the elections for the City Council. Part of the ward was in the centre of a militant Protestant area, where the King was 'King Billy' and the man to follow was 'Pastor' Longbottom, the Liverpool equivalent in his time of the present day Reverend Ian Paisley. Since the area was one of serious poverty (like most of Liverpool) I launched my campaign with an attempt at an open-air meeting. After I had been speaking for about five minutes, a number of the women present in the traditional black shawls of my home town, were screaming out, 'Go home, you Fenian bastard' and other less polite messages. Then stones and bottles began to fly and we retreated fast" (*Union Man*, 2008 edition, pp55-6).

The Redmondite legacy of O'Connor was not, however, the only variety of Irish politics that overlapped with Liverpool Labour. The complexity of political traditions in Liverpool has been further highlighted by Barry McLoughlin in respect of

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National newspaper

The following letter was submitted to the *Irish Times* on 20th June, but failed to find publication

Twice in the last ten days alone your political columnist Miriam Lord referred to the Taoiseach of this country as "Biffo". As is known this is an abbreviation for "Big Ignorant F**cker from Offaly". Every time I see this term used in the self-styled "national newspaper of record" I squirm. It would be inconceivable for any other newspaper which The Irish Times likes to see as its equivalent—e.g. The New York Times, Le Monde, Frankfurter Allgemeine or the British Guardian or Times—to refer to the leaders of the governments of their states in such contemptuous and odious terms. Does this reflect a reversion on the part of The Irish Times to a contempt for the very existence of this state?

Philip O'Connor

a leading Labour Party politician, Jack Braddock, who had been a member of the Liverpool IRA. Braddock had been put on trial in 1923 on explosives charges connected with a murder committed during the course of an IRA 'fund-raising' robbery, and only walked free when the 'King's Evidence' against him was withdrawn. McLoughlin further relates:

"Until they left the CPGB in 1924, Bessie and Jack Braddock were the leaders of Scouse Bolshevism ... In the Braddocks' joint biography, published in 1963, Jack omits to mention his involvement with the IRA ... The Braddock's break with Communism is described in some detail, a plausible retelling of trust betrayed and inner-party machinations which persuaded them that their home was in the Labour Party, for which Bessie was a forthright and popular MP from 1945. The first biography of Bessie, a hagiographic portrait of a hard-nosed proletarian mother-figure with a heart of gold, published in 1957 does mention husband Jack's involvement with the IRA, and the trouble he bought upon himself ..." (*Left to the Wolves: Irish Victims of Stalinist Terror*, 2007, p 239).

Since I had never once had any indication of CP-type politics from Jack, I concluded that he must have had some clandestine Irish Republican background. Jack's wife Evelyn, of course, was rightly honoured in her own right for her 1930s heroism in operating as a Comintern courier to the underground CPs of Fascist Europe. And her first husband George Brown, killed in Spain's battle of Brunete in 1937, had been CPGB Manchester organiser. But even his own children assume that Jack himself had never been in the CP. And when I spoke in Jack's memory at the second George Brown commemoration in the latter's birthplace of Inistigoe, Co. Kilkenny, in June 2009, I only half-jokingly speculated that, while

it might have been dead everywhere else, the Irish Republican Brotherhood had survived in Liverpool, and that Jack Jones himself had been an IRB member!

It was just my luck to have misheard the name Jack dropped and to have it fail to ring a bell from the brief reference in Jack's memoirs. I now belatedly realise that, if I had greeted Jack's enigmatic smile with something more than ignorance about Leo G, he would probably have been prepared to continue with a conversation based on an informed line of questioning. A squandered opportunity! For the name he had mentioned was not that of some Fenian leader named McGee, but the man described as follows by Jack:

"On odd days off work from the docks I often took part in meetings and demonstrations and I listened, with increasing sympathy, to speeches by Leo McGree {NOT McGee!}, the communist leader in Liverpool and chief spokesman for the unemployed. He impressed me greatly with his vigorous exposition of the facts, laced with sharp Liverpool wit. He became a thorn in the side of authority and even of my own friends in the Labour Party like Jack and Bessie Braddock. While they were experts in dealing with the bureaucrats, Leo McGree on the other hand advocated direct action against housing evictions. The massive demonstrations he organised gained the support of thousands of the unemployed. For his pains Leo landed up with twenty months in gaol. The police authorities panicked, even at one stage arresting Jack Braddock for leading an unemployed action at which he was not even present!" (p40).

There is no further mention of McGree in Jack's memoirs and no ostensible reason for the reader to necessarily become more curious about him. Those of us—including Mick Jones and myself—who served on the Executive of the International Brigade Memorial Trust under Jack's Presidency,

welcome and have no fears of genuine historical investigation. Indeed, it is one of our fellow Executive members, Richard Baxell, author of *British Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War* (2004), who has brought to light a most significant document which now fills in the missing pieces in the jig saw. At the close of International Brigade involvement in the Spanish Anti-Fascist War in 1938, as a mark of solidarity with the Spanish Communist Party which would now have to carry on the struggle unaided, there were mass membership applications for that Party. For the most part, these came from Brigaders who had already been CP members in their own countries, as was the case with my own father. But what of Jack Jones? The following are key excerpts from the Spanish CP document brought to light by Richard Baxell:

"All comrades who are not Spanish but who wish to join the ranks of the Spanish Communist Party must write a biography following the form of this questionnaire and send it, with their application, to the central commission for admission into the Party. This disposition applies equally to all of those comrades who were, in the past, member of one of their national parties and who also wish to obtain a membership card for the current year."

"PERSONAL AND TRADE UNION LIFE. Name: JAMES LARKIN JONES; Place and date of birth: LIVERPOOL 29/3/13; Name of your parents, their political opinions: GEORGE HENRY JONES—ANNE CONSTABLE—COMMUNIST; Profession: TRANSPORT WORKER; Place of work: DOCKS, GARSTON, LIVERPOOL; Member of a trade union: TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION (DOCKS SECTION) LIVERPOOL; Position of Responsibility in Union: NATIONAL COMMITTEE AND AREA DELEGATE; Union representation in place of work: 4 YEARS."

"POLITICAL LIFE. When did you begin to be interested in the workers' movement? 1929. STRIKE MOVEMENT; **On what date did you join the CP? 1930;** In what cell were you? LIVERPOOL DOCKS; **Which responsible comrades presented your request to join the Party? LEO MCGREE; Are you still a member of the Party? Yes;** Have you had any leadership role or responsible position in the Party? LIVERPOOL ORGANISER 1932-38 MEMBER LANCASHIRE DIST. CTTEE. 5 YEARS. STRIKE FUNCTION IN THIS CAPACITY; Which party work have you undertaken most? INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY ASSISTING LEADERSHIP IN DOCKS; Have you participated in a Party

Congress? BATTERSEA 1932. MANCHESTER 1934; To which countries have you been? GERMANY 1931. FRANCE; **Are you known as a communist in your country? NO; And abroad? NO;** Which leaders of political, trade union organisations do you have a personal relationship with? FRANK BRIGHT, WILLIAM RUST AND PETER KERRIGAN CP. G. GIBBONS (DISTRICT SEC. TGWU) ALD HOGAN, LEADER LIVERPOOL LABOUR PARTY; What political courses organised by the Party have you taken? SPECIAL PARTY SCHOOL, LONDON 1935. 2 MONTHS; Which Party newspapers and magazines do you normally read? LABOUR MONTHLY, IMPRECOR, COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, DAILY WORKER, Which books on communist doctrine and politics have you studied? WORKS OF MARX, ENGELS, LENIN, STALIN; Which are the political questions that have drawn your attention most and which do you enjoy studying most? INDUSTRIAL POLICY; Have you written articles for newspapers? YES. VARIOUS—CHIEFLY TRADE UNION. "RECORD" (TU Journal). 'MILITANT TRADE UNION'; When did you arrive in Spain? MAY 1938; Via what means? PARTY; With what objective? TO FIGHT FASCISM; What military and political functions have you had in Spain? COMPANY COMMISSAR; In which battles have you been? EBRO, JULY 1938, ATTACK ON HILL 481, JULY 31ST 1938. SHOULDER WOUNDS. Which comrades do you know best and

which responsible person can confirm the veracity of your statement? WILLIAM RUST, H POLLITT {*Daily Worker* editor and CPGB General Secretary, respectively MO'R} **Place: Barcelona; Date: 5th of September 1938; Signature: J.L. Jones."**

"The Party expels those who give false information or try to deceive it. Comrades must report all aspects of their current circumstances; in the event of them wanting a guarantee of maximum confidentiality, they can deliver the questionnaire directly to the central committee of the PCE."

Jack may not have been the "Fenian bastard!" that the Orange hecklers of Liverpool accused him of being. But he certainly behaved like a Fenian Centre who only divulged certain categories of information on a 'need to know' basis. If Ramelson complained that Jack never publicly 'owned up' to having been a CPGB member in the 1930s, neither did his application to the Spanish CP once mention his membership of the Labour Party. But with this added information we can also read Jack's autobiography in a more informed manner, including seeing between the lines, and discover the most independent-minded of 1930s Communists, who had already decided to part company with the CPGB by 1940.

(to be continued)

Manus O'Riordan

A Good Biography with a Fatal Flaw

I am glad that Pat Muldowney has drawn attention to the new biography of Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire by Benjamin Hazard ('Political Historians', *Irish Political Review*, July). Hazard's book has its faults, which I'll come to later, but no one can accuse him of shirking work or doing things half-heartedly. He gives valuable information about a fascinating man, without any doubt one of the key men of 17th century Ireland. Besides what was mentioned in last month's issue, some other points may be worth making.

As Pat has pointed out, Ó Maolchonaire came from a family of poet-chroniclers who served various lords in Connacht-Ulster, including the O'Rourke. He became a master in his profession, and by his late 20s he was fully established. What gave him the first impulse towards a

complete change of life was probably the wreck of the Spanish Armada. A large number of Armada survivors were given protection by Brian O'Rourke, and quite possibly Flaithrí would have served these men as interpreter (using Latin) and teacher of Irish, himself picking up Spanish in the process. (Unfortunately, the prejudiced but perceptive Captain Fernando Cuellar never made it as far as O'Rourke's territory, or he might have confirmed this.)

Ó Maolchonaire was over 30 when he entered the Jesuit-run seminary in Salamanca in 1592. Hazard does not suggest that he came to Spain for this purpose: more probably he was doing diplomatic business for the O'Donnells. No doubt he had seen that the Spanish officials gave more respect to diplomats who were clerics, and this might have

been a factor in his decision. Respect, or the lack of it, was something that he noticed. Anyhow, a couple of years after he had got himself through the seminary, where he was a troublesome student, he was accusing the Jesuit Order of being obsessed with money, biased in favour of merchants' sons from the south of Ireland, and contemptuous of lads from the Gaelic families of the north.

He returned to Ireland for the last few years of the Nine Years War and made a powerful impression. Hugh O'Neill couldn't wait to have him made a bishop, or if possible an archbishop. Eventually, through O'Neill's influence, he was appointed Archbishop of Tuam in 1609. This was much to the disgust of the other archbishop (although there were four, only two of them counted), Peter Lombard, who was hoping to win concessions from King James in return for Catholic loyalty. Ó Maolchonaire wasn't very interested in concessions. What he wanted was O'Neill and O'Donnell reinstated, the Catholic Church established, and ideally the sovereignty of Ireland transferred from the kings of England to the kings of Spain.

Ó Maolchonaire spent decades patiently working towards these goals. He was preparing for an upheaval in Ireland which did not occur during his lifetime, though it happened not many years after his death. Pat has noted the attention he gave to the Irish regiment in the Spanish army. Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill was his protégé: he was appointed regimental commander through Ó Maolchonaire's influence.

The limitations of Hazard's book are best shown by quoting the first few sentences from his Conclusion.

"Following his return to Leuven in the final years of Philip III's reign, Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire commented on the contention between the poets of the northern and southern halves of Ireland. Refusing to take sides, he described their dispute as "wrangling over an empty dish". Although raised among the scholarly families of Connacht and Ulster, Ó Maolchonaire had absorbed new thinking in Spain, Rome and Flanders. Using his continental contacts, both religious and political, he looked forward, serving Gaelic interests and modernizing Irish religious and cultural institutions within the Spanish political system."

There's more ideology than thought in this passage. The dogma is that Ó Maolchonaire had *moved on*. He must have done. What else could an innovative strategic thinker possibly do with Gaelic

culture, except move on from it?

However, what actually happened in the Contention of the Poets suggests otherwise. Roibeárd Mac Artúir, a leading member of the staff of St. Anthony's College, Louvain (which Ó Maolchonaire had founded), entered the dispute at a crucial stage, accusing Tadhg mac Dáire Mac Bruaideadha, the southern champion, of carrying on a destructive controversy, and telling him to desist from it . . . and at the same time taking the northern standpoint on major points of discussion! The question is, can we believe that a Louvain cleric would have got involved in a dispute of this kind without consulting the college's founder, who happened to be a master chronicler? And, secondly, would it not be reckless for anyone who was not a master chronicler himself (which Mac Artúir was not) to enter such a controversy and dispute such questions with the likes of Tadhg mac Dáire?

There was a tradition among the 17th century chroniclers that Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire had written the Louvain contributions to the Contention, using Mac Artúir's name. Roderick O'Flaherty says this in so many words in *Ogygia*. To my mind, there's a high probability that it's true. And if so, then I think it's a critical moment: the master chronicler, who is now a master political strategist, enters this controversy in an attempt to suppress the dissenting southerners, to put down disunion in Gaelic Ireland . . . and fails, because Tadhg mac Dáire firmly stands up to him.

I surveyed all this years ago in *The Contention Of The Poets*. Hazard has no suspicion of such things. As a matter of fact, some years ago a professor of the Institute of Advanced Studies, in his own pedantic way, drew attention to the tradition that Ó Maolchonaire had written the Mac Artúir poems. (Pádraig A. Breatnach, *Téamaí Taighde Nua-Ghaeilge*.) But Hazard was being advised on matters Gaelic by people from another faction or factions in that truly awful Institute, so evidently he wasn't informed. He shows very little awareness of the evidence that Ó Maolchonaire had an ongoing relationship with the poets (Tadhg mac Dáire went out of his way to express his respect for him). Hazard's fatal assumption that Ó Maolchonaire had "*moved on*" leaves an empty space in his picture of the man. It's an absence that distorts everything.

Regarding another question that Pat raised, the question of extermination, here

I can only make one or two brief points. I don't agree that the Desmond War or the Nine Years War were wars of extermination, even though famine was used as a weapon of war in both of them. Once the wars were over, there were opportunities for conforming Gaelic and Norman-Gaelic lords to prosper within the imposed system. Those who weren't sufficiently adaptable were marked out to be destroyed, but their destruction could be slow, peaceful and legal. The English weren't aiming to wipe out a population, they were aiming to wipe out a civilisation and replace it with another. It was social engineering, not extermination. Fear Flatha Ó Gnámh described it best:

Saxa nua darb ainm Éire

A new England called Ireland.

Sir John Davies in his *True Causes Why Ireland Was Never Entirely Subdued* says clearly that this is what is intended. His hope, he says, is that within a generation there won't be any difference between Ireland and England except the sea. He had the idea that the Irish loved English law and couldn't get enough of it, and he was personally very active in spreading the machinery of English law through the country—sometimes for example he might have to have jurymen's ears cut off when they brought in the wrong verdicts, but no doubt he would have called these teething troubles. The point, that machinery of law isn't something you'd really need if what you had in mind was extermination.

I only know of one accusation that the English were attempting to wipe out the native Irish population, and that is in Spanish. But one can find many descriptions, mainly in Irish, of their attempt to wipe out the civilisation. For the people who were deliberately starved in Munster and Ulster the distinction might be academic. However, I don't think we can make sense historically of what happened unless we acknowledge this difference.

John Minahane

The Contention Of The Poets, an essay in Irish intellectual history, by *John Minahane*. 72pp. ISBN 0 9522582 4 2. Sanas Press. June 2000. €9, £6.

Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin: Danta / Poems With translations by *Pat Muldowney*. Supplementary Material by Seamus O'Donnell and others. *Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin: Collected Writings, Vol. 2*. 230pp. Index. ISBN 1 903497 57 9. AHS, 2009, €20, £15.

See Athol Books site for further Gaelic publications

Naval Warfare

Part One

Naval warfare is an issue once more. In recent months we have seen the high seas piracy of the Israeli navy in action against a Turkish vessel attempting to break the blockade of Gaza. And now we have the publication of an article by Mr. Mark Cronin on *Naval Warfare* in the First World War contained in a book entitled *A Great Sacrifice—Cork Servicemen who died in the Great War*.

Mr. Cronin's name might ring a bell with readers of this magazine. The present writer was engaged in something of a debate with Mr. Cronin in the letters pages of *The Examiner* recently over Britain's Great War on Turkey. Mr. Cronin was keen to place responsibility for this war at the door of the Sublime Porte and we were interested to know what his interest was in the affair. But that has been cleared up. Pat Maloney recently sent me a copy of Mr. Cronin's chapter contained in the aforementioned 650-page book—which includes the names of the nearly 4,000 people from County Cork amongst the 49,000 people of Ireland who died whilst fighting with the British and Imperial forces in the Great War. Mr. Cronin's grandfather, Augustine Bermingham fought with the Royal Artillery in that war and this led to his interest in remembering it.

Mr. Cronin's chapter about *Naval Warfare* seems to be a pretty matter of fact affair about British naval operations in the Great War. Here is how it starts:

"Between August 1914 and November 1918 Cork sailors served on the smallest boats—tugs, trawlers and drifters; on the newest submarines; and on the huge dreadnoughts and battle cruisers. They laid mines off the coast, blockaded ports, borders and searched vessels, transported troops and supplies, and fought in naval battles such as Jutland and Coronel. And each and every one of them made a significant contribution to the eventual outcome of the war."

There is one major inaccuracy in this opening paragraph and that is to do with the dates at which these Cork sailors enforcing the blockade of Germany returned home (to a small nation that the 'war for small nations' obviously forgot). We know for a fact that the war blockade on Germany did not end in November

1918 but actually carried on past the Armistice into July 1919. So—unless the Royal Navy, in its benevolence, said to the Cork boys: "that's enough chaps" on the day of the Armistice, "we'll do the blockading ourselves from now on—it is quite probable that most of them served in this work for another eight months after the supposed end of hostilities.

Mr. Cronin writes:

"the Royal Navy began the war with most of its ships located in Scapa Flow in Scotland from where it could control the North Sea and blockade German ports by patrolling the waters between Scotland and Norway... it severely interrupted German merchant shipping. For its part the German Navy was equally cautious and never attacked troop or supply shipments steaming across the channel... from the Allied perspective the war at sea took a dramatic turn for the worse on the 04 February 1915 when Germany declared that it would implement a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare in all waters surrounding the British Isles... Now they would attack without warning although some assurances were given to neutral shipping, mainly to placate the United States... Many senior German naval officers felt the new campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare would finally cripple Britain and force her to sue for peace. They believed that such a move would substantially reduce the amount of vital war supplies reaching the Western front and they were cognizant of the fact that the failure of the high seas Fleet to lift the British blockade of Germany was now having a direct impact on the course of the war because food imports had fallen dramatically, the population was consuming many inferior substitute products and the number of deaths had occurred due to malnutrition. It was for all these reasons Germany resumed her campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare on 1 February 1917 and initially the new strategy proved successful... however this strategy ultimately proved to be counterproductive for Germany as it led the United States to enter the war on the side of the allies on 6 April... During the Great War British shipping carried over 23.7 million people, 2.25 million animals and 46.5 million tons of military stores and equipment which provided the logistic supply line that ultimately led to success in the field. Over 400 sailors from County Cork died at sea during the Great War."

In his letters to the *Examiner* Mr. Cronin

was inclined toward a rather benevolent view of Britain's role in the creation of the Great War against Turkey. He has the disposition, quite common today in Ireland, that England merely reacts to events in the world, confronting evil when it appears periodically and conducts its affairs in the interests of the greater good of humanity when it does.

However, Mr. Cronin's chosen subject of naval warfare in the Great War is a good illustration of how this is a false view and the view produced by the simplistic Remembrance that is deemed harmless and creditable these days.

The article by Mr. Cronin on '*Naval Warfare*' has led the present writer to the conclusion that this aspect of the Great War requires more serious and thorough treatment. Mr. Cronin's article presents a rather sanitized narrative of what the naval warfare of the Royal Navy was really all about during the Great War. It mentions the deaths of a few hundred Cork men imposing a blockade on Germany and other activities but it fails to note the half million or so Germans that perished as a result of that blockade. They are not mentioned on the Royal Navy Memorials at Plymouth, Portsmouth or in London and those who wish to engage in Remembrance about *Our War* do not seem to be too keen to remember them.

As I noted in last month's *Irish Political Review*, in the article *The Huns Of 1940*, the Royal Navy blockade of Germany was a decisive factor in Germany's defeat in the Great War. It proved to be totally effective in cutting off Germany's imports of food and material, and led to the German policy of unrestricted submarine warfare which brought America into the war. And the blockade was maintained for eight months after the official ending of the war—resulting in the starvation of more than half a million civilians, mostly children, in order to turn Germany's conditional surrender at the Armistice into an unconditional one in July 1919.

But the process by which England began to starve Germany into submission had taken shape in the mind of the British State a decade before the Great War.

The most important factor (along with perhaps the building of the Baghdad Railway) in the increasing English hostility to Germany before the Great War was the German decision to construct a navy to protect its growing commercial interests

in the world. Between 1907 and 1914 this was the issue that dominated relations between England and Germany.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, England was the supreme maritime power and the Royal Navy was the greatest military force in the world—which guaranteed that England was impregnable and that all its wars could be fought through choice or interest, rather than through defence or necessity.

England had emerged from the Napoleonic wars in complete command of the sea. No other nation seriously thought of disputing its naval supremacy. The command of the world market, the position of its overseas Empire and the power of

expanding it inevitably followed as a matter of course. After the Corn Laws had been repealed in England in the 1840s, Britain began to establish a global system of free trade to supply the industrial masses of British capitalism with cheap food. In the long-term this meant that Britain could no longer feed itself and was reliant on its Navy to protect the imports which fed the masses. And the embarking of Britain on this process, in time, forced the other industrializing powers of Europe to follow the British example.

After 1870 Germany became the most over-populated country in Europe. England had her "*Greater Britain*" to in which she could deploy her surplus population, but German colonies were

few and not in such fertile or inhabitable areas of the world. Not only was Germany the most densely populated place in Europe, it had the fewest natural resources and was hemmed in by hostile expansionist powers on both its flanks. On its eastern flank was Russia that controlled the Baltic and was mistress of Poland. In the West was France which had been sending armies into Germany since the Thirty Years War and Waterloo, and which had only been deterred from doing this after the defeat of its last foray in 1870-1.

During the 1880s, as a consequence of these conditions, German emigration soared, particularly to England. However, as Germany began to import raw materials and food stuffs, a more productive



A lithograph by
Kathe Kollwitz
commissioned in 1924
for use as a poster by
*Internationale
Arbeiterhilfe*

economy developed, the surplus population was put to good use, socialistic provisions were made, and emigration practically ceased. The downside, however, was that Germany became highly dependent on its imports of foreign raw materials and food stuffs—a fact noted by the British Admiralty and a number of political writers in England.

A group of writers on the editorial staff of the *Manchester Guardian*, including W.T. Arnold and C.E. Montague, began to write anti-German propaganda at this time. Arnold went on to produce articles for the *Spectator* and in 1903, a book entitled, *German Ambitions: As They Affect Britain And The United States*, in which he advocated the blockading of Germany into starvation by the Royal Navy, to ensure England's continued commercial supremacy in the world. Like the articles of Leo Maxse, written around the same time in order to define England strategic reorientation in the world, these articles were not the obsession of a crank but represented the popularizing of the policies of the British State:

"Germany has become dependent upon sea-borne trade. Her own harvest no longer feeds her. For one hundred and two days out of the yearly three hundred and sixty-five Germany is fed on foreign corn... She must import on a great scale, and she can only pay for her imports by a great export trade... From every point of view we come round to the same conclusion. Germany is absolutely dependent on foreign trade, and that trade cannot be regarded as secure unless protected by a great fleet. In all this Fleet-literature no term recurs so often as 'blockade'. This is what the Germans fear. An effective blockade of her Northern ports, coupled with a war on her East and West frontiers, would mean it impossible for Germany to feed herself, or to pay for food, supposing she could get it. The gains of the last twenty-five years would be lost for Hamburg and for Germany, and England would regain her old position of trade-supremacy... Short of war and blockade, the nightmare which haunts the German imagination is provided by the tendency to great exclusive trading areas which the Germans perceive in Russia, the United States, and France; and which they apprehend, however gratuitously, from Britain." (pp. 5-8.)

Germany depended on its trade for its growing prosperity and it could only maintain its standard of living by protecting its trade. The necessary development in German naval capacity parallel to the growth of its commerce and trade was entirely understandable. But that is where

it ran into a problem with England.

In 1905, when the British re-orientation against Germany was only in its formative stages, and honesty was still possible with regard to describing German motives in the world, Carlyon Bellairs of the Royal Navy—the *Round Table's* naval expert and member of the *Coefficient Dining Circle* (of Lord Grey, Lord Haldane, Halford Mackinder, Leo Maxse, Lord Milner etc.)—wrote the following estimation of Germany's prospects as a sea-power *vis-à-vis* England.

(The article *The Navy And The Empire* is included in the volume of essays, *The Empire And The Century*, in which every aspect of Imperial affairs was reviewed by influential and knowledgeable people, so it may be presumed that Bellairs knew what he was talking about and he represented the honest view of Naval thinking.)

Bellairs makes the point that because of the extreme cost of the production of modern battleships only a select few of the nations could even hope to compete with England:

"...Germany, in the attempt to build ships fit to engage vessels of the dreadnought type, must necessarily enlarge her existing docks and accommodation of the Kiel Ship Canal. The path chosen, however, is one along which Germany will be forced to follow Great Britain with much reluctance. She is bound to involve herself in a very large expenditure, which is merely accessory to fighting strength, and not the provision of fighting strength itself. This expense was certainly not foreseen when the Second German Navy Bill was passed in 1900 for an extraordinary expenditure of £94,000,000 by the year 1920 as regards works, and the year 1916 as regards ships. This great effort is being made under the great disadvantage of heavy expenditure connected with the defence of three important land frontiers, and a drain on resources through the military campaigns in the colonies. Great as are the advantages derived by Germany through the concentration of her navy, it involves the sacrifice of both colonies and distant commerce in face of a power which can more than hold its own in home waters, and is in the position to attack elsewhere. The present programme of two battleships per year can easily be rivaled by Great Britain. In a few years Germany will cease to enjoy the advantages a new navy confirms of a small pensioner or ineffective list, and but little wastage of ships to replace... As compared with the United States, France, and Russia, the German building resources are cheaper in their work and more efficient, but they cannot be compared with those of Great Britain, which exceed all Europe com-

bined. In 1901 the United Kingdom built 983,873 tons of shipping as compared with the record output for Germany of 132,873 in 1903... The French Parliament has now passed a vote which practically pledges the Government to build ship for ship against Germany, a course which, if pursued for a generation at the present rate of German shipbuilding, would entail, under the two power standard, a programme of four battleships a year for Great Britain" (pp201-2).

As Bellairs pointed out, because of the strength of the Royal Navy, Germany, in order to protect her commerce, was being reluctantly forced into building a larger navy. There was no suggestion that it was through any desire to overhaul England and dominate the world. And he also made the significant point that the naval arms race was going to be fueled, not by Germany's ambitions, but by France's decision to match her in naval capabilities. And, since the English standard of Naval building was the Two Power Standard, and France was now an ally of England, Germany would be forced by necessity into increasing its navy to ensure any sort of defence capability at all. (The Two-Power Standard or "*Two keels to one*" was the British policy, enshrined in the Naval Defence Act of 1889, to maintain a capacity greater than the next two strongest naval powers. This was based on the calculation that the Royal Navy could only be challenged through a combination of Powers—so the idea was to make sure that shipbuilding proceeded at a higher rate than that conducted by the strongest two naval powers on the continent. Prior to the Boer War, the Two-Power Standard had related to the French and Russian fleets but after the turn of the century it was based on the capacities of the German and American navies. When Germany began constructing a navy, the Admiralty would have loved to lay down a Three-Power Standard, but the Liberal Government balked at such expenditure.)

In May 1906 the Committee of Imperial Defense, the body set up to provide continuity of war policy at the higher levels of the British State to ensure that the growing democracy did not interfere with such things, began discussing naval war on Germany (along with assaulting Turkey through the Dardanelles). It noted that German trade with the British Empire represented a quarter of her total seaborne commerce and recommended that, in the event of war, the Royal Navy's home fleet be imposed between German ports and blue water in order to create severe distress to Germany's whole commercial and

industrial structure and population. After the second Hague Conference held in 1907 to discuss rules of contraband in relation to neutrality, an examination of the records of other Powers by the British delegates made them understand the significance of international trade to German survival and as a consequence heightened interest in the policy of blockade.

In July 1908 the British Admiralty issued new war orders placing responsibility for both the strategic conduct of war and the placement of the fleet upon the supervision of the entire Admiralty (rather than the command of the commander-in-chief) and drawing up a plan to concentrate a superior force of vessels in the North Sea. This force had as its objective the blockading of the German coast line and the preventing of all enemy maritime trade in the North Sea in order to draw out and force battle with the enemy fleet.

Writing to the First Lord of the Admiralty, Reginald McKenna, in December 1908, Rear Admiral Sir Charles Otle, Secretary to the Committee Imperial

Defence assured him that the policy of blockading Germany had been—

"Constantly under investigation during the three years I was DNI (Director of Naval Intelligence), and Admiral Slade tells me he has given particular attention to it since he succeeded me... The geographical position of this country and her preponderant sea power combines to give us a certain and simple means of strangling Germany at sea... The mills of our sea power (though they would grind the German industrial population slowly perhaps) would grind them 'exceedingly small'—grass would sooner or later grow in the streets of Hamburg and widespread death and ruin would be inflicted" (cited in A.J.A. Morris, *The Scaremongers*, p278).

None of this information appears in Mr. Cronin's *Naval Warfare*. Like all the work of the Remembrance historians, it is devoid of historical context and rendered as harmless as a Great War can be—and they wish it to be.

Pat Walsh

(In Part Two next month we examine the Irish Party in relation to British Naval Warfare)

ANYONE SEEN NEPTUNE'S TRIDENT?

The Trident system is composed of four
submarines. One is always on patrol,
going to sea for three months, pole-to-pole.
Nuclear-powered, sixteen missiles, door-to-door.
A prime minister's coded-fire-command.
Their range: seven thousand five hundred miles.
Each eight Hiroshimas, again defiled,
the world threatened with a city that was canned.
Usual Rule Britannia and those waves.
It is North Korea's turn to defy
and it is Iran who resists being slaves.
Revengeful spores cultivates, amplifies.
Think Iraq, Afghanistan and their graves.
Trident fired, island-nation petrified.

Wilson John Haire
23rd July, 2010

VIRTUE continued

own efforts and that it has suddenly been taken away by domestic corruption and Government incompetence. One of the most open economies in the world should have been made impervious to the world economy!

The Government should have known and should have done something. But neither the media nor the Opposition told it when it might have made a difference. And even now they cannot tell it what to do, only that what it is doing is morally repugnant.

"*NAMA is a moral abomination*". But what is the alternative? Should the loans be kept in the books of the banks at overstated values while they slowly repair their balance sheets as was done in Japan?

"*Anglo Irish Bank was a corrupt institution and should be closed down*". Does this mean the State should renege on the Bank Guarantee to depositors?

"The guarantee was wrong". Should the State have risked the collapse of the banking system?

It is one of the characteristics of the politics of virtue that its proponents exempt themselves from considering real world consequences.

We suspect that the level of support for the Opposition parties will diminish. In the meantime 16 years after the collapse of the Labour/Fianna Fáil coalition *The Irish Times* (21.7.10) reminded the Labour Party again of what it was. In an interview with Eamon Gilmore it extracted the following promise:

"We have made it clear all along that our intention is to get Fianna Fáil out of government in the next election,"

The interviewer then asked if Gilmore: "... would rather serve as tánaiste with Fine Gael than as taoiseach with Fianna Fáil?"

To which Gilmore replied:

"I want to be absolutely clear ... I don't want there to be any ambiguity about this. Fianna Fáil must be put out of government at the next election."

Despite the enormous changes that have occurred since Fine Gael was last in government Irish politics continues to revolve around the same axis.

It is Fianna Fáil versus the rest.



LABOUR

Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 28 No. 8

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

The Politics of Virtue

It remains to be seen if the era of Fianna Fáil dominance has come to an end or if the mould of Irish politics has been broken. *Labour Comment* cannot claim to know the future. It can only go on the evidence presented to it. On the evidence of the last month the appearance of change has masked a conservative sustance. That Eamon Gilmore would rather be Tánaiste in a Fine Gael Government than Taoiseach in a Fianna Fáil one shows that Labour has not departed from its traditional mindset. The system has stabilised because the Opposition has proved itself incapable of offering an alternative.

Since 1932 Fianna Fáil has dominated Irish politics. From time to time the second party, Fine Gael, has succeeded in forming a government with the help of Labour. And Labour has been content to fulfil this modest role.

Fine Gael considered that it, rather than Fianna Fáil, was the natural party of government and the basis for this was that it was morally superior to Fianna Fáil. Garret FitzGerald, who some thought was not a typical Fine Gaeler, denounced Charles Haughey for having a "flawed pedigree". The Fianna Fáiler's flaws were not merely a reflection of flawed moral choices but were congenital.

What is the source of Fianna Fáil "corruption"? Perhaps the original sin was its opposition to the Treaty. One could make a very strong case that the Treaty was the best that could be achieved, but the Republicans who were active in the War did not like it presented as a *fait accompli*. Fianna Fáil based itself on this active element. The pro-Treaty party preferred to rely on the moral authority that an agreement negotiated under duress with the British Empire gave it. An authority which is independent of the

society proved a flimsy basis for political success but the party could say that it retained its virtue.

Fianna Fáil, on the other hand, harnessed the active elements in the society and undermined the Treaty settlement at every opportunity. But such an active engagement with the society has its risks because the people are all too human.

It is the silly season, so last month we had the spectacle of Fine Gael TD Lucinda Creighton denouncing her party on moral grounds, but that was an amusing sideshow from someone who takes the morality of the *Sunday Independent* seriously. Perhaps she should join the Labour Party!

Labour has been the social conscience of Fine Gael. Every so often it threatens to be something else, but nothing ever comes of it. In 1992 Labour went into coalition with Fianna Fáil and for a brief period there was a possibility that it would become something else. There was talk of Dick Spring becoming Taoiseach but the

pressure of not being itself was too much for Labour. In 1994 Spring had shown remarkable skill in outmanoeuvring Albert Reynolds over the appointment of a conservative Attorney General to the Supreme Court. The formal basis for Reynolds's resignation as Taoiseach was flimsy but there was a substantial political objective that had been achieved. The Attorney General Harry Whelehan and ultimately Reynolds had become an obstacle to liberal reform. Their removal represented a substantial victory for supporters of liberal and social reform.

The conservative Reynolds was succeeded as leader of Fianna Fáil by Bertie Ahern who had labour sympathies.

But at the moment of truth *The Irish Times* was on hand to remind Labour what it was and that it could not be anything else. A story by Geraldine Kennedy claimed that whatever wrong Reynolds did—and 16 years later we find it too tedious to recall never mind write about it—the Fianna Fáil Front Bench knew about it and therefore was implicated in Reynolds's wrongdoing.

Labour decided that Fianna Fáil was unfit for Government. The moral humbug had become more important than the fact of Reynold's removal. There was no more talk of rotating Taoiseachs. Labour returned to the arms of Fine Gael in the manner of a prodigal who had been out in the world but had realised the error of his ways. And throughout the Celtic Tiger era it retained its virtue in opposition.

But now that the Celtic Tiger has expired, it appears that the Irish people have discovered an appetite for virtue. The media have nurtured the belief that the Celtic Tiger was created by the people's

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Irish Political Review is published by the IPR Group: write to—

1 Sutton Villas, Lower Dargle Road
Bray, Co. Wicklow or

PO Box 339, Belfast BT12 4GQ or

PO Box 6589, London, N7 6SG, or

Labour Comment,

C/O Shandon St. P.O., Cork City.
TEL: 021-4676029

Subscription by Post:

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€ 30, Ireland; € 35, Europe.

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€ 15 / £12 for 12 issues
(or € 1.30 / £1.10 per issue)

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