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Existential Crises

The Irish body politic is broken—so says the *Irish Times*, taking the wish for the deed.

"We are not the citizens any more of a vibrant, confident state, but of a broken polity. We are no longer the masters we believed ourselves to be of our own fates, but hapless players of hands dealt us by others, by huge uncontrollable forces beyond our understanding. Old attachments and certainties to and about institutions like Church and State, to which our parents clung with what now seems naive optimism, and which to a great extent defined their sense of identity for good and ill, were castles built on sand..." (St. Patrick's Day)

What has changed in political life in recent years to warrant all of this?

Well, the PDs, of which the Editor of the *Irish Times* was a fervent founder member, has exterminated itself. That is saddening for her of course, but how did it affect the "polity". What it signified was utter failure to disrupt the "polity". The purpose of the PDs was to break up Fianna Fail, which has been the stable core of the "polity" for eighty years, whether in Government or Opposition. But, while the PDs bit hard, the dog it was that died.

The only other change we can think of is that the Greens stopped being a mere protest movement against the way of the world, became a party with serious political intent, and joined Fianna Fail in Government.

Fianna Fail is in office, while the secondary parties, of Left and Right, are trying to get themselves joined up to form a Coalition Government when Fianna Fail eventually loses an election. If our grandparents came back to have a look, they'd wonder why things never change here.

Fintan O'Toole has said that "*we are in the middle of an existential crisis for this State*" (20.4.10). While that does not apply to the "polity", it might be applied to Labour.

The Labour Party doesn't know what it is supposed to be. It has never since it stood down in 1918 so that there might be a clear electoral mandate for an independent Republic—and four years later contested the bogus Treaty Election and joined the Free State Dail for the dismantling of the Republic.

It is now in the hands of the Stickies, the 'Official Republicans' of 1970, who were 'national liberation' terrorists for a while, were Moscow style Marxist-Leninists for another while, and were Ulster Unionists as well, before becoming social-democrats and joining the Labour Party. They took it over and remade it into a businessman's party. The latter change had just been completed when the business crisis struck, and memories had to be cudgelled in order to recall the old, discarded slogans.

Fine Gael forgot long ago what it is supposed to be. It just hangs around waiting for a lucky spin of the wheel of fortune. If it gets into office after the next election, it will not be the first time that it formed a government with former bank-robbers.

Ten years ago, the grandparents would have noticed a great change. Haughey had launched us on "*uncontrollable forces beyond our understanding*". We rode those forces recklessly for a decade and a half—there was really no other way to ride them. Sinn Fein was a thing of the past. But the cosmopolitan world into which we threw ourselves went awry (as it was always certain that it would, the only uncertainty being the date) and threw us back on ourselves again. Arthur Griffith would not have been surprised by either phase of that development. He did not devise Sinn Fein as an ideal to set against the world. He was for involvement in the world, but he saw that the world was not a functional unity, but an interaction between distinct national parts.

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"It takes a worried man, to sing a worried song"

Garret Fitzgerald is seriously worried about the current direction of the EU. This should be a grave matter for all his acolytes, such as Brigid Laffan. Garret was her mentor and was the personification of the good European—which in Ireland meant a naive Panglossian faith that the EU could not go wrong.

Garret never got the hang of why the European project was set up. It was to keep Britain out of European affairs after the culmination of its balance of power game that led to two World Wars had destroyed Europe. But how could an anglophile like Garret ever conceive of such a thing? Instead we have had years of *râiméis* from him and his fellow travellers. All very detailed, factual and analytical but constantly missing the point.

Now, just when his party colleague Varadkar calls him boring, he actually gets interesting. He writes:

"Governance of EU has evolved in a disturbing direction. The recent European Council on the Greek crisis showed that the Big Three now dominate proceedings. What Greece got was an arrangement under which, if necessary, it could be offered loans of €25 billion—two-thirds from other EU member states, and one-third from the International Monetary Fund. Any such loans would not be "soft" ones, but would be offered at market interest rates. This scheme was seen as an *ultima ratio*, or last resort. It is not clear how this arrangement will help Greece. *Financial Times* columnist Wolfgang Munchau has argued that such loans could provide only psychological support—which he described as a "*dangerous confidence trick*" that would backfire. Meanwhile, Standard Poor's said that its rating of Greek public debt would be unaffected by the European Council decision... It is now clear that the flagrant failure of quite a small country such as Ireland to maintain its tight pre-entry euro zone discipline, and of Greece

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There is no real doubt that Ireland has been a substantial net gainer from its adventure with the *"uncontrollable forces beyond our understanding"*.

There are no general rules for success in the pseudo global market, only particular judgment from moment to moment. We recall in the 1990s, when the USA and Britain were levering open protected economies in Asia, having tolerated Protection during the Cold War as a measure for minimising the appeal of Communism. The anti-Protection campaign was waged as an anti-Corruption campaign. Dr. Mahatir of Malaysia refused to open the economy to the *"uncontrollable forces"*. He was denounced as a corrupt Godfather of crony capitalism by Ameranglia—and, of course, by the *Irish Times*, the voice of Whitehall in Ireland. He paid no heed. Malaysia stayed healthy during the *"Asian flu"* contracted by the obedient states a few years later. And one does not hear of it as a basket case today.

Our parents built castles on sand, the *Irish Times* charges. It does not say where else there was to build them. Ameranglian capitalism, which gained the power to run most of the world in 1945, and the rest of

it in 1990, determined that the medium of economic activity should be like shifting sands. In America itself, ever since the genocide, cities have come and gone like mushrooms. The culture is dedicated to flux. And the condition of permanent flux, which it chose for itself, obliged it to throw the world into flux as it gained control over it.

We cannot establish dominance over the USA, or even over Britain. The terms of existence have been set for us. So let us get on with it, and let us praise such castles on sand as we manage to build.

It is not because the *Irish Times* thinks there is solid building ground somewhere that it carps about what was done here.

The existential crisis which Fintan O'Toole is going through, on behalf of the insensitive state which is failing to experience it, is no doubt connected with the inability of the Tribunals to do what the *Irish Times* itself failed in its ambitious attempt to do. The Moriarty Tribunal, as reported on another page, is ending as farce, having forgotten a letter it had from the relevant Attorney General, and conversations it had with him, and remembering a letter which, as far as can be

ascertained, it was not sent. And this was all because Denis O'Brien saw the draft report expressing fact-free opinion and let it be known that he would take legal action to force the Tribunal to face the facts. And O'Brien is a rich man, which makes him obnoxious. He made his money in the market-place, instead of being gifted it in the *Irish Times* hot-house, or drawing it in exorbitant legal fees in the Tribunal racket, and he offended nature by not going West British as he got rich.

It cost him an awful lot of money to bring the Tribunal to order in the handling of evidence, and in curbing the fact-free reporting on the basis of loose procedures which a Court had judged to be lawful in a case brought Liam Lawlor's widow (in respect of a different Tribunal). Tribunal procedures have been slipshod and uncertain, more appropriate to vendettas than to either civil or criminal law. And law is in any case a kind of commodity—the more you can buy of it, the more notice it will take of you. The unusual feature of this case is that a very wealthy capitalist was willing to spend an awful lot of money to put manners on a Tribunal which could have done him no real damage if he had let it be—but might have done great damage to the country, even to the point of giving it an existential problem.

R.V. COMERFORD

The *Irish Times* on April 9th carried a report of a launch of a book by Professor R.V. Comerford, who himself recently published a book rejecting the 'two nations' view of the Northern crisis on the ground that nations are imagined entities, made by human contrivance, rather than products of nature, like dogs and cats.

The 'two nations' view of this magazine was set out forty years ago on the grounds that nations were historical forms brought about by human contrivance, and not natural products, and were therefore subject to change. Professor Comerford, like the Tribunals, forms fact-free opinions about facts.

The book he launched is *Outside The Glow: Protestants And Irishness* by Heather Crawford. According to the report, it concludes that because of "memories", and "residual religious ethic and cultural tension", Protestants could not have "an authentic Irish identity". Religious, ethic and cultural tensions are pretty comprehensive. If the GAA etc. are binned as divisive, Protestants can then have "authentic Irish identity"—whatever that will be then.

There are many Protestants for whom being Irish does not seem a problem, and who do not see being English as the authentic way of being Irish. They are intimidated and brainwashed, according to the Anglican Bishop of Cork.

If it is impossible for Protestants to be

Irish after living for 90 years in an Irish state, surely that suggests that national differences, if not quite products of nature, are far from being imaginary. Professor Comerford needs to get his act together!

THE BRITISH ELECTION

All 'parties' in the North are contesting the British Election as usual without having any real stake in it.

The only real party is Sinn Fein, because it is an all-Ireland party which has the normal aim of a political party, which is to form the Government of a state. The state which it aspires to govern is not Northern Ireland, which is not a state, but the Irish state, in which it hopes to include the Six Counties.

The Ulster Unionist Party used to have a token connection with the Tory Party. It ended that connection in 1972, when a Tory Government abolished the old Stormont system. Last year, having lost heavily to the DUP, it sought to avoid extinction by becoming part of the Tory Party. In the 1980s, when there was an agitation in the North to bring it within the British party system, the UUP opposed it. Now, by becoming part of the Tory Party, it lost its only MP, whose British alignment was with the Labour Party.

Having declared itself to be part of the Tory Party, and to be engaged in a new departure, it then made overtures to the DUP for an electoral agreement very much on the old Unionist lines. A small Tory group had been allowed to establish itself in the North some years ago. It included a number of Catholics. The merger of the UUP with the Tory Party brought these Tories with it. When the UUP, under its peculiar new name, began negotiations with the DUP for an election pact, some of these members objected strenuously that they had not become members of the Tory Party to be transferred into Orange Unionism, and they refused to stand as candidates. In order to retain them, Cameron had to rule an election pact with the DUP absolutely out of the question.

As we go to print, we learn that the DUP and the UUP have agreed not to contest the Fermanagh/South Tyrone seat, but to support an independent candidate, Rodney Connor. Or that they have decided separately to do this without agreeing about it—they have made an agreement without "official knowledge" of it, as Mrs. Thatcher said about her arms deal with Iran on behalf of President Reagan.

It is not clear if Cameron turned a blind eye to this chicanery by the Ulster section of his party.

There is no real difference between the SDLP and Sinn Fein, except that Sinn Fein is much better at tending to the political interests of the Catholic community than the SDLP is. There is perhaps a vestige of historical difference from the

There is time and space in life for romance

Es Ahora (Irish Political Review, April 2010) describes a controversy about Ryszard Kapuscinski: he was berated by Timothy Garton-Ash for blurring the line between fiction and "non-fiction". Garton-Ash is only known to me as one of the most self-important opinionists in the *Guardian* newspaper. Kapuscinski is known to me from two books: his *Shadow of the Sun*, and a book about the Angolan conflict. The latter seemed to be a quite dry factual piece of reportage. The former was a beautifully written book. I discovered it about a decade ago when a dear friend was going to Africa for a couple of years, and gave it to her as a going-away present. I took the time to read it and was proud that I had found such a nice gift for her.

History, they used to say, is written by the victors. Today it's written by any Tom, Dick or Harry. Any reader of *Irish Political Review* knows that, from its investigations of the reality of Ireland's War of Independence and the fiction that has been written about it.

Kapuscinski is not an historian: he is a journalist and a fine writer. And he gave me some insights into a continent which at that time I had not visited. And that is valuable. Similarly, reading Dostoyevsky and Solzhenitsyn gave me an insight to Russia which no academic text could provide. It may well be a skewed insight that such writers provide, but at least they are a pleasure to read.

By the way, I have just begun Kapuscinski's last book: *Travels with Herodotus*: the title might have given Garton-Ash a clue: Herodotus was known as the "Father of Liars" for his mixing of history and myth. **Tom Doherty**

Irish Army And The Cutbacks

As pensioners shiver, the Grand Old Duke of York prepares to march.

Times are hard. Much belt-tightening is required. The old-age pensioners will not be getting their fuel allowance. Still, there is a financial crisis going on... On the other hand we can all sleep sound in our beds, knowing that there is a commitment to maintain the strength of the Irish Army at 10,000. Ten thousand is a good round figure, very reminiscent of the Grand Old Duke of York.

Just one question: what the hell do we need an army that size? We had about 2,500 in 1969, times are hardly more dangerous today. An Irish Army of 10,000 is useless for defence purposes. It could not stop any likely invader (though I cannot think of any potential invaders just at the moment). We could not stop an invasion with an army twice that size. And it is not the way we fight. We did have invaders once, for a few centuries, and they were driven out by guerrilla warfare, not by uniformed heroics. We could not stop an invasion, but we could make an invader very uncomfortable. A real Irish defence policy would be to increase the size of the FCA and—as used to be the case up to sometime in the 1970s—let the FCA take their weapons home with them. It would not prevent an invasion, but that many personnel with some military training and weapons available would be the basis for a decent insurgency. It would also, particularly given our history, be more likely to give any potential invader more pause than a 10,000 strong standing army which could easily be wiped out by superior airpower.

So if it is not about defence, what is it about? O'Dea wants a "deployable army" and has fantasies of playing his tiny part in liberal imperial adventures in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. They are not our wars, and they are not going well (have they caught that Saudi playboy Osama binLadin yet? No?). O'Dea and co want to send Irish troops to die in places a very long way from Tipperary in a fight that has nothing to do with us so that he can strut the world stage (even if only in a very small way). And what will pay for it all? Shivering Irish pensioners. We have truly lost the run of ourselves.

Wee Willy, our own pocket-sized Grand Old Duke of York, playing cowboys and Indians at Dell HQ in Texas (where else?) **Sean Mac Suaine**

Editorial Note: The actual strength of the Irish Army in 1969 was 8,416. In addition there was the First Line Reserve and the FCA (see p83-4, *Military Aspects Of Ireland's Arms Crisis* by Angela Clifford). Willie O'Dea is the former Minister for Defence.

time of the war, but during the war that difference was essentially spurious. The SDLP at one point considered a new departure in alliance with the UUP but never embarked on it. In the absence of any difference of principle or policy now, Sinn Fein proposed an election pact. The

SDLP refused to consider it. The question now is whether the SDLP will set its own fantasising life above the interests of the Catholic community in Fermanagh, despite the Pan-Partitionist arrangement between the supposed Tories and the DUP.

Worried Song

continued

ever to have achieved this discipline, has the capacity to destabilise the whole monetary area." (IT 3 April)

So the solution offered to Greece is "*no solution*". It is a piece of sticking plaster with fingers crossed. True. But, more important, because of the IMF involvement it means that the EU has not the confidence in itself to sort out a minor problem. With full participation in NATO and now with acceptance of the IMF, the EU has declared the end of any independent role in the world and thereby declared its own futility.

A word that Garret, like everybody else, would have thrown around for years was *subsidiarity*—and it usually acted as a conversation stopper. It sounded so profound. In reality what this meant was the principle of federalism. But that word could not be mentioned. Britain saw to that and Garret was not going to argue the merits of federalism with the British.

Subsidiarity/federalism means decisions and responsibilities being taken at appropriate levels. That should have been applied to countries, and any other revenue raising authorities, when it came to managing their budgets. And people have to learn from their mistakes. Any other approach means a higher authority taking the responsibility and the control of such matters—treating them like children.

The Eurozone has got itself into the worst of all worlds. It advocates that countries don't incur deficits but will not let them take the consequences when they do so; and it has not the power to control and compel these economies to prevent deficits. It is a situation that maximises conflict and aggravation between Member States and there is no longer a greater moral authority than Member States looking after themselves.

It is quite natural and healthy from a national point of view to put one's own interest above all else—but the same tendency a virus if one had still any concept of the integration of Europe. But the virus is now virulent.

One other useful aspect of a clear and open federal approach would be that the Germans would understand what people were talking about and that would be most helpful at the moment. If there is not mutual understanding with the Germans on basics, there's trouble ahead and it's not Germany's fault.

FitzGerald continues:

"The proceedings of this recent meeting of heads of government have drawn attention to the fact that since the European Council was established at the Paris Summit in 1974, the governance of the European Union has greatly evolved—in

what I regard as a disturbing direction. In 1974, with the support of the Benelux countries and of a courageous French president of the commission, François Ortoli, I succeeded in blocking an attempt by the three large states to use this new body as a means of bypassing the commission's role of legislative initiative, which has always provided protection for small states. For a long period thereafter the heads of government of the three larger states, unwilling to submit themselves to taking decisions exclusively on the basis of commission proposals, confined themselves at European Council meetings to broad "orientations". This left actual decisions on implementing commission proposals to ministers attending different formations of the ministerial council—each of them supported by civil servants with their own specialised expertise. This has all changed, and there are now four formal councils each year, plus two informal ones—together with extra meetings for specific purposes."

So the heads of the three major states were looking for ways out of the community approach for decades! If Garret was so aware of this danger, it is surprising he never pointed it out when it mattered, i.e., during the years of debate leading up to Lisbon which has sanctioned the dominance of the major states. Garret wrote and said plenty during those years but missed the wood for the trees.

It was rather unfair to describe James I as the wisest fool in Christendom but Garret now qualifies himself as the cleverest fool in the whole Irish constellation on Europe.

He goes on to describe some realities about decision taking at the present time:

"Meetings of the European Council tend to be dominated by the Big Three, because, in contrast to the period when there were only nine member states, and five or six of them could easily combine to oppose undesirable developments, 27 states, some with divergent interests, are much more difficult to mobilise in defence of their common interests... While foreign ministers attend the actual meetings of the European Council, in the evening the heads of government and foreign ministers dine separately. No doubt the informality of these occasions has its own merit, but the absence of any authoritative record of any decisions now effectively made at the heads of government level can cause problems—especially for foreign ministers who then have to implement whatever may have been decided. I recall that at a much earlier, and very messy, heads of government meeting in Copenhagen in late 1973, prior to the formal establishment of regular council meetings, we foreign ministers received no coherent account from our bosses of what they had agreed at their "fireside chat". As a result we had to invent a fictitious account of what might have happened! This is what can happen when

heads of government meet on their own, without even a notetaker!"

The logic of this is that the Commission should have been given more power as the Community enlarged, but the very opposite happened! Who stood for more Commission power—nobody. Of course the opponents of Europe did not. But why not the supporters? They lacked either the guts or understanding and probably both. They relied instead on fear, demagoguery, money and sheer spoofing *à la* Pat Cox. The latter did more of course—he actively helped destroy the Commission's authority. Ireland certainly played above its weight in that despicable episode. And all were so proud of him!

This description by Garret puts the whole Lisbon rigmarole in perspective. All the rhetoric and legalese means absolutely nothing when the chips are down. And the chips are always down for heads of state. If Lisbon had been able to ensure a notetaker at Heads of Government meetings and nothing else it would have been a useful exercise. Instead it represented nothing more than years and years of displacement activity.

The chickens are coming home to roost when even Garret Fitzgerald sees serious problems about the governing of the EU. But, to mix the farmyard metaphors, the horses have bolted and the doors cannot be closed.

Jack Lane

STATELESS

Filled trenches, the barrack
streets of Belfast.
Cold winds, rain, lashes
the cemetery
where lies warfare
without symmetry,
first as peace then as
apartheid recast.
They brought war as peace-keeping
on their tanks.
Now the guns sleep, bombs snore,
for the long-haul,
and,
they keep space on marble
in Whitehall.
This talk of democracy
so much cant.
With nothing but the emblems
of a state,
empty flags flutter
over a pretence.
Coloured kerbs cry out
incandescent hate.
How can this crude culture
be recompense,
when state power by a nation
deactivates
nightmare into dream
as inoffensive.

Wilson John Haire
29th March, 2010

REPORT: This report fills out the remarks which appeared in the last issue of *Irish Political Review*

13th Annual Roger Casement Symposium

Buswell's Hotel, Dublin
28th November 2009

JACK MOYLETT

In his introduction, the Secretary of the Roger Casement Foundation, Jack Moylett, spoke of how the Foundation had recently got the Write-On computer programme up and running. This specialized software system has been developed to facilitate the study and analysis of handwriting and handwritten documents. It allows comparable samples of handwriting to be brought together on screen for viewing, examination and analysis. For example, it allows hundreds of handwritten occurrences of the same word to be viewed on the one screen for purpose of comparison.

Documents, either in the original or in the form of good quality copies have to be scanned into the system. The resulting digital copies have to be catalogued in the computer's memory. Corresponding exactly faithful typescripts for each document have also to be entered into the system and catalogued. Much of these are already available as digital files which can be obtained from various sources and automatically copied into the computer. Others will have to be typed in manually. There is a great deal of work to be done.

All the questioned diary material will be scanned into the system. When all the source data, consisting of a large and varied amount of samples of Casement handwriting, both authentic and alleged, has been scanned in, and it is accompanied by corresponding texts, and has been catalogued, the resulting database will be available to interested experts.

At the end Moylett read out to the audience a moving collection of thoughts Casement had written down the day before he was executed. The words came across as vital and immediate. Casement's dominating thought, he said, was that Ireland would, as far as possible, be kept out of the Great War then raging. He also referred to the spiritual comfort he derived from the Catholic faith which he had, in his final days, accepted.

PAUL CULLEN

The title of this talk was "*The Prerogative of Grace*". The theme centered on a number of paintings by Sir John Lavery. He was married to the striking American born Hazel, a woman younger than him by twenty years. Hazel, also known as Lady Lavery had been a source of fascination, in turn, for Michael Collins and then Kevin O'Higgins.

Sir John had produced two versions of his painting of the Central Court of Appeal hearing of the Casement case. He wrote of

the paintings in his biography, *Life Of A Painter* which appeared in 1940.

It appears Sir John had been in the habit of leaving coded messages in his paintings. One of the versions of the painting has Casement, from his seat in the courtroom, waving goodbye to a mysterious woman.

MICHEÁL MACDONNCHA

The title of this talk was "*Roger Casement, Irish Unionism and Irish Unity*". The speaker has for a long time been a member of Sinn Fein.

Regarding the question of forgery, Mac Donncha spoke of such activities as intrinsic to the way Britain operated at the time of the independence struggle. There had been a case where Dáil Eireann notepaper had been used to make apparent threats against certain individuals. Thus the Dáil, as a respectable political assembly, was being brought into disrepute, not only nationally but internationally. The threatening statements were forgeries. *The Irish Bulletin*, the main publicity sheet of the movement, got out the message that forgery had been involved. This foiled the British in what they had attempted to do. Also forged editions of the *Irish Bulletin* itself were used by the British in an attempt to fool journalists.

At the end of his days Casement had as his "*central purpose*" the fight for Irish independence. In his writings he made a case for Irish unity and sovereignty. Given the above, and the British penchant for forgery, unless proven genuine, the questioned 'black diary' matter must be presumed to be bogus.

In answer to a question from the floor MacDonncha stated that there was no Sinn Féin 'party line' regarding the Diaries question. He had been nineteen years on the party Ard Cómhairle and all that time there had never been a fixed party position on the matter. He did say that the notion that belief in forgery amounted to homophobia was false. Most republicans believe the Diaries have been forged. This did not automatically mean they were homophobes.

He went on to say that a most important aspect of Casement was that he was a freedom fighter and anti-imperialist with an insight into the upper-class Protestant mind-set.

The Tories had a lot to do with the fostering and development of Unionism. The support of the high Tories had given the Unionists a sense of superiority. In 1912 James Craig toured Britain. At one meeting Bonar Law, leader of the Conservatives and Craig addressed a crowd of

20,000.

The Rev. J.B. Armour of Ballymoney supported Home Rule. In October 1913 there was a public meeting of Protestant Home Rulers in Ballymoney, among them Rev. Armour. Casement and Jack White, and Alice Stopford-Green spoke. Casement denounced partition and said the real Government appeared to be among the mutineers in the Curragh.

Connolly had predicted partition would spawn on both sides of the border "*a carnival of reaction*". This is what happened. Casement saw partition as the fruits of "*deliberately fostered sectarian divisions*". In the south a Catholic confessional state developed. In the north Orangeism promoted a discriminatory state which favoured Protestants.

The Good Friday Agreement of 1998 has brought about a new dispensation. Now, in the north, "*parity of esteem*" defines the relationship between the communities. This has been a sea change for Unionists. In practice the Assembly and the All Ireland bodies do not operate as they should. More progress needs to be made.

The transfer of policing and security powers to the Assembly is still awaited. The Democratic Unionist Party is dragging its heels. [NB: this was said in November 2009.]

The new dispensation can be observed in the way Republicans and Unionists cooperate in Local Authorities and Councils in the north in a way that would have not happened in the past. The only viable destination for northern politics is one in which partition is ended. This outcome however, can not be taken for granted nor taken as guaranteed.

What has Casement to say to us today? He is of interest as a republican from a northern Protestant background. Jack Bennett, himself from a northern Unionist background, defined Irishness in 1963, the bicentenary of Wolfe Tone as "*afusion ...blended in the crucible of history...*". The "*two nations theory*" is self evidently false. Thomas Kinsella in his poem on Bloody Sunday called "Butchers Dozen" used the phrase "mongrel pure". There was the Deputy Editor of *An Phoblacht* in the 1930s, Jeff Coulter, who also had belonged to a northern Protestant family.

MacDonncha finished with a quotation from Casement: "*a nation*" was the result of "*many converging streams*".

A discussion ensued prompted by questions from the floor. One questioner took issue with the notion that Casement understood the northern Protestant mind-set. The questioner, himself an Ulster Unionist, claimed that Casement particularly failed to understand the northern Presbyterian outlook and the force and

commitment behind Presbyterian opposition to Home Rule.

TIM O'SULLIVAN

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

The organizer of the investigation and report by Dr Giles one Dr. W.J. McCormack wrote a book; *Roger Casement In Death* (2002). The book attempts to put forward a thesis that the idea that the Casement diaries now known as the 'black diaries', had been forged by British Intelligence, originated in the 1930s. It had, it was suggested, originated as a conspiracy theory among a group of men of strongly Irish Republican sympathies, chief of them being Dr Moloney, the author of *the Forged Casement Diaries*, published in 1936.

In the Introduction Casement's first biographer Denis Gwynn is mentioned. McCormack's language is elaborate and obtuse. "*Since the days of Denis Gwynn (who was discrete though undecieved), Casement's biographers have broadly accepted the implications of truth behind the stories of scandalous diaries*" claims McCormack.

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

The speaker (this writer) then drew attention to what Gwynn actually wrote in 1930. On page 18 he said:

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

Gwynn went on to advance more arguments for his scepticism regarding the diaries being those of Casement, diaries the existence of which at that time was neither officially confirmed nor denied.

Gwynn did not rule out forgery. From the text, it is apparent he thought it possible Casement had transcribed material originating from someone else as part of his investigations and these writings had been deliberately and purposefully misconstrued. Gwynn, as already quoted,

expressed great skepticism towards the notion the record of "*indecent experiences*" originated with Casement himself. Yet one would never deduce this from what Dr. McCormack had written in his book.

A large bundle of letters dating from the 1920s and 1930s were auctioned at Sotheby's, London on 17th December 2008. It would appear from the details provided by the auctioneer that they had belonged to the Parry family, descendants of Casement's cousin Gertrude Bannister. The collection was titled "*Lot 7 - Casement, Roger—A collection relating to his diplomatic career and posthumous reputation*". It included 36 letters related to the threatened publication of the Diaries in 1925 by Peter Singleton-Gates. All in all it came to 170 pages.

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

TRALEE CONFERENCE

There was a day long conference on Casement in Tralee on 3rd August 2009. It was titled *The Roger Casement Gathering*. Hopes were expressed it will become an annual event.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Martin Mansergh TD. The speech covered many themes among them the question of the Diaries. Mansergh referred to the "*pornographic diaries*", saying he retained "*an open mind*" as regards possible forgery. Regarding the "*white*" and "*black*" Diaries for 1910, there was "*an extraordinary contrast of tone*". In one account Casement was "*high-minded and idealistic*", in the other "*cynical and contemptuous of other human beings*".

He had read all (Government) files on the matter from the 30s, 40s, 50s and 60s.

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

These exercises "*take the party line*" because of the dictates of an official

mindset. He said he did not believe there was any sort of conspiracy underfoot. Concluding, he said he believed "*no proper and thorough test has taken place*".

Tim O'Sullivan

Roger Casement: The Crime Against Europe. With *The Crime Against Ireland* Introduction by B. Clifford.
184pp. AB, 2003. €13, £9.99.

Meath History Workshop

ANNUAL SEMINAR

Dear Friends,

The Meath History workshop successfully held its second gathering in the Navan Library on 13 February last. 12 people attended and we were addressed by Liam McNiffe and Seamus MacGabhann as arranged.

Our first annual seminar is going ahead as planned on **Saturday 15 May 2-5pm** in the **Knights of Columbanus Hall**, Cannon Row, Navan. This seminar is open to the general public and will be advertised more widely as the date approaches. Please mark it in your diary now.

The topic is **Parnellism and Meath.**

This encompasses not just the period from 1875 - when Parnell was elected MP for Meath in a by-election - until his premature death (aged 45) in 1891, but also the subsequent period until 1900, notably the controversial Meath by-elections of 1892-93.

Our two keynote speakers will be RTE Radio presenter Myles Dungan, currently researching for a PhD on Parnell and the Fourth Estate, and David Lawlor, author of *Divine Right?: the Parnell split in Meath*. Noel French and myself will also join the speakers' panel to say a few words.

Background Reading

We will all be better prepared for the seminar and get more out of it if we do some background reading beforehand.

Recommended:

David Lawlor, *Divine Right?: the Parnell Split in Meath* (Cork University Press, 2007), 265pp.

For basic background:

Noel French, *The Honourable Member for Meath: Parnell's local connections* (Meath Heritage Centre, Trim, 1998), 44pp. booklet.

Copies available in most libraries and bookshops (price €4) in Meath. Also from Noel, who is offering free copies to seminar participants, at the Heritage Centre Trim. Also of interest is Myles Dungan's article on Parnell and the 1877 forgery case involving Meath-born Richard Pigott in the Irish Times Weekend Review (13 February 2010), p.6.

Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

ANGLO IRISH BANK RESULTS

A review of the Financial Statements of Anglo-Irish Bank indicates that the least costly option is to keep it going.

Brian Lenihan thinks that it will cost 27.3 billion euros to close it down within a year. Richard Bruton has argued that the losses are Seanie FitzPatrick's and should not be borne by the State. Unfortunately, in September 2008 the Government with the support of Fine Gael (and *the Long Fellow*) introduced a Bank Guarantee Scheme to protect Depositors and Bond Holders (the liabilities of the bank). This prevented a collapse in the banking system. It also meant that Anglo-Irish's problems became our problems.

Anglo has about 81 billion in liabilities: most of these will crystallise within a short period of liquidation. This is an enormous figure when it is considered that the total national debt is about 79 billion. The problem with Anglo, as with the other banks, is that its assets (the loans to developers and others) have been difficult to value. However, it is indisputable that those assets would diminish significantly in value in the event of a fire sale.

Joan Burton of Labour thinks that if the Bank were liquidated it could avoid paying €2.3 billion in subordinated debt. But she doesn't say how she proposes to deal with the remaining €79 billion in liabilities, most of which are covered by the Guarantee.

In the Dáil she said that the Anglo management was not prepared to negotiate with Bondholders, but nothing could be further from the truth. In its last financial period it made a profit of €1.76 billion on the repurchase of its financial liabilities.

Karl Whelan on the irisheconomy.ie web site thinks he has discovered another €11.5 billion that Anglo can avoid paying in the event of liquidation. Apparently, this is money owed to the Irish Central Bank and therefore doesn't really count as a liability! The facts of the matter are that, if Anglo is liquidated, this €11.5 billion will have to be written off by the State. If, on the other hand, the bank remains as a going concern there is a reasonable prospect that this debt will be recovered.

In normal circumstances it would be perfectly rational to close down a loss making firm, but there are good reasons for avoiding this in the case of Anglo Irish Bank. Anglo's problems relate to the past. The losses result from new and more accurate information about past decisions. They do not relate to decisions made by

the current management. The company made an operating profit before "provisions for impairment" of €2.4 billion. Write-offs of loans made in the FitzPatrick/Drumm era amounting to €15 billion turned a profitable set of figures into a record loss of almost €13 billion. Closing down the company will make this legacy issue even more expensive.

ANGLO-IRISH BANK CORRUPTION

Al Capone is supposed to have said that it is better to own a bank than to rob it. That must have been the guiding principle of the former Directors of Anglo-Irish Bank. The figures speak for themselves. Of the total loans of 150.6 million to these people, the bank estimates that 108.3 million will not be collected and therefore will be written off by the bank and ultimately the taxpayer.

	<i>Loan outstanding</i>	<i>Expected Write off</i>
Sean FitzPatrick	85.3	67.9
David Drumm	8.4	6.7
Willie McAteer	8.5	7.7
Lar Bradshaw	27.3	21.9
Pat Whelan	5.8	4.1
Other directors/ employees	15.3	0.0
Total	150.6	108.3

All the above figures are in millions of Euros.

NAMA TRANSFERS

The figures for the amount of loans that will be transferred to NAMA also make sobering reading. They indicate the dependence of the banks on loans for developments and are as follows:

	<i>Total Value of Loans Transferred to NAMA</i>	<i>On Books</i>
Anglo Irish Bank	72	36
Allied Irish Bank	131	23
Bank of Ireland	131	12
Irish Nationwide	10.5	9.0
EBS	17.0	1.0

All the above figures are in Billions of Euros.

The Anglo figures show the extent of its development loan business, but it is also true to say that it has a substantial business that is not related to development loans and not all the loans transferred to NAMA were development loans. Some loans were transferred because they were "associated" with development loans (e.g. the non development loans were borrowed by a person who also had development loans). Only 46% or 16.3 billion of the 36 billion to be transferred by Anglo to NAMA are development loans in the strict sense. So it is not true to say that *Anglo-Irish Bank* was merely a "developers bank".

Bank of Ireland was less dependent than *AIB* on development loans, but

probably the most shocking figures relate to *Irish Nationwide*. The latter is supposed to be a Building Society set up to help homeowners, but we find that the bulk of its business relates to development loans which helped fuel the property bubble putting home ownership out of the reach of most people.

THE NAMA HAIRCUT

There has been a lot of rubbish talked about the so-called "haircut" or discount that NAMA will receive for the loans, which it buys from the banks. An estimate of 30% was suggested by Brian Lenihan at the beginning of the process. However, this was only ever an estimate. The actual discount is determined by an independent review of each individual loan. The first tranche of loans to be transferred amounts to 16 billion Euros. The figures are as follows:

	<i>Book Value</i>	<i>Purchase Price</i>	<i>Discount</i>
Anglo-Irish	10.0	5.0	50%
AIB	3.3	1.9	43%
Bank of Ireland	1.9	1.3	35%
Irish Nationwide	0.7	0.3	58%
EBS	.14	0.09	37%

All the above figures are in billions of Euros.

These figures confirm a pattern: in absolute terms Anglo has been the most reckless; Bank of Ireland has been more prudent (or less imprudent) than AIB; and in relative terms Irish Nationwide's behaviour has been the most appalling.

The purchase of the loans will be financed by the issue of Government Bonds, which will enable the banks to borrow from the European Central Bank.

A second myth that has been perpetuated by the media is that these discounts will be passed on to the developers and that NAMA is a bail out for the developers and banks. This has in turn prompted populist calls for a "NAMA for homeowners". But the discounts will not be passed on to developers. NAMA will pursue 100% of the debts outstanding. All the discounts represent is a realistic view of how much is collectable given the fact that many of the borrowers are bankrupt.

A third myth is that NAMA is buying the property of developers. It is not. It is only buying the loans. However, it is true that, in the case of default, the property of the borrower will revert to NAMA. It does not follow that, because property has fallen from its peak by 60% or more, the haircut should be 60%. In many cases the loans were for property that was not bought at peak prices. Also, some developers will have accumulated capital from previous times, which will enable them to pay for their loans. On the other hand, anecdotal evidence suggests that in many cases the paperwork of the banks has left a lot to be

desired. All of this is taken account of when a value is put on the loans.

The NAMA process has been remarkably transparent. This has been in marked contrast to other countries, such as the UK and Germany. In the UK, for example, the equivalent to NAMA is an Insurance Scheme in which the banks pay 10% to the State to insure 100% of the value of the loans. In other words, the 'haircut' in UK is 10%. But this figure is purely arbitrary. Nobody believes that the figure, which includes sub prime loans from the US, is anything like 10%.

It is no wonder that International commentators and investors, in contrast to the Irish media, have been impressed by the handling of the crisis by the Irish State. The yield on Irish bond have been the second best performers (after Austria) in the Euro zone.

There is a very reasonable expectation that NAMA will not lose money over its ten year life. As Eamon Ryan of the Green Party said, the current generation will bear the cost of the crisis. Future generations will only inherit the hard lessons that this generation has learned.

BANK RE-CAPITALISATION

The level of discounts, which NAMA has received from the banks, has reduced their capital. In order to remain liquid, the State has decided that their core 1 tier capital ratio must be at 8%. This is greater than is strictly necessary, but is considered a requirement to restore confidence in the Irish banks. The capital requirements are as follows:

Anglo Irish	8.3
AIB	7.4
Bank of Ireland	2.7
Irish Nationwide	2.6
EBS	0.875

All the above figures are in billions of Euros.

These figures are in addition to the 4.0, 3.5 and 3.5 billion that Anglo, AIB and Bank of Ireland have already received. The Minister for Finance has suggested that Anglo may require an extra 10 billion.

These are enormous sums. However, in the case of AIB and Bank of Ireland some or all of the capital required will be raised internally with the sale of their own assets. The State will finance the capital in the form of a promissory note to be paid over 10 years. The State finance will not be given free to the banks. It will own the two building societies. It already owns Anglo-Irish and is expected to have a minority share in Bank of Ireland and a majority share in AIB.

The Long Fellow remembers a time

when the left wanted the State to control the commanding heights of the economy. But these days it is only capable of whinging about corruption and wants to close Anglo-Irish Bank, our fully nationalised bank. It has a complete lack of ambition. Meanwhile the State, through the Minister for Finance, is imposing lending targets for the banks to small businesses. It has also restrained the Irish banks and building societies from evicting homeowners. In spite of the economic crisis, there have been only 28 cases last year where banks participating in the re-capitalisation scheme have sought and obtained repossessions.

The Long Fellow originally favoured nationalisation of all the banks requiring extra capital, but the approach of the Government allows the possibility of raising additional international capital by retaining the existing private structure of AIB and Bank of Ireland.

The money that the State is paying to the banks is an investment. It is not an expense which must be immediately written off. Of course, just because it is an investment, doesn't guarantee that the State will receive a return. In the final analysis it all comes down to politics. If one agrees with the Minister that this country is capable of running its own banking system there will be a return on the investment. On the other hand, if one believes, like so many in the media, that we as a nation are inherently corrupt, venal and incompetent it would be best to leave it to foreign financial institutions (notwithstanding their own considerable problems).

The Long Fellow supports, in this incidence, the approach of the Government. However, this crisis has exposed the shortcomings of our financial institutions. The Minister himself made the following startling statement to the Dáil:

"our banks have not been very well acquainted with our modern economic sectors."

This accords with the experience of the *Long Fellow*. The banks are not capable of evaluating business plans and in some cases do not even try. Their first response to a loan application is to charge the loan on property, which has proved to be very dubious collateral. In recent years they have been aggressively pursuing personal guarantees. By contrast, the State institution for native industrial development, *Enterprise Ireland* conducts a detailed review of business plans and is able to evaluate them by its detailed knowledge of the loan applicant's customers both in Ireland and abroad.

QUINN INSURANCE

The media's reporting of the financial crisis has been characterised by much morality and little learning. The small minded, petty bourgeois mentality was

illustrated by Matt Cooper on the *Late Late Show* (2.4.10) who called Seán Quinn a "cute whore".

The Quinn Group (sponsors of the *Late Late Show*) employs 5,500 people, many of whom live in an area of the country that in the past has been decimated by emigration. The Financial Regulator must do his job in order to restore confidence in our financial system. However, the State is perfectly entitled to do what it can—including using Anglo Irish Bank—to protect these jobs.

Quinn's problems began when he thought he could save Anglo-Irish Bank. His problems with the regulator were caused by the massive loss he incurred from his purchase of shares in that bank. This disastrous transaction was outside the normal course of his business. He is not the first entrepreneur to have overreached himself. A 1.2 billion loan, which is guaranteed by Quinn Insurance, has reduced the assets of that company by 448 million, resulting in a technical breach of the solvency requirement. But, as far as one can judge from media reports, the company is run in a competent manner and continues to be profitable.

It should not be beyond the ingenuity of the parties involved to come up with a solution that preserves the jobs in the company while not undermining the credibility of the office of the Financial Regulator.

MEDIA REPORTING OF FINANCIAL CRISIS

Media reporting of the financial crisis has been woeful. On 6th March Conor Brady had a soul-searching article but came to the following rather limp conclusion:

"Perhaps it {i.e. the soul searching—LF} might lead us to the conclusion that the Irish news media did as good a job as was possible and that it would be unreasonable to have expected any better."

How kind the media is ... to itself!

Of course, as readers of this magazine will know, *soul searching*—indeed searching of any kind—is not exactly Brady's forte. He was Editor of the *Irish Times* when it failed to find the "white nigger" letter in the British Public Records Office. When Jack Lane from this magazine did, the Editor *emeritus* excused himself on the grounds that no other *journalist* discovered the document. Presumably Professor Fanning, who was a regular columnist for the *Sunday Independent*, did not qualify as a *journalist*?

Regarding the current economic crisis Seamus Martin made the following incisive comment:

"As a retired Irish Times journalist I

feel that the financial media not only failed to sound the alarm bells, in some cases they were cheerleaders for catastrophe.

"I remember being at the editorial conference of *The Irish Times* when Bank of Scotland introduced the 3 per cent mortgage. The general reaction was one of jubilation. That, the financial experts told us, would sort out the lazy Irish banks who were charging too much.

"We all know what happened next and now, having fuelled the property bubble, *Halifax Bank of Scotland* have done a bunk back to the UK where they should have stayed in the first place."

It might also be said that the media failed the Irish public at the last General Election. It devoted acres of newsprint to the transactions amounting to thousands of Euros involving Bertie Ahern, while failing to report on the billions of Euros that the banks were using to fuel the property bubble; an example of "straining at the gnat, while swallowing the camel".

The Irish media is very good at kicking people or institutions when they are down. But when the lords of the counting houses and the Church were at the height of their power there wasn't a peep out of a compliant media.

MORIARTY TRIBUNAL

The media has also failed to scrutinise the conduct of the Tribunals. At a very early stage in the proceedings of the Moriarty Tribunal it became clear that Michael Lowry had not influenced the competition for the mobile phone licence. No civil servant could be found that could indicate under oath even an attempt at the slightest influence being exerted in favour of the eventual winners Denis O'Brien's *Esat*. But this did not prevent the Tribunal from leading a merry dance across Ireland and the UK in an attempt to find a link between O'Brien and Lowry's business interests.

As the long (over 10 years) and wasteful folly draws to a conclusion it appears that Moriarty is becoming desperate. A leak from the Tribunal indicated that he intended to find that the award by the State of the licence to *Esat* was illegal because between the time *Esat* had won the competition and the actual awarding of the licence there had been a change of ownership. A company owned by Dermot Desmond had acquired a 20% stake in *Esat*.

However, at the time of the award, the legal advice to the State had been that this change of ownership was not an impediment to the awarding of the licence to *Esat* (a perfectly sensible piece of advice).

All of this was explained to the Tribunal's counsel in 2002. A curious element to this story is that one of the Tribunal's lawyers to whom this was explained was Jerry Healy, who also

represented a company called *Persona*, which finished second to *Esat* in the competition. This company made an unsuccessful appeal to the European Commission against the awarding of the licence to *Esat*.

Sarah Carey in her *Irish Times* column (29.3.10) explains that in February 2008 Moriarty issued a ruling stating that he had received a letter from an unnamed Attorney General (there have been a number of attorney generals in the last 10 years) stating that the legal advice to the State did not cover the ownership issue. In response to this the Attorney General's office wrote to Moriarty on March 7th, March 12th, April 21st, April 29th, June 17th and July 1st, 2008 and made further submissions in September 2008 asking when this supposed letter was sent because they had no record of it.

Last March Moriarty admitted that his February 2008 ruling was wrong.

The implication of Carey's article is quite extraordinary. She seems to be saying that Moriarty is finding evidence (a supposed letter from the Attorney General) that does not exist (in other words he has the opposite problem to Conor Brady!). If this is true, it makes Moriarty singularly unsuitable to chair a Tribunal of this kind.

RWANDA: FOOTSIES WITH THE TUTSIES?

Probably the silliest attack on the Catholic Church in recent times came from Vincent Browne in his column of 31st March in *The Irish Times*. Apparently, whatever the Church has done in this country it pales into insignificance compared to her deeds in Rwanda.

My favourite part of Browne's article is the following:

"The Catholic Church bore grave responsibility for contributing to the culture that fermented (sic) the genocide..."

Ah yes! The fermenting of culture and genocide can produce an intoxicating potion!

Almost as good is this:

"Inevitably, and predictably, sectarian tensions between the Hutus and Tutsis were ratcheted up and in the post-independence era there were several mini-genocides before Africa's holocaust in 1994 when one million people were slaughtered out of a population of eight million, almost all the victims being Tutsis."

It used to be the case that genocide meant the destruction or attempted destruction of a race or nation. However, the new meaning is any killing of about one thousand or more people that has been perpetrated by a race or nation that acts against the interests of American imperialism. Accordingly, the

Government of Sudan has been found guilty of genocide.

But what are we to make of "*Africa's holocaust*"? It is generally agreed that there were indeed 1 million deaths during this bloody civil war. But were all of them Tutsis? The Tutsi tribe consisted of about 10% of the population. So, on Browne's figures, the Tutsi tribe would have been completely wiped out. And yet the so-called victims managed to seize power from the Hutu tribe (representing about 85% of the population).

The distinguished French journalist Pierre Péan estimates that about 720,000 of the dead belonged to the Hutu tribe. Also, many of the Tutsi victims were killed by the Tutsi controlled and American financed *Rwandan Patriotic Front*, which had a policy of eliminating Tutsi "collaborators" of the previous government.

The remainder of Browne's article is a litany of Tutsi-inspired propaganda against the Catholic Church. Needless to say Browne makes no mention of the assassinations of the Hutu Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi by the *Rwandan Patriotic Front*, which sparked the "*holocaust*". Nor does he mention Rwanda's invasion of Zaire, which has caused at least 3 million deaths.

About 6 years ago Browne mused on the de-luxe treatment he received from his Tutsi hosts on a visit with other Irish journalists to that tragic country. In recent times one reads in the business pages of our newspapers articles about the need for Ireland to be "*competitive*". But nobody can accuse our journalists of lacking competitiveness.

On the contrary, they can be bought quite cheaply!

WREATHS FOR THE WRITHING

Once more a Sunday morning and the Times. Foreign-Policy-Imperialism rhymes. Like errant Dublin sister she does tout colonial views of world. Turned-back clocks chime.

Remember Gallipoli and that rout when Irish soldiers fought and died for nought. Sand turned red that day, Madam President. Wreath set where England's blood was saved from drought.

Ireland for blood of German innocents, and what reward did Turkish gore present. A holy mission against the heathen. But England still remained the incumbent.

Compost heap – a week's news of deceiving. Each and every day the methane season. One time one spark and the Oul Sod blew up forced healing the UK-Ireland lesion.

Britannia's on heat, hopes to corrupt Irish families' sons, daughters for peanuts, then a wreath from Ireland's surrogate queen. Think Churchill for that old colonial touch.

Wilson John Haire
20th April, 2010

Presidential cringe

It is normal in a democracy to hear monarchs talk the most awful rubbish. It goes with the territory. Presidents of a Republic are expected to be more tolerable; at the least what they say should make for easy listening. A certain amount of palaver is acceptable, but our President has taken palaver and *plámás* to new heights. Her Gallipoli trip gave her an opportunity to display this to the full.

She was not long into her itinerary when the alleged genocide of Armenians by Ottoman Turkey arose.

"A Turkish journalist asked Mrs McAleese about the continuing controversy surrounding the killing of Armenians by Ottoman Turks in 1915. Turkey recently recalled its ambassador to Washington following a US congressional committee vote describing the massacres as genocide. The President replied that Ireland had no official position on the matter" (Irish Times, 24.3.10).

This is a very pertinent issue for Turkey. If she had left it at that, that would be acceptable. But no, she went on: "*I think there is probably no place more qualified to stay out of an argument than Ireland*". Drawing on the experience of the Northern Ireland peace process, Mrs McAleese spoke of the importance of healing.

"We can understand the dreadful sense of loss that people endured, and we also understand in a very special way how important it is that memory is given a chance to heal... We would certainly be very strongly supportive of all efforts in today's world to heal memory and to try to achieve friendship in this generation—I think that is true both of the issue in relation to Armenia and in relation to the Kurds" (Ibid).

It is probably a unique boast for any head of state to say her country is best qualified to avoid issues. Have we some inherent inability to understand and deal with some issues and disputes?

What she should have said was, if the event she was commemorating had not happened—the invasion of Turkey in 1914—there would have been no killing of Armenians. This is so obvious, so banal and so true—and would be so acceptable to her hosts (as well as to the Armenians)—that it was the ideal statement to make.

But the Irish President could not say something like that—and rather than point out the obvious—she has to engage in a request for mass amnesia all round. The Bourbons were supposed to never forget or never learn anything. Our President wants us to forget everything, and we

would then surely learn nothing as the latter state would follow the former as surely as night follows day.

But why did she not say the most obvious and most diplomatic thing that could be said for the occasion? The problem is that such an answer might encourage her listeners to ask why in fact did the invasion happen and why the War itself? WWI has been given the status of being a kind of political earthquake, a tsunami or a volcano—it just happened. 'War came' or 'war broke out' is a typical way of describing it.

An incident is chosen such as the shooting in Sarajevo and then the rest made to appear inevitable, just like dominos falling. Then there are events that happened after war started, such as the German 'atrocities' in Belgium, which are made to explain why it started. Cause and effect are neatly interchanged.

There were, are and will be hundreds of incidents, such as those associated with the alleged causes of WWI, that regularly occur but which never lead to any kind of war, never mind a World War. It takes some doing to arrange a World War. It's not the kind of thing that happens by accident. The basic requirement is that the perpetrator has to be a world power. And this is the truth about WWI. It was planned for and set in motion by the unrivalled superpower of the day, Britain.

Later in the President's itinerary she said:

"The sacrifice of the Irishmen at Gallipoli had suffered a "deficit of remembrance" due to the vagaries of history... The Irish who fought for the British Empire here were not only destined to be overwhelmed by those who opposed them but to have their memory doubly overwhelmed, for they fought in a campaign that was lost and so long overlooked... Those fortunate enough few who returned alive from Gallipoli returned to considerable ambivalence, even hostility about their role and their sacrifice." The distance of time and a changing historical context now allowed for an attempt to address this and, in doing so, to contribute to "the much-needed healing of memory on our own divided ..." (IT, 25.3.10)

Those who died at Gallipoli were not forgotten because of some vagary of history. They could not be forgotten while *The Foggy Dew* was sung, but they were not celebrated because they fought for an Empire that denied and betrayed what they believed they were fighting for—the freedom of small nations. There was no ambivalence. Irish people were ashamed of how so many of them were fooled into doing what they did and the consequences for them personally and politically. To say that what happened to them and the attitude to them was a "*vagary of history*"

is an insult both to them and those who opposed what they did. It is contemptible.

The mind boggles at the concept of an outcome of the greatest war in history being a *vagary*, a fluke, a whimsey of some sort. If it is so, then human history might as well be written off as a collection of vagaries and whimsies.

WWI ended all prospects for Home Rule in Ireland and what we got instead was an independent Irish Republic. Logically then, according to the McAleese approach, she is President of a *vagary* or whimsey of history. That is hardly something to be proud of and explains why she is desperate to have a mind-emptying approach to the history of this state. Individuals who lose their memory are sad to behold and that would be the state of this Republic if the McAleese approach succeeds. She is a disgrace to her office.

Jack Lane

Ireland's Turkish War

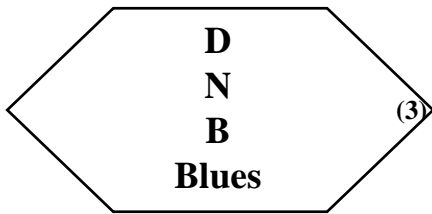
I have just finished reading *Forgotten Aspects Of Ireland's Great War on Turkey* by Dr Pat Walsh. What a giant of a book! An education in itself. In the April 2010 issue of *Irish Political Review* he gives a good summary of his book for the *Irish Examiner* in protest at President Mary McAleese's forthcoming commemoration of those unfortunate Irish soldiers who died for British Imperialism at the battle of Gallipoli. So I would like to pick out just a few of the many gems in the book.

The Turkish delegation enter the conference room and are guided to wooden chairs. The European Colonial delegation are sitting in soft armchairs. Asked why the wooden chairs, they are told they have run out of armchairs. Exit the Turks. Suddenly Lord Curzon has located more armchairs. Turkish delegation re-enter room. You know now the Turks are not going to stand for any more nonsense from Curzon and his motley crew.

Almost a year passes and the Turkish delegation win their major demands. In the light of Turkey's success the new Irish Free State Government is made to look like Punch's battered wife Judy.

Go on ye eejits ye! is how I felt about the Dáil debate, commented on by the *Catholic Bulletin*, when the Free State Government discover it is still at war with Turkey and must sign Britain and Turkey's Lausanne Agreement which gives Turkey her independence—unlike the debacle of the Anglo/Irish Agreement. I had to say to myself:

Hell rub it into you! when one member complains that the Turkish negotiators spent almost a year in talks with Britain.



Elizabeth Bowen

The *Dictionary of Irish Biography* entry on Elizabeth Bowen by Ian Dalton is very accurate—up to a point. But the point it misses is the crucial one from an Irish perspective. He writes:

"After Florence's (her mother's) death from cancer Elizabeth was raised by aunts in England. Later she averred that 'possibly, it was England made me a novelist,' (*Pictures and conversations*, 1975)... She lived and worked in two worlds—a cosmopolitan literary England, and a decaying, brittle, vacuous Anglo-Ireland, especially from 1930, when she inherited Bowens Court. Her Anglo-Irish life had a pervasive influence on her perspectives. Bowen wrote as an outsider... If her observation-point as a writer was as the 'spy inside the gates' (H. Lee, *Elizabeth Bowen*, 1981), this mirrored her wartime role as a journalist for the ministry of

information. Moving between London and Bowens Court, she conveyed Irish opinion to the ministry; Lord Cranborne found her reports 'sensible and well-balanced.' "

This is a disingenuous description of Bowen's wartime reports and not Dalton's normal style. Hermione Lee used a very apt metaphor in referring to her as "*a spy inside the gates*" but that related specifically to her relationship with the English middle class at a social and personal level. Her wartime reports could not be a metaphor for spying as they were the real thing.

Dalton's use of *journalist* in describing her wartime reports to Whitehall is a misuse of words and he is normally a clear and honest writer. They were espionage reports pure and simple. The people reported on were not told they were being reported on, they were deceived; the reports were classified as secret by her and the recipients; they were circulated only to a handful of people, essentially to Churchill and the War Cabinet; and then most of them were destroyed with a few of the approximately original 200 surviving by bureaucratic oversight. This is not journalism by any stretch of the imagination.

Dalton does not normally treat his

readers as idiots but it seems that, even for the most hard headed of our *literati*, Bowen's wartime espionage is still too raw to describe it for what it was. Naturally Dalton does not include any of Aubane's collection of her reports in the bibliography—with the result that the only record of one of her life's proudest achievements goes unacknowledged, i.e., her unique service to her country in a time of war.

The result is that a great gaping hole remains in this assessment of her as a person and proof of a pretty rare and powerful talent is airbrushed away. And, from an Irish perspective, which is supposed to be the DIB perspective, the entry misleads on the most important aspect of her life's work here. But in this the DIB only remains true to form.

Jack Lane

Elizabeth Bowen: "Notes On Eire"

Espionage Reports To Winston Churchill, 1940-42

With an extended Review of *Irish Neutrality in World War 2* by Jack Lane and Brendan Clifford.

4th edition with extra items. 296pp. Bibliog. Index. ISBN 978-1-903497-55-5.

Aubane Historical Society, 2009.

€20, £15.

How long did Collins and Co take in London—eight weeks? The *Catholic Bulletin* (quoted again by Dr. Walsh) cynically asks if Ireland should be occupied by Turkey in order to get a genuine freedom. I thought at this point that maybe it's not too late for Ireland to convert to Islam.

Turkey, as Dr Walsh says, was also threatened by British military violence and had warships already in her waters as a bullying tactic in a bid to intimidate the Turkish delegation. But they called Britain's bluff. Britain was exhausted after WW1 and didn't have the will to remobilise her troops, who may not have responded anyway.

What of David Lloyd George's threats to the Irish delegation? Was there not in the end a *most terrible war*—but between the Free State forces and the soldiers of the original Dáil, when the flower of the nation were killed in the most horrifying way. Maybe even too horrifying for British Imperialism to put into effect, as written about in the *Tragedies Of Kerry* by Dorothy Macardle—men roped to a landmine by Free State soldiers with one survivor thrown into a tree and recovering enough to be a witness. Would such killers care enough about what might happen to the abandoned Northern Catholic?

Some of we Catholic Northerners in 1950s England were taunted on occasions by Southerners who said we weren't Irishmen. There could only be one answer to

that: Who signed the Treaty? And the answer to that, an attempted brawl.

Wellington House, forerunner of Chatham House, certainly put out some very distasteful propaganda about the Turkish nation, which I feel is still running to the present day. During my teenage days in the Six Counties it wasn't unusual to hear the Turk described as an *arse-bandit*—a predatory homosexual I presumed, one who doesn't care about the sensitivity of the heterosexual. It was also said, on that same low-level in factory and street, that the Turk wore baggy trousers in case Mohammad was re-born to him. Crude stuff I know but isn't there, supposedly, on a higher plane, a claim surrounding Colonel T. E. Lawrence (also known as that fantasy figure Lawrence of Arabia) that he was raped by a Turkish military commander while temporarily held in custody?

On the 20th of July, 1974 the Turkish armed forces invaded Northern Cyprus in response to a Greek junta-backed *coup* which wanted the island integrated with Greece, to the cost of the Turkish-Cypriot. The British media mostly backed Greece and condemned Turkey automatically. The rights and wrongs of this episode I can't be sure about, but I do remember the horror stories of the Turks cutting open the stomach of pregnant Greek-Cypriot women and tramping on the foetus. Again, who knows what happens in war, but no one attempted investigate these reports

put out by the British media. If the Turks were involved, then there had to be brutality, was the assumption.

When I first came to London in 1954 I was puzzled as to why the Cockney referred to we Irish as Turks. Was it their lack of understanding of us or just a double racial slur.

Wiser now I decided it was racial. Had I known what I know now, through this book, I would have been proud to be called a Turk.

In the past, when reading or discussing the signing of the Treaty, it was mostly done in isolation to the rest of the world. We were however bolstered by kind remarks made by Nehru who, when leading the opposition to British Imperialism in India, called us a small country of big deeds, that we had caused the first crack in the British Empire. Nehru would also make sure the new Indian national flag of freedom bore the colours of the Irish Republic. All romantic stuff that has maintained us over the years but, like most romances, they cool in the manner in which the national aspirations of the nation declines.

But now Dr Walsh has given us a new world view that we may see our achievements through the prism of brave Turkey's fight for independence. In a realistic world we don't come out of it very well but there is plenty of room for improvement..

Wilson John Haire

The Irish At Gallipoli

Last month we carried a response by Pat Walsh to Mark Cronin's criticism of his article in the *Irish Examiner* of 23rd March. (That reply was subsequently published.) Mark Cronin came back and the letter below was sent in as a response. At the time of going to press, it has not been published. We also reproduce below the two letters by Cronin.

Mr Mark Cronin (Letters, April 12) reasserts the British view that the Turks bear responsibility for being invaded at Gallipoli because "the pro-German faction within the Turkish government was the controlling party in the lead-up to the war." There was indeed someone within Ottoman ruling circles (Enver) who may have favoured a more substantial alliance with Germany. However, the fact that the Turks remained neutral, despite various provocations, such as the seizing of their battleships by Mr. Churchill, and kept offering numerous alliances to the Entente Powers up until the declarations of war on them suggests that Enver was not such a "controlling" influence.

That Turkey ended up at war is more a testament to the successful policy of the Entente which made Enver's policy the only viable option in the light of an inevitable attack on the Ottoman Empire.

This was because, despite Mr Cronin's assertion, it was not just Whitehall civil servants who made contingencies for war on the Ottomans in 1914. A public offer was aired by Russia to England in 1903 for a division of the area around Constantinople whereby Britain would take the gateway to the Straits at Gallipoli if the Czar was permitted the Ottoman capital. As early as 1906 the Committee for Imperial Defence, the most important strategic body in the British State, discussed and devised plans in the form of a report, for an assault on the Dardanelles which provided the (misguided) template for operations in 1915.

Mr Cronin's belief that "Britain had to remain true to its ally Russia when it declared war on Turkey and so, like the larger war itself, was sucked into a conflict not of its choosing" ignores two important facts. Firstly, there was no requirement for anyone to contest the war against every adversary just because they were part of an alliance. The Italians were in alliance with Germany but they remained neutral in 1914 - and were successfully 'turned' by British efforts in 1915 to the Entente side. The U.S. saw no necessity of declaring war on Turkey when it entered the conflict. Why? Because it had no Imperial ambitions for territorial aggrandizement in the Middle East (whereas England did).

Secondly, there is a large amount of evidence contained in my book, 'The Rise and Fall of Imperial Ireland,' that from around 1903/4 England determined to make war on Germany, in alliance with France and Russia. That was what the 1904 Entente Cordiale and the 1907 Agreement with Russia were all about. Once Britain, ceased its "the Russian's shall not have Constantinople" policy, and agreed to a division of Muslim lands in return for the Czar's army bearing down on Berlin war on the Ottoman Empire was inevitable. It just needed a trigger or excuse. As Field Marshall Lord Carver noted in his book on Gallipoli the obscure incident that occurred in the Black Sea was never justification for destabilizing an entire region.

To paraphrase Mr Churchill "History will be kind to me since I intend to write it myself." Again, Mr Cronin is too influenced by the English version of history to see anything wrong with how the British State operates in the world.
Dr, Pat Walsh

No foolish escapade: the Irish at Gallipoli (12.4.10)

Again Dr Pat Walsh (Letters, April 5) ignores the facts in wishing to view British involvement in World War I against Turkey as part of an imperialist plot to dismember it.

Any cursory investigation into why Turkey entered the war never posits Britain as the instigator or willing facilitator of such an action.

Dr Walsh does not respond to the well-known facts that the pro-German faction within the Turkish government were the controlling party in the lead-up to the war.

His quote of Lord Grey as expecting war with Turkey in early October 1914 was just demonstrating sensible political prescience knowing this fact and knowing Turkish fears of Russia.

Britain had to remain true to its ally Russia when it declared war on Turkey in early November 1914 and so, like the larger war itself, it was sucked into a conflict not of its choosing.

Just because some Foreign Office civil servants in the years prior to the war might have hatched ideas and theories on how a post-Ottoman empire might benefit Britain does not produce the smoking gun when the war eventually came.

It was not akin to the American neo-conservative policy of regime change in Iraq that was voiced publicly in 1998 and given effect in 2003 when the opportunity arose. Turkey attacked Russia first and sunk some of its ships. There was no British involvement here.

Whether it justified a Russian declaration of war is another question, but considering their fraught history it was a highly provocative act that made Russia's

reaction understandable in the circumstances.

If Serbia had done the same to Austria, its possible the conflict would have remained regional as Austria's harsh demands could in some way have been seen to be justified, and not as they were, an over-reaction to the assassination of the archduke as a means to reassert Austrian dominance in the region. Military aggression by a country usually produces a response and Turkey's acts were no different with the result that many Irishmen fought and died in the war against Turkey.

It was not a foolish escapade. There was a worthy principle at work in their sacrifice. **Mark Cronin**

'Imperialist plot' theory dishonours Irish soldiers who died at Gallipoli (25.3.10)

I'm surprised you allowed Dr Patrick Walsh's article (March 23) on the Gallipoli campaign to be printed considering the falsehoods it disseminated.

If true historical research is akin to poor farmers cultivating poppy plants, then this concoction of an article seemed to be an anti-British imperialist opiate that blurred and falsified facts to assuage traditional nationalist perspectives. Anti-imperialism is a worthy cause, but to skew facts only blunts legitimate criticism.

Dr Walsh says "the British invasion of 1914 brought Turkey into the war much against its will".

What invasion? The "obscure incident" in the Black Sea that led to the Russian declaration of war on November 2—and not November 5, as published—was an authorised, unprovoked Turkish naval attack on Russian ports and ships. Surely a declaration of belligerency that any country would respond to? Britain wanted Turkey to stay neutral, but Turkish fears of Russian aggrandisement provoked it to act and it chose to side with Germany and Austria simply because it thought they would win.

To fully understand Turkey's entry into the war, which was of its own choosing, you would have to explore the internal politics at work within the country and especially among the governing elites. These are complexities that would obscure Dr Walsh's thinly-veiled diatribe against British imperialism. **Mark Cronin**

Forgotten Aspects Of
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Turkey.**
1914-24
by *Dr. Pat Walsh.*

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Athol Books, 2009.

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"The soundest strategy in war is to postpone operations until the moral disintegration of the enemy renders the mortal blow both possible and easy."

V.I. Lenin.

MATTHEW ELDERFIELD

Matthew Elderfield became Ireland's new Financial Regulator in January 2010. He has impeccable qualifications to represent UK interests abroad in foreign places such as the US, Bermuda and now of course—Ireland. Prior to taking on the Irish job, Elderfield was Chief Executive of the Bermuda Monetary Authority (BMA) from 2007-2009.

"The Bermuda Monetary Authority is the integrated regulator for Bermuda's financial markets, with responsibility for the supervision of insurance and re-insurance, banking, funds, investment firms and trust companies. Mr. Elderfield represented the BMA on the Technical Committee of the International Association of Insurance Supervisors".

This is according to Mr. Elderfield's CV. But really Bermuda and tight financial supervision—well one would have thought a little oxymoronic—*no*? Certainly, the economy of Bermuda is enormous, consisting as it does of offshore, secretive and tax-avoiding funds from the US, UK, Canada, Ireland and a multitude of other countries. Amazingly, the Irish media haven't really taxed themselves too much about Mr. Elderfield's *previous post*. That may mean that—as he is an *Englishman*—he is to an extent proofed from attack. And as *The Irish Daily Mail* puts it, "*He's the man who scares the Banks*" (15.4.2010).

But let us be more acquainted with the man brought in to "*get*" the Irish banks and the boyos sorted out. Prior to joining the BMA, Elderfield spent eight years at the UK Financial Services Authority as a Head of Department in a variety of posts responsible for exchange and clearing house supervision, for secondary markets, and listing policies for banking supervision. In this latter role, he represented the FSA on the Basle Accord Implementation Group and was on the panel responsible for economic capital model review. Before joining the FSA, Elderfield established the European operations of the International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA), and held posts at the London Investment Banking Association, the British Banker's Association and a Washington-DC based consultancy firm, the Institute for Strategy Development.

Matthew has also written for a number of publications and is the Consultant Editor of *A Practitioners Guide to the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive* and has

co-edited chapters on Exchange, Derivatives and Capital Adequacy regulation. He graduated from Cambridge University in 1988 with a Masters degree in International Relations and earned a Bachelors degree in Foreign Service, *cum laude*, from the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University in 1987. (Most of this is sourced from the Speaker's Bios at the Fintel Conference and *The Irish Daily Mail*.)

Probably the most important factors working for Elderfield—apart from being a lobbyist himself—is that the Minister for Finance, Brian Lenihan TD, is also a graduate from Cambridge University. It is the latter who has been the one Minister from Government to come out and bat for Elderfield on RTE TV News over the strange saga of the Quinn Insurance debacle. And of course *The Irish Times*, that organ of financial probity and transparency which has been also the latter's biggest cheerleader, printing gleefully Labour's Sean Sherlock's quip about him being "*the Sheriff of Dodge City*".

Almost from nowhere the new Financial Regulator came out on the attack on the Quinn Insurance Group, the second biggest insurer in Ireland with interests in Northern Ireland and Britain. Elderfield appointed administrators from Grant Thornton—one of the UK's biggest chartered accountancy firms, and went to the High Court to compel Sean Quinn to acquiesce to the takeover. Suddenly a very big story from the financial section became *the* news story nationwide. Everywhere there was shock. Quinn's massive workforce—all based mainly in Ireland and including some 5,500 people—came out and appealed to the Government to safeguard their jobs. Policy holders were also in shock and everyone begged for clarification.

Elderfield immediately stopped Quinn Insurance business from trading in NI and the UK—but interestingly enough he didn't stop it trading here in Ireland. Even the *Irish Daily Mail* accepted that this was harsh indeed—but necessary—and that the sharks were in the water all ready feeding off the juicy portfolio in the two prohibited areas. Now you don't need to be a financial analyst to know that the UK is Ireland biggest competitor. So *Qui Bono*? After a week from hell, with Quinn increasingly outmanoeuvred, the Quinn Insurance Group accepted defeat and as the *Irish Times* (16.4.2010) wrote: "*In a dramatic reversal of its position, the Quinn Group withdrew its opposition, leading the High Court to appoint permanent administrators to the insurer*". The regulator had won. *The Irish Times* report went on: "*A sense of realism dawned on people*", said a Director of the Quinn Group, who asked not to be named. "*The regulator held all the cards... pennies dropped across the whole system*". And, for Sean Quinn, a decent man who worked

hard in Ireland and gave great employment and was a stalwart of Fianna Fail—what now his thoughts on former friends and *Cambridge enemies*?

JOE LEE

Professor Joe Lee, the historian who was Chair of Irish History in University College Cork and then famously did a moon-light flit to New York University where he is now firmly ensconced, is still much missed. A few weeks ago, the *Irish Examiner* in its Saturday Property section had pictures of Lee's lovely house near Cork University as it is up for sale. Which means that Joe is certainly not coming back anytime soon. Where did it all go wrong for the academic, who aroused such feelings in his department that had fellow historians hissing about him being God—no less. I always had time for Joe and he bucked the revisionist trend that was poisoning a generation of young people. He didn't go out to court people either, which probably didn't endear him to the right people but if Lee couldn't cut it here—well who could? I well remember the Features Section of *The Irish Times*, 21st October 2000, on the question of 'Identity', where the usual suspects were spooling their usual drivel, Joe's entry was as usual abrasive and true. I have to quote it in full to give the flavour of the thing.

"Being Irish today is, for the historian, like living in a participatory laboratory. The Irish are at one of the periodic hinge moments in their history when they are reinventing themselves. Remaking always involves a degree of refaking, which requires in turn a capacity for both unctuous self-righteousness and massive self-deception, both in ample supply.

"A pluralist Ireland can enrich Irish culture. But where pluralism is really a fraudulent ploy for the destruction of everything distinctively Irish, then it becomes simply an agent for global homogeneity, contributing more to conformity than to diversity. That is why so much of what passes as cosmopolitanism in Ireland is so redolent of provincialism, with globalisation in place accompanied by provincialism in time, fostering an obsession to rubbish the dead in order to enhance the self-importance of the living."

He called it well.

THE IRISH TIMES AND ITS PEOPLE

The *Irish Daily Mail* is that thing in Irish life that is real to its roots and its 'sense of place' and for the Lord Rothermeres of the world—that is always England. So when it sees what it does not expect in Ireland—it always calls it out. On 15th April 2010, the column under '*Bickerstaffe*' noted what it thought was an amusing piece in the *Irish Times* of 14th April 2010. Bickerstaffe was delighted—

"to see that Madame Editor is staying true to the ideals set out by the founding fathers of *The Irish Times*. On page 10 of yesterday's issue, the page titled Home News was dedicated to Westminster Election 2010. Water Found On Mars may yet make it to the Foreign News page."

But I have found recently that the overt hostility of the *Irish Times* to the Catholic Church has actually moved on to something far more sinister and that is secular fundamentalism—but here is the kick—when commenting on anything to do with the Protestant Church—the paper comes over all 'knee bowing' and pro-Protestant Church. An example would be the constant lack of proper titles for Catholic churchmen, calling all by their surnames like Cardinal Brady is 'Brady' etc etc. But when the Dean of St. Patrick's is mentioned—then he is titled as follows on April 2nd 2010 as "*The Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Rev. Robert MacCarthy*", even though the issue was a sectarian bigoted letter by the latter to *The Irish Times*, stating of Muslims and Hindus that "*to them, religious education has no meaning; instead they wish their children to be indoctrinated in the worship of a cult*" (2008). But in *The Irish Times* he is always referred to as '*Dean MacCarthy*'. I had the misfortune of meeting said Dean on two occasions, and I can attest that, in my opinion, he is a mean-spirited, rude man.

Another man garnering good notices from *The Irish Times* recently is Michael Colgan, now that the English Queen has bestowed upon him the title of MBE. But while Colgan, who as Artistic Director of the Gate Theatre in Dublin is a very successful and indeed gifted impresario, he has his enemies and by all accounts well earned them. In 2005, at the height of those Tigerish days, the writer Colm Toibin held his fiftieth birthday in his "*magnificent city centre apartment, just off Fitzwilliam Square*". About a hundred carefully selected guests were invited to the soiree which included a "*catered buffet, fine wines, champagne and cocktails were all dispensed by waiters*". Colgan has never put on any work by one of Ireland's finest playwrights, the then 70 year old Tom Murphy whose works include '*The Gigli Concert*' and '*Bailengangaire*'. The "*flamboyant, larger than life character with a fondness for large cigars and a more recently acquired taste for fine wines, never misses a good party*". There was bad blood evident between Colgan and Murphy, with it culminating in Colgan being heard to mutter to friends for a listening Murphy to hear "*You're only a provincial playwright*". "*And you are the keeper of a museum on Parnell Square*" replied an incensed Murphy who then threw his bowl of hot lamb curry over poor Colgan's head. Peace was restored by a placating Toibin and the party went

on into the early hours with both Colgan and Murphy staying on. All this was reported only by one paper at the time and that was *Ireland on Sunday*, 12th June 2005. Neither party could be contacted by the paper as Colgan had gone off on his holidays to Mauritius and Murphy did not respond at his terraced home in Rathgar, south Dublin. According to *Ireland on Sunday*, some of the guests included the poet Paul Durcan, June Levine, Anthony Cronin, Gene Kerrigan, Nell McCafferty *et al.*

So Colgan is now an MBE but what really was the gong for? And isn't it interesting that only Colm Toibin acknowledged Sean Fitzpatrick recently in the *Shelburne* saying "*When I had no money, he gave me a mortgage and I was able to buy my apartment*". Now with Matthew Elderfield looking into Fitzpatrick's business in Anglo-Irish bank and being appalled by precisely that sort of lending—will Toibin's Georgian apartment be also ending up in Nama?

ELMA COLLINS AND THE REVISIONIST PROJECT

Elma Collins might not be a household name but her influence on Irish history, its writing and its teaching was quite profound. *History Ireland* said of her: "*Elma Collins has had a profound, if unsung influence on the generation of students who have passed through the Southern school system over the past thirty years*" (Spring 1997). She was involved as an active member in the History Teacher's Association of Ireland and has even edited its journal since 1978. She studied History at UCD in the late 50s and found the History department there "*tremendously exciting*", naming her favourite lecturers as Desmond Williams, Dudley Edwards, Jack Watt and Maureen Wall.

After graduating in 1960 she taught at second level in Cavan town and, prompted by Margaret MacCurtain, joined the History Teacher Association. She was then approached by Bill Connolly of Gill and Macmillan to do a series for the new Intermediate Certificate syllabus and was recruited to write '*Conquest and Colonisation*' covering the 15th to the 18th centuries. This also coincided with the early revisionism that was beginning to reach a wider audience. Collins contended that most of the previous text books had been written in the 1920s and '30s and—

"were strongly influenced by a nationalist agenda. We were trying to write school level history that would be, if not value free, as near to being non-partisan as one could realistically get. Because of the civil rights movement which hadn't at that stage developed into violence—we were conscious of the Northern issue and the whole question of religion in politics."

By the mid 70s Collins realised she

needed a "*theoretical framework for what I was doing so I did a Masters in Education at Trinity College, Dublin*". She accepted in the interview that the Northern situation impacted as importantly "as historical research in developing one's critical faculties". Then Collins went on to state what really was the most important issue in the North for her, explaining how it hit her and found its expression in the next Leaving Cert history book that she wrote.

"In 1969 the civil rights movement in the North was campaigning for 'one man one vote' in local elections. It didn't even strike us that 'one *man* one vote' was politically incorrect." (The italics are in *History Ireland!*)

So this pushed her to put in a section entitled 'feminism' in the Leaving Cert textbook and lots of her friends and fellow colleagues warned her that it would be contentious. But "*I stuck to my guns. In it went and I got no negative reaction from anybody*". It is hard for me not to be livid about this—the North was at war and here was our academic elite determining to write up a meaningless issue, but of course that was precisely the point of the exercise. At the end of the interview, Collins notes without her vaunted "*critical faculty*" that when she started in school, "*well over ninety per cent of the students did history for the Leaving Certificate. Nowadays it's about twenty-five per cent. And that's because it is still compulsory at Junior Certificate level*". If that is not an indictment—then I don't know what is. They plundered our history of its meaning and watched as the students walked away in their thousands. Still the elite and their media cronies guilt-trip our Catholic Church and our society implodes with its *value free* behaviour.

Julianne Herlihy. ©

Israel-bashing

The following letter failed to be published in the *Sunday Independent*

Eilis O'Hanlon writes that "Israel-bashing seems to be a natural reaction for Irish republicans and socialists" (March 7th), and clearly thinks that such a reaction is not justified. But is that so?

Israel is unique in this world in having occupied militarily large swathes of territory not its own for more than forty years – the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, Gaza and the Syrian Golan Heights.

Not only that, it has planted around half a million of its own citizens into the territory it occupies, contrary to Article 49 of the 4th Geneva Convention, and to UN Security Council resolutions 446, 452 and 465. And it has annexed East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, contrary to a raft of

continued on page 15

The Spy Who Grew Up With The Bold:

the Irish Republican Education of Sir John Betjeman

In Part Two of this series (April *Irish Political Review*) I quoted at length from a July 1942 espionage report sent by John Betjeman to Nicholas Mansergh, his "control" in the Empire Division of the UK Ministry of Information. That report highlighted a vigorous political and ideological struggle going on at the time among the IRA prisoners interned in the Curragh Camp. Yet such a struggle was completely overlooked in an academic history of wartime Ireland that was published in 2000 and whose very title, *Ireland And the Second World War*, purported to be a work of definitive character. One editor, Geoffrey Roberts, concentrated on embracing what he himself described as "the anti-neutrality alternative" of the pro-British Fascist James Dillon. His collaborating editor, Brian Girvin, not only maintained that for the duration of that War the IRA was focused on "its attempts to support the Axis War effort", but he further asserted that, before the War even started, "the IRA was already in alliance with Nazi Ger-

ISRAEL continued

other Security Council resolutions.

While claiming to be the only democracy in the Middle East, it rules over millions of Palestinians in the occupied territories, none of whom have a vote for the Israeli parliament, the Knesset. And this situation has gone on for decades. By contrast, Jews who live in the illegal settlements in the occupied territories do have a vote for the Knesset—which smacks of racial discrimination akin to the practice that obtained in apartheid South Africa.

The Israeli state deliberately discriminates against its Arab minority (which makes up nearly 20% of its population). The former Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, has said so. Giving evidence to a parliamentary commission of inquiry on 11 November 2008, he said: "We have not yet overcome the barrier of discrimination, which is a deliberate discrimination and the gap is insufferable".

Finally, Israel has secret nuclear facilities (where it has developed nuclear weapons), and it refuses to open these facilities to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Authority, as demanded by the UN Security Council in resolution 487.

I suggest that, in the light of this record of failure to live up to its international obligations, a little "Israel-bashing" is not unreasonable, no matter what part of the political spectrum one inhabits.

David Morrison

PART THREE

many, for both practical and ideological reasons". In other words, the IRA were not only objectively agents of Hitler, they were also subjectively crypto-Nazis in their own right.

The language of the show-trial indictment—whether of the Churchillian or Stalinist character—is not conducive to serious historical analysis. Such a comprehensive demonisation of the IRA *per se* renders the academic historian blind to the sharp divisions within that organisation and the vigour of its anti-Fascist wing that was being so keenly monitored by Betjeman. But even to categorise the IRA's pro-German wing as *ipso facto* Nazi would render incomprehensible for any analyst the dynamic process by which so many who had been initially pro-German came to develop an anti-Nazi perspective. My father, Micheál O'Riordan, had been one of the earliest IRA volunteers to be interned in February 1940. Having fought in the Spanish anti-Fascist War in 1938, his continuing anti-Fascist activities in the Curragh Internment Camp were to result in a death sentence on him being ordered by IRA Chief-of-Staff Stephen Hayes, who had been appointed to that position by his predecessor Seán Russell. In the light of my own birth in 1949, this sentence was obviously not carried out! But the very fact that this sentence had been passed in the first place, did not lead O'Riordan to seek revenge on the Russellites by obliterating the distinction (as per Brian Girvin) between the subjective and the objective when it came to a historical presentation, in my father's 1979 book *Connolly Column*, of Russell's own personal position:

"The outbreak of World War Two in September 1939 found the then leadership of the IRA in contact with the Nazis. The justification advanced for this reactionary association was that it continued the Irish national tradition of regarding always that 'ENGLAND'S DIFFICULTY WAS IRELAND'S OPPORTUNITY'... In other words, any enemy of Britain was automatically an ally of Ireland... The contact with the Nazis was through Sean Russell, the then Chief-of-Staff of the IRA".

Notwithstanding his own pro-Soviet, Communist-inspired championing—from June 1941 onwards—of an Allied victory over Nazi Germany, and notwithstanding his own 4 years imprisonment by de Valera, O'Riordan never wavered from the view that Dev's policy of wartime neutrality had to be defended, no matter from what quarter an attack might come:

"Ireland... was neutral in the World

War, because involvement with either side would have created an Irish civil war situation in itself... In that period Frank Ryan was clearly conversant with the situation in his own country and the conditions that made the Irish Government's policy of neutrality both inevitable and generally acceptable. Despite his political criticisms of de Valera, he was more than capable of taking a positive position on this aspect of neutrality. An indication of this is recorded in Enno Stephan's book referring to his first interrogation in Berlin: *'The Germans were impressed... above all with the respectful manner in which this Irish 'Red' spoke about his country's leader, de Valera.'*" (See www.irelandscw.com/docs-Ryan2.htm for my own assessment of Ryan).

Russell's attempt to forge an offensive alliance with Germany was a threat to that de Valera policy of neutrality. O'Riordan nonetheless allowed Russell to speak for himself, in terms of what he had declared to Lt. Col. Lahausen, second-in-command to Admiral Canaris in Nazi Germany's intelligence service, the *Abwehr*:

"I am not a Nazi. I'm not even pro-German. I am an Irishman fighting for the independence of Ireland. The British have been our enemies for hundreds of years, they are the enemy of Germany today. If it suits Germany to give us help to achieve independence I am willing to accept it, but no more, and there must be no strings attached".

O'Riordan further allowed for the subjective in describing that statement as "a fair reflection of Russell's attitude to the Nazis" before proceeding with the castigation that "in view of the Nazi objective to dominate all of Europe, this attitude of Russell's was the extreme in naivety". He summed up the Russellite position as being objectively "no different from those Indians, Bretons, Flemings and others who were pro-German, without necessarily being pro-Nazi, in Hitler's bloody and vicious attempt to enslave the peoples of Europe".

Such were the polar positions present among the IRA prisoners of the Curragh Internment Camp from 1940 onwards. Initially the anti-Nazi position was only voiced by the three internees who had previously fought in the Spanish Anti-Fascist War—Micheál O'Riordan, Johnny Power and Paddy Smyth. But others were thinking their way towards that position. Seán Ó Maolbhríde was a young Republican internee with an enthusiastic liking for German culture, although he had never been pro-Nazi. Three decades later, in his article entitled "The Curragh Communists" which was published in the *Irish Times* on 16 June 1971, he wrote of his own personal response to wartime developments:

"My real moment of truth was when

the news came into the camp in June 1940—actually about a fortnight after I went into the camp—that the French Republic had capitulated to the Nazis. The whole camp just went berserk, berserk. The prisoners ran around in sheer delirious joy that the Germans had defeated and were about to occupy the cradle of modern militant Republicanism. I was so deeply saddened and disillusioned by this traumatic event. I could never understand how Republicans fighting for the freedom of their own country could support an imperialist power that was crushing all the nations, big and small, in Europe. To me the idea that we could expect liberation from an all-triumphant Nazi Government, was just perverted logic."

The most bizarre event that loomed largest in O'Riordan's memory was the night that the German *Luftwaffe* had bombed Belfast in April 1941. This was an occasion when de Valera was indeed of assistance to Hitler, but quite unwittingly so! During the War, belligerent Northern Ireland was, of course, blacked out, as also was the neutral South—with one exception. In order that the camp guards could keep a close eye on their IRA prisoners, the Curragh Internment Camp remained lit up and it was these lights which guided Hitler's bombers across the Irish Sea. Dev, of course, made amends for this security lapse by speedily dispatching the Dublin Fire Brigade to Belfast in order to put out the flames of the *Luftwaffe* inferno. But, as the *Luftwaffe* bombers flew low over the Curragh before swinging northwards to Belfast, an extraordinary scene unfolded. A huge cheer went up from a large section of the internees and they commenced singing pro-German songs. O'Riordan and his Spanish Anti-Fascist War comrade-in-arms Johnny Power led the opposition to such developments and it was this opposition which resulted in IRA Chief of Staff Stephen Hayes sending in word from the outside that O'Riordan had been sentenced to death.

This conflict among IRA prisoners intensified as Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union on 22nd June 1941, and it would seem to have been the intention of the Camp authorities that it should do so. They took the unusual step of broadcasting that news as it broke on the Camp loudspeakers. The IRA leadership demanded of O'Riordan if he now supported Churchill, to which he replied that he would support the Devil himself if he in turn was supporting Soviet resistance to Hitler's invasion. In discussing this exchange with my father, I reminded him that this was akin to Churchill's own imagery (but with roles reversed) when privately defending his own pro-Soviet statement on the occasion of that same invasion. Churchill had stated that "if

Hitler invaded Hell he would at least make a favourable reference to the Devil!" Dad observed, tongue-in-cheek, that if Churchill could have intelligence reports from Betjeman and Mansergh on IRA divisions surrounding the anti-Fascist manifesto of May Day 1942, perhaps he had also been eavesdropping on the Curragh argument of June 1941 and had borrowed the imagery from him!

By that stage Hayes was no longer in a position to take action against O'Riordan, having been deposed as Chief-of-Staff in a *coup* by the IRA's Northern Command. When a successor Chief-of-Staff, Pearse Kelly, was captured and subsequently interned, the Camp divided down the middle, with the Russellites led by Liam Leddy and the Opposition led by Kelly. When the future IRA Chief-of-Staff Cathal Goulding was also interned he, in turn, joined the Russellites under Leddy. In 1948 Goulding was to be the principal IRA organiser behind the erection of the monument to Seán Russell. In the Republican split of 1970 Leddy would repay the compliment by denouncing the Provisionals and declaring his support for Goulding's Official IRA. See www.indymedia.ie/article/81199 for my dispute with Eoghan Harris re Goulding; my own attempts at a balanced assessment of Russell; and Harris's defence, not only of Goulding's record, but also of an Official IRA Workers' Party bully boy, the *Waffen* SS veteran Staf van Velthoven.

The actively pro-Nazi internees led by Jim O'Donovan, however, formed only a minority of the Russellites in the Curragh Camp of the 1940s. The anti-Fascists, grouped around O'Riordan and Power, were, in turn, located on the Kelly side of the fence. When yet another Chief-of-Staff, Seán McCool, was captured and interned in April 1942, he immediately joined the Kelly leadership and divisions also sharpened on that side. Seán McCool

had a Left-wing pedigree and he had also been successfully treated for tuberculosis in a Soviet sanatorium in 1931. In short, he owed his life to the Soviet Union. In the wake of McCool's capture, his Army Executive elected an Army Council on 20th April 1942 and adopted a number of resolutions. Like their Russellite opponents before them, they sought German military aid. In return, they were theoretically prepared "*to give military information to powers at war with England which would not endanger civilian lives*". But, since they also had such a reaction against the indiscriminate character of Russell's 1939 bombing campaign in England, the new IRA leadership had nothing practical to offer the Germans and nothing came of such resolutions. O'Riordan was nonetheless determined to confront McCool as to where he now stood, as soon as the latter arrived in the Internment Camp. "*I want to see the Soviet Union victorious and England defeated*", McCool told him. "*You can't have it both ways*", was O'Riordan's reply.

Greater organisational cohesion was given to the Anti-Fascist faction in the camp following the internment of the Anglo-Irish Communist, Neil Goold Verschoyle in Spring 1942. Ironically, this was not for any Republican activities on Goold's part, but for leading a rent strike in Dublin. A broad-based Connolly Education Group was formed among an ever-increasing number of anti-Fascist Republicans, with an inner circle now constituting a Communist Group.

In the monumental archive of oral history from that period which he edited and published in 1997 under the title of *The IRA in the Twilight Years 1923-1948*, the late Uinseann MacEoin retold the experience of the Protestant IRA volunteer George Fluke as he arrived to be interned among what he thought would be a solid group of Republican prisoners. The Camp

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by *Brendan Clifford*

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Commandant James Guiney ironically enquired: "What part of this open university would you like to go into?" When Fluke expressed bewilderment as to the nature of the question, Guiney continued:

"I will put it in perspective for you. You can go and join Mr. Leddy who is totally Republican; Republican flag and Republican to the backbone. If you don't like his side of the Camp, you can go and join Pearse Kelly who is a little more liberal with his northern Republicanism; there is more give and take and he is not as dogmatic. Then if you don't like that you can go and join Mr. O'Donovan's group; the ones who believe in Hitler all the way through. If you are still not satisfied, you can join Mr. Goold, who marches under the banner, workers of the world unite. Now move yourself Fluke, you are holding us up".

Whereupon a camp guard gave him a belt of a baton that split his ear.

Seán Ó Maolbhríde further recalled:

"Neil Goold had a short article in the camp journal, edited at that time by Pearse Kelly, in which he called on Republicans to support the Allied cause against the Nazis. Pearse Kelly replied to this article in the same issue with a bitter attack on Neil Goold in which something like the following occurred: 'If Neil Goold had a drop of Irish blood in his veins, he could not have written these words.' From the day I read this vitriolic attack ... my sympathies were wholly on the side of the Communists in the camp."

Seán described how anti-Fascist influence among internees accelerated through the mechanism of the Connolly Education Group. Although he had been O'Riordan's best man at his 1946 wedding, my father had severed all political and personal relations with him following Seán's public renunciation of Communism in 1969 (though I myself conversed with him on several occasions thereafter). There was, however, no grudge against my Dad displayed in his 1971 article, where he went on to recall:

"Open meetings were held in vacant huts. These were generally conducted by our most competent speaker, Michael O'Riordan. The growing numbers of non-Party prisoners who attended these meetings were greatly impressed by the sincerity and clarity of our speakers. There was never any sign of hostility, although the majority of them were encountering a completely new political philosophy. Alarmed by the spread of Left-wing ideas and other signs of disaffection among the prisoners, the Right-wing IRA leaders of the camp had earlier compiled a list of the 'rebels' (numbering about two hundred) and handed that list to the Military Governor of the Camp with the request that these prisoners be moved into new huts in a compact area of the camp and be con-

sidered separate (excommunicated perhaps?) from the 'official' camp. The prisoners in the bigger section were strictly forbidden to speak to any of us outcasts, but we were at liberty to speak to any of them if we wished. This petulant and panicky action of the Right-wing leaders rather accentuated the feeling of rebelliousness among the prisoners in the 'outlawed' section... More and more people were being attracted to the open meetings and the most interested were being absorbed into the group... A Party journal appropriately named *An Splannnc (Iskra—The Spark)* was produced every month, several copies being meticulously written out and systematically circulated among the prisoners in our camp."

These were the Republican developments that Betjeman's espionage activities had been attempting to monitor so keenly and precisely. That he was unable to get his hand on the actual text of the 1942 May Day Manifesto is not, however, surprising. The Connolly Education Group itself stated that "*the manifesto was issued and distributed on May Day 1942 on behalf of those attending Revolutionary Study Classes*" but each copy carried the health warning: "*Notice—Will Readers of An Splannnc please ensure that the PA's (Camp Guards) do not see it.*" The Manifesto that had eluded Betjeman and Mansergh had come to the following conclusions:

"But it is not only in the struggle of the Irish labouring classes that our traditions are linked with the International Working Class Movement. Throughout the history of our country's fight for freedom the true leaders of the people at each successive phase of the struggle have always pointed out the community of interests between our national movement and the national and revolutionary struggles in other countries. This was so when the United Irishmen toasted the fall of the Bastille in 1789, it was so in 1848 when Irish patriots greeted the people's revolutionary uprisings in Europe and the Chartist risings of the oppressed people of England, Scotland and Wales, and it was so in 1916 when the vanguard of the Irish working class through their paper the *Workers Republic* associated themselves with the international movement for turning the Imperialist war into a war against the oppressors in every country."

"Today, in reviewing the revolutionary movement in our own country, we would do well to criticise ourselves for the apathy and the lack of a sense of responsibility which are so prevalent and which have left us at this period of International crises divided in will and outlook... *Whatever confusion may reign, all honest patriots will agree that all who would replace British Imperialism by Nazi Imperialism on the pretence of establishing an Irish Republic here must be branded as either traitors or imbeciles. It is our National Independence we are fighting for, not for a change of masters, therefore our sole*

hope lies in the creation of a mass movement of the 'Men of No Property'. *Such a movement would not look to the enslavers of Europe for inspiration but to the rising national movements in India, Australia and Canada, the people's movement in Britain itself which supports them, the Republic of China and the USSR fighting for their existence, and the suppressed Republican movements of France, Spain, Catalonia, the Basque country and other peoples now undergoing martyrdom in Europe.*"

It was precisely because only a minority of the pro-German Russellites were imbued with any form of Nazi ideology, that it was also possible to make recruits to the anti-Fascist cause from among their ranks. Among the Russellite internees was one of Stephen Hayes's hit men, Joe O'Connor. An IRA member, Michael Devereux, had been falsely accused by Hayes of being an informer and had been shot on his instructions. As a result, O'Connor was charged with murder and taken out of the camp for a series of military trials lasting from November 1941 to the end of January 1942. The Protestant IRA leader George Plant was convicted of Devereux's murder and executed, but O'Connor himself was acquitted. His return to the camp was a spectacular event. Cheered and carried shoulder-high, O'Connor demonstratively gave the Fascist salute. This was an act of defiance of the camp authorities, more than anything else. He had hitherto been devoid of any political ideology. He had been a pure-and-simple physical force man. However, during the course of 1942 the forcefulness of the anti-Fascist argument won him over to such an extent that he actually joined the Communist Group and spent the remainder of his period of imprisonment arguing with his fellow-internees on the need to defeat Nazi Germany.

But the Goold-O'Riordan-Power Group of anti-Fascists was also to meet a far more sophisticated ideological challenge in a document produced by the Pearse Kelly leadership. Entitled *Statement of Republican Policy*, it was primarily drafted by Seán McCool in the latter part of 1942, and coincided with a resumption of a limited military campaign in Northern Ireland in September 1942. This campaign was to be strongly condemned at an Irish Communist Conference held in Belfast on 25th and 26th October 1942, when CP General Secretary W.H. McCullough stated:

"Within recent months there has been another clash between the (Stormont) Government and Republicans. Bombs have been thrown and shootings have taken place and a number of lives have been lost. From the point of view of creating greater unity between Catholics and Protestants the situation could not be much worse. While it is correct to state

that the policy that the Government pursues towards the Nationalist section of the population—the unconcealed sectarianism, raids and imprisonments—prepares the ground for these outbursts, severe criticism must be levelled at the Republicans. Their narrow Nationalist ideas; their failure to understand that the fight for the freedom and liberty of the Irish people can only be accomplished in unity with the fight for freedom throughout the world, which today is crystallised in the struggle against Fascism, leads them into actions which are disastrous to the cause they profess to advocate, and benefits only the enemies of progress, who are also the enemies of Ireland. Acts of terrorism can never replace the popular mass actions of the people, therefore we condemn in the strongest possible terms the acts of terrorism of the IRA. The Labour movement is the only force that can win Republicans away from their present suicidal policy."

But McCool did not consider himself to be a narrow Nationalist in the mould of either Russell or Hayes. He decided to tackle Communist criticism from both within and without the camp on its own ideological terrain. Historians will be forever in the debt of Uinseann Mac Eoin for rescuing and reproducing a summary of that 1942 *Statement of Republican Policy*. Mac Eoin stated that "One presumes that numbers of copies of the document were made and that they were passed around the 330 men, or whatever number wished to read it (assuming that at this time, late 1942, early 1943, there were about 200 men on the Leddy side, who would not be reading it)." Were it not for Mac Eoin himself, however, nobody else would now know what had been in it.

The McCool document began by castigating the anti-political Russellite coup that had been carried out among the Republican internees of the Curragh in November 1940. It denounced on the one hand the Liam Leddy regime for inflicting on internees a "surfeit of German Victory dope", while on the other hand it also denounced Neil Goold as "a trained Marxian Communist" who, it inferred, suborned IRA members into a policy of support for the war effort of the United Nations. The McCool document went on to summarise as follows the arguments of its Connolly Group opponents:

"(1) The war forced upon the Soviet Union has changed the entire aspect of this struggle.

(2) We, Republicans, should therefore stand behind Britain.

(3) As German Fascism is now the prime enemy, it is only through its downfall that Republicans can aspire to a regime based upon their 1934 programme.

(4) Any attempt at revolt now will play into the hands of native and British Fascists.

(5) On these grounds the Northern

Campaign of September 1942 is condemned."

Mac Eoin stated that the document then proceeded to give what it called "*the Republican case against this misguided line of policy*". It denounced Churchill as "*the arch imperialist*" who had sought in 1919 to overthrow the Russian Revolution. It showed the links between British Imperialism and German Fascism, at the same time declaring sympathy with post-Versailles Germany because of the harshness of that Treaty. It also quoted remarks from James Connolly sympathetic to Germany at the commencement of the First World War.

But the document went on to concede that "*the attack by Germany on the Soviet Union was a particularly unfortunate development*". It lauded the Soviet people's "*epic and mighty defence*" of their country, but also reminded the Communists of the Connolly Group of Stalin's previous non-aggression pact "*with the monster Fascism*". It argued that Stalin had been nationally minded enough to put the interests of the Russian people first, "*which is what we must do*". It would be futile, it said, to abandon the Republican struggle because of a "*vague internationalism dependent upon future hypothetical situations*". Republicans should be prepared to seek aid in the shape of "*weapons of warfare*", whether "*they be from Birmingham, Berlin or the banks of the Volga*". The IRA had no secret treaty with Germany, but "*if Ireland's only enemy is weakened in this titanic struggle, then it is our business to seize that opportunity and, with God's help, smash England's grip on our island nation*".

McCool sought to adhere to an anti-Fascist ideological position but, as O'Riordan had already put it to him in April 1942, he could not have it both ways. But the McCool document did exploit a fundamental weakness in the Communist position, its failure to seriously analyse in any depth Connolly's stand during the First World War. In his January 1941 introduction to that set of writings P.J. Musgrove had maintained that "*Connolly's efforts to combat Britain's hawking of atrocity stories have sometimes been misinterpreted as a 'pro-German' attitude*". But this was no misinterpretation. The very writings that Musgrove himself had assembled stated Connolly's position quite explicitly. As Connolly had argued in the *Irish Worker* on August 22, 1914:

"Do not let anyone play upon your sympathies by denunciation of the German military bullies. German military bullies, like all tyrannies among civilised people, need fear nothing so much as native (German) democracy. Attacks from outside only strengthen tyrants within a nation. If we had to choose between strengthening the German bully or the

Russian autocrat the wise choice would be on the side of the German ... German influences have shaped for good the hopes of the world, but the thought and the hopes of the best in Russia were but the other day drowned in blood by Russia's worst. To help Britain is to help Russia to the dominance of Europe, to help the barbarian to crush the scientist."

The fault-line in Musgrove's introduction was that he had failed either to subject Connolly's explicitly pro-German choice to a Leninist critique or else to enter the *caveat* that, while correct in its own context, it could in no way apply to the Second World War, even in respect of that War's earlier phase. Hitler Germany was not Kaiser Germany; German democracy had been completely smashed by Nazism. Moreover, Connolly was also a resolute opponent of anti-Semitism—one who had issued a special appeal to Jewish workers in their own Yiddish language during the Dublin Municipal Elections of 1902. And, indeed, in that very same *Irish Worker* article, one of the reasons advanced by Connolly for preferring a German victory in the First World War was because, in that War, it was Britain which was standing full force behind the powerhouse of anti-Semitism in Europe, Tsarist Russia. Connolly argued:

"Conscientious and impartial authorities have proven from official documents that the pogroms or race riots for which Russia has been notorious, and of which the Jews are the victims, have almost always been carried out with Government connivance. In these pogroms the Jewish districts were given up to pillage and outrage by mobs of armed men, while the police looked calmly on. Shops and houses were burned after being looted, women and children were ravished, babies and old men and women were thrown from windows to their death in the streets, and hell was let loose generally upon the defenceless people. After long months, some few nobodies were occasionally arrested and sentenced for those crimes, only to be set free again by pardon signed by the Czar's own hand... The British armies are fighting to increase the power of this monster over Europe".

Musgrove's failure to even acknowledge, not to mind place in context, the pro-German character of some of the articles which he had included in his 1941 edition of Connolly's writings, had given a hostage to fortune. In November 1942 the McCool document was now quoting Connolly out of context against the Connolly Group's stand on the Second World War. Musgrove had by this stage become editor of *Unity*, the newly legalised publication of the Communist Party in Northern Ireland. When it came to preparing W.H. McCullough's Communist Conference address for subsequent

Ataturk And The President

The following letter failed to find publication in the *Irish Times*.
An extract from the letter it is responding to appear below it

publication, an astute observer like Musgrove knew that the General Secretary's dry denunciation of what he had referred to as "*IRA terrorism*" would cut very little ice in the debate now raging among Republican prisoners. As far as Republican Sacred Scripture was concerned, McCool had gone on the offensive with Connolly. A response in kind was required. And so, when the Conference address was finally issued in pamphlet form with a November 1942 postscript, the very first page of that pamphlet consisted of a statement of principles that had not been referred to at all by Mc Cullough during the course of his actual speech. In a shamrock-adorned frame on an otherwise blank page there appeared the following banner proclamation, with emphasis added by the editor:

"If Ireland were to win freedom by helping, *directly or indirectly*, to crush another people, she would earn the execration she has herself poured out on tyranny throughout the ages." *Terence MacSwiney*

When I raised that interpolation with the late John de Courcy Ireland, he recognised the unmistakable hand of P.J. Musgrove in that propaganda counter-offensive. My father further confirmed that, prior to the publication of the McCullough pamphlet, it had not dawned on either the broad-based Connolly Group or the narrower Communist Group to make use of that particular MacSwiney statement during the course of their own anti-Fascist propaganda among the Curragh's Republican internees. But now they used it to the full. So powerful was its enduring legacy that, in his 1979 book *Connolly Column*, O'Riordan was to quote from memory its exact message (if not with word for word accuracy) when historically reviewing the IRA response to the Second World War. Moreover, he quoted it not once, but twice, on one and the same page! The quotation was taken from *Principles of Freedom*, the book which the IRA leader and Republican Lord Mayor of Cork, Terence MacSwiney, had prepared for publication in September 1920 as he lay dying on his 74 day hunger strike in Brixton Prison, London. The book was dedicated "TO THE SOLDIERS OF FREEDOM IN EVERY LAND" and MacSwiney argued:

"This is the question I would discuss. I find in practice everywhere in Ireland—it is worse out of Ireland—the doctrine, 'the end justifies the means' ... So, clear speaking is needed: a fight that is not clean-handed will make victory more disgraceful than any defeat. I make the point here because we stand for separation from the British Empire, and because I have heard it argued that we ought, if we could, make a foreign alliance to crush English power here, even if our foreign allies were engaged in crushing freedom

Dennis O'Callaghan's letter (9 April) condemning President McAleese's laying of a wreath at the tomb of Ataturk because he was "responsible for the ethnic cleansing of Smyrna in Asia Minor" is a very partial view of history.

The Turkish capture of Smyrna occurred as the culmination of a Greek attempt to conquer Anatolia, which led to large scale ethnic cleansing of Muslims, starting in Smyrna itself and reaching to where it was stopped by Ataturk, at the gates of Ankara. The Greeks were victims of their own irredentist dreams of a new Byzantium and their misplaced faith in Lloyd George, in attempting to impose the punitive Treaty of Sèvres on Turkey.

In any other context, such as that applied to the Second World War, the recapture of Smyrna would be seen as an act of liberation and the blame for the unfortunate events of September 1922 placed at the hands of the original aggressors. **Dr. Pat Walsh**

President's view of Turkey and EU

...Mrs McAleese laid a wreath at the tomb of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. In September 1922, Mustafa Kemal was responsible for the ethnic cleansing of Smyrna in Asia Minor. This was achieved through the massacre of 100,000 Christians by Kemal's troops, followed by the deportation of a similar number. Bizarrely, our President stated that she had admired Kemal since childhood.

Is it really necessary for this country to crawl through the sewers of history in search of diplomatic or commercial advantage? **Dennis O'Callaghan**

elsewhere. When such a question can be proposed it should be answered, though the time is not ripe to test it. If Ireland were to win freedom by helping directly or indirectly to crush another people she would earn the execration she has herself poured out on tyranny for ages. I have come to see it is possible for Ireland to win her independence by base methods. It is imperative, therefore, that we should declare ourselves and know where we stand. And I stand by this principle: no physical victory can compensate for spiritual surrender. Whatever side denies that is not my side."

McCool, of course, had his own concept of a clean-handed fight. His particular version of IRA terrorism was noble and chivalrous in the extreme. RUC men were ambushed, captured, disarmed—and then released. McCool's own anti-Fascist scruples, coupled with a refusal to countenance any civilian casualties, so circumscribed his theoretical willingness to accept German aid that it was rendered inoperative. But a misreading not only of the wartime strength of morale among the Unionist majority, but also of the mood in the Nationalist minority, saw that IRA Northern campaign, which McCool had set in motion from behind the barbed wire of the Curragh Camp, evaporating by Easter 1943.

The Connolly Group's struggle to win the hearts and minds of their fellow internees to support the defeat of Nazi Germany had also received a powerful morale boost from the Red Army's

annihilation of Hitler's forces at Stalingrad in January 1943. Messages of solidarity also reached the Group from Northern Ireland. Of particular significance were the hand made cards from a group of Republican prisoners in Belfast's Crumlin Road Jail, who had created a series of anti-Fascist cartoons mocking those who had placed their faith in a German victory.

Anti-Fascist cartoons also featured in the production of *An Splannc* in the Curragh camp itself. The May Day issue for 1943 reprinted (or more accurately, transcribed) the 1942 Manifesto and carried an article by International Brigader Johnny Power in which he recalled May Day in Spain in 1937 and the vow made there "*never to rest until Fascism has been defeated*". To his fellow Curragh internees Power declared: "Let our May Day slogan be—Fascism must be destroyed, or it shall destroy us".

With the IRA defeated, releases from the Curragh Camp accelerated, and O'Riordan finally walked free in September 1943. But why had this veteran of the Spanish Anti-Fascist War been deprived of his freedom for almost four years? In January 1940 one Fianna Fáil Government source had in fact approached him with an offer of a commission in the Irish Army, while at the same time another Government decision, signed by Seán T. O'Kelly, was being taken to arrest and intern him! One other internee who was to join the Connolly Group in the Curragh, Séamus Ronayne, offered the following analysis to Uinseann MacEoin as to why

de Valera's Government had made no exceptions in its internment offensive, even in the case of militantly anti-Fascist Republicans:

"As for neutrality, on which you question me, I never believed that we were a threat to it. To a certain extent, I believe that we were being used as pawns by de Valera, enabling him to say to Sir John Maffey, the British representative in Dublin, that he should have no complaint, that Mr. Churchill could sleep easy and that he had the IRA all locked up!"

But de Valera was doing more than that. The very fact that the German invasion of the Soviet Union had been broadcast to the Republican prisoners indicated a desire to see an intensification of the ideological conflict, whereby the initial pro-German majority of the IRA would be whittled down to functional insignificance. To have prematurely released the Republican anti-Fascists would have thrown that opportunity away.

[to be continued] **Manus O'Riordan**

shay's speech against the Anglo-Russian Agreement in the House of Commons on 17th February 1908 is contained in a later book of 1911, *An Eastern Miscellany*).

Up until 1907 Ronaldshay saw Russia and England as the grinding mills on Islam but there was always a necessity on England's part, at least, and a deterrent factor on Russia's, to tolerate the Islamic buffer-states that lay between the mills of civilizing. But in 1907 the grinding process of Islamic states was let loose, beginning with the division of Persia between the Christian Powers of Russia and Britain. And by 1918 Britain had no great rival left in the region, with the collapse of Czarist Russia and Germany, and decided to take on the grinding of Islam to itself.

Gallipoli—The Criminals and The Crime

Ireland's participation in the Gallipoli landings of 1915 is well known as an isolated event. Like the Great War, it is something that just happened—"out of the blue" as folk used to say. Of course, it is very rarely that things happen "out of the blue", and particularly so in relation to Imperial matters when England was at the height of its power, nearly a century ago.

There is a trail that leads back from the shores of Gallipoli in 1915 to 1903—from crime to criminal.

Recently, I came across a book that showed how Gallipoli was a part of the English imagination as far back as 1903. That book was written by the Earl of Ronaldshay, and is entitled *On The Outskirts Of Empire*.

Lawrence Dundas (1844–1929), Earl of Ronaldshay, was known as the Earl of Zetland from 1873 to 1892, and was a Conservative politician and statesman. He was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland between 1889 and 1892, under Lord Salisbury's Government. He was sworn onto the Privy Council in 1889, and in 1892, on Lord Salisbury's recommendation, was created the Earl of Ronaldshay, in the County of Orkney and Zetland (Shetland).

But what The Earl of Ronaldshay concerned himself most about was the Indian Empire. He authored the most famous and best biography of Lord Curzon. He was widely travelled in the near East and the Far East and wrote a number of books about the area described by Curzon as the "*glacis of India*". He was Governor of Bengal between 1917 and 1922 and Secretary of State for India between 1937 and 1940.

In *On The Outskirts Of Empire* Ronaldshay cites Lord Curzon's famous dictum concerning the Indian Empire which defines the area known as a "*glacis*" (from the area surrounding mediaeval fortifications which was used as a killing ground):

"India is like a fortress, with the vast moat of the sea on two of her faces, and

with mountains for her walls on the remainder; but beyond those walls, which are sometimes of by no means insuperable height, and admit of being easily penetrated, extends a glacis of varying breadth and dimension. We do not want to occupy it, but we also cannot afford to see it occupied by our foes. We are quite content to let it remain in the hands of our allies and friends; but if rival and unfriendly influences creep up to it and lodge themselves right under our walls, we are compelled to intervene, because a danger would thereby grow up that might one day menace our security. This is the secret of the whole position in Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet, and as far eastwards as Siam. He would be a short-sighted commander who merely manned his ramparts in India and did not look out beyond; and the whole of our policy during the past five years has been directed towards maintaining our influence, and to preventing the expansion of hostile agencies on this area which I have described."

Ronaldshay saw it as being in Britain's interest to preserve the glacis of Islamic buffer-states that existed in the area between Russia's advance into central Asia and Britain's Indian Empire—despite the fact that he saw them as being subjected to an inevitable process of grinding down between the irrepressible civilizing forces in the region—Russia and Britain.

What Ronaldshay was talking about, of course, was the Great Game—the military and political manoeuvrings that went on in the glacis between the Russian civilizing of central Asia and the Indian Empire. The Great Game had been a constant of British foreign policy for nearly a century, along with the Balance of Power policy which England applied to Europe. Ronaldshay was taken aback when Sir Edward Grey signed in 1907 an agreement with Russia that effectively called off the Great Game because of an adjustment in the Balance of Power policy and in order that a greater game could be played by Britain against Germany in Europe and beyond. (Ronald-

But where does Gallipoli figure in all of this?

In *On The Outskirts Of Empire*, written in 1903, Ronaldshay considers the problem of the Ottoman Empire in relation to the glacis. The Ottoman Empire did not form part of the glacis because it was a reasonably stable entity which acted as a giant buffer zone between the Indian Empire and Russia and obviously prevented the Czar from obtaining his desire of a warm water port at Constantinople. It therefore was an entity that Britain sought to preserve. However, Britain had territorial ambitions in relation to the Ottoman territories which complicated the matter. Ronaldshay noted the antagonistic relationship that existed between Russia and Turkey:

"Beginning on the extreme west, we have the Turkish Empire, forming—thanks to its geographical position—the starting-point of that belt of territory of unsettled political status which stretches across Asia from west to east, and which merits the description of Captain Mahan of "the debatable and debated ground". From the days when the germ of the Russian Empire first fell upon Russian soil up to the present time an uninterrupted antagonism has existed between the two countries. The peoples have changed but the antagonism remains."

Ronaldshay believed that British power was essential to the preservation of the Ottoman Empire as Russian power and expansionism developed:

"As the power of Russia has consolidated and increased, the vigour of the Turk, as of almost every other Asiatic nation, has proportionately declined, and it is thanks only to the rivalry of Western Powers that "the sick man" still sits on the throne at Yildiz.

"For since Turkey is one of those states which impinge upon the eastern extremity of the Mediterranean, and is lapped by the waters of the Persian Gulf, "the integrity of Turkey" has of necessity been the watchword of British policy in this

portion of the globe. Twice in the course of the past century has Russia let loose the dogs of war that she might get possession of the keys of the Bosphorus, and twice has Great Britain stepped forth to wrest them from her grasp—once in 1853 by appeal to the arbitrament of war, once again in 1878 by aid of the masterful diplomacy of Lord Beaconsfield.

"As a result of this want of success Russia diverted her energy for the time being into other channels, and a whole crop of political questions in Central Asia immediately came into being; but though frustrated for the time, she still looks with longing eyes at the object of her desire, and no chance which comes in the way of her astute and indefatigable diplomatists for oiling the wheels of her endeavour is ever allowed to pass by."

But there was another complicating element appearing on the Ottoman horizon:

"In the meantime, however, another Power, which, in the days of the Berlin Conference, knew little of and cared less for the attractions of the Near East, has raised its voice in the councils of the Turk, and to-day the trumpet-blast of German ambition resounds through the streets of Constantinople. The blandishments of Count Hatzfeldt, and the ability and force of character of General von Goltz, paved the way for the magnetic personality of the Emperor William II., who was completely successful in securing the friendship of the Sultan, and with the royal visit to Constantinople in 1899 a third Power was hurried incontinently into the forefront of the theatre of Ottoman diplomacy and intrigue."

Ronaldshay then draws attention to a Russian proposal made to Britain in the light of the increasing German influence within the Ottoman Empire. This is a proposal that I have never seen mentioned in any other publication. And, given the subsequent history, and the events of the Great War, one would think it is of the utmost significance. It reveals a common interest emerging with regard to the Ottoman Empire where there had only been conflict before:

"Needless to say, Russia regarded with feelings of undisguised aversion this latest intruder in the field of her hereditary ambition, and the Russian censor has in nowise prevented Russian opinion from sounding loudly in the Russian press, and a novel solution of the Turkish imbroglio was a short time ago put tentatively forward.

"A spark was to be applied to the Ottoman volcano—that was necessary to create an excuse for active operations—upon which Russia, with England's acquiescence, should secure the Bosphorus, and England, Russia assenting, should secure Gallipoli and the command of the Dardanelles. With the Bosphorus in her possession, Russia

would be content to leave the Mediterranean to others. With Gallipoli fortified and in British hands, no reasonable grounds for British suspicion of Russia in regard to the Mediterranean could exist. The dominating note which sounded throughout the whole suggestion was jealousy of Germany. 'Germany', it ran, 'has, it is true, made her appearance in the field. German intrigue at Constantinople has latterly been strongly in evidence, but the solution of the Russian problem can and will be found without particular reference to Germany. The Germans may yet find that they might with profit have been content to wait inevitable developments around the Euxine before putting so many eggs into their Baghdad basket'.

"The whole scheme is delightful, but—and they are rather big but—despite the sanguine anticipations of its author, I am inclined to think that Germany would have a good deal to say in any such arrangement, to say nothing of the Turks, who might not unnaturally commit the mistake of supposing that they had some claim to a voice in the matter of the partition of their own country. Finally, all mention of the future of that vast portion of the Ottoman Empire which stretches from the Black Sea on the north to the Red Sea on the south, and from the Mediterranean on the west to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean on the east, is conveniently ignored. The head is to be severed, but what of the trunk? 'Where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together'..."

Ronaldshay, whose thoughts and efforts had been directed toward the Great Game, and who was disinclined to conceive of Germany as a threat to the Empire, found the Russian proposal fraught with dangerous uncertainty.

Instead, he urged the Government to take seriously the German offer to become stakeholders in the Baghdad Railway that was being debated in Parliament in the Spring of 1903. But to no avail—as Liberal Imperialist opposition combined with Germanophobe agitation to result in the turning down of the German attempts at allaying British fears of the railway.

But this piece of information, alluded to by Ronaldshay, of an offer made by Russia to the British is of significance because, essentially, this was the deal that was constructed between the Powers six weeks after their respective declarations of war on Turkey, and concluded in the Constantinople Agreement and Treaty of London in 1915.

We have no evidence of a formal offer. These things are still clouded with secrecy. But there was much kite flying in the press in those days about such things. And we know that, when Sir Edward Grey sought to make his alliances with France and Russia, that is how he did it (through Leo

Maxse). So it is only to be expected that the Czar was responding to Grey's proposals by signalling on what ground he wished to do business. And we know for a fact that that business was concluded a decade later.

Ronaldshay's revelation also ties up a loose end in the question of why England was assaulting the Ottoman Empire at Gallipoli when it was Russia that was going to gain the ultimate prize of Constantinople after the war. Presumably, even if Britain had allowed Russia to take Constantinople in the event of victory, Gallipoli and the Straits may have been retained in Britain's hands as a guarantee against the Czar at Constantinople.

The interesting point made by Ronaldshay about what was to be done about the main bulk of the Ottoman Empire in the event of a collapse brought upon it by a Russian and British war against it was thrown into actuality between 1915 and 1924. And it was a problem that the British Empire, having seen off the Germans, having watched Czarist Russia disappear as a rival in the region, and believing the Turk to be done, was unable to find a solution to.

And, three years later it is, of course, on record that the Committee of Imperial Defence discussed war with Turkey in July 1906; following a dispute over the Turkish/Egyptian frontier. (Which really should not have been a frontier at all but Britain had absorbed Egypt, a part of the Ottoman Empire, into the British Empire as security for its route to India through the Suez Canal.)

Sir John French, Commander in Chief of the British Army, prepared a memorandum for the CID [Committee for Imperial Defence] which signalled the British reorientation away from seeing its prime enemies as being Russia and France and focusing on the Germans and the Turks. It stated:

"Germany is known to be jealous of our maritime supremacy, and has adopted an attitude generally hostile to our commercial and political interests. Turkey is entirely alienated from us for reasons which are well known. These two Powers are believed to be in close sympathy, the word and advice of Germany counting for a great deal in the counsels of the Ottoman Empire. There is, in fact, something very like a secret alliance between them, and all their interests in the Near and Middle East are antagonistic to ours. France desires peace at almost any price, and is unlikely to intervene in any quarrel in which she is not directly interested. Russia may probably be regarded as a *quantité négligeable* for some years to come. Austria-Hungary and Italy practically neutralize one another."

Russia was taken to be "*a quantité négligeable for some years to come*" because of her defeat by Japan in the 1904-05 war. This defeat, after the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902, came as a great boon to England, producing the possibility of alliance with the Czar after he had been prevented from gaining a warm water port in Manchuria and been chastened in his ambitions in Asia.

So with France onside with the 1904 Entente and Russia no longer a worry plans were considered for a Royal Navy storming of the Dardanelles.

A report was commissioned entitled *The Possibility of a joint naval and military attack on the Dardanelles*. It was presented to the CID in December 1906 and suggested:

"A mere naval raid... into the Sea of Marmora being at once such a dangerous and ineffective operation, it must be taken for granted that, if ever an attempt to force the Dardanelles is made the work will have to be undertaken by a Joint Naval and Military expedition having for its object the capture of the Gallipoli Peninsula and the destruction of the forts... The General Staff... fully accepts the Admiralty view that few operations of sea power in combination with a modest land force promise to be more effective in their final results than the seizure of the Dardanelles. The governing factor however, in the consideration of any schemes of coercion in relation to the Turkish Empire, is that success must be certain."

The reason why the British government felt that "*success must be certain*" in any attack at Gallipoli was that the effect of a defeat would be a great blow to British 'prestige' in the area, particularly with regard to the Moslem world. (The idea of 'prestige' became a watchword of British Imperialism after the 'Indian Mutiny'. Before that event the British had the idea that their civilizing of the East was sufficient in achieving dominance in the area, but after it there was the realization that the natives would not always be grateful and quiescent in the face of British civilizing and more was needed, in the demonstrating of power and authority over the 'lesser breeds' to keep them in order.)

What we have now is a trail that connects the criminal—England—to the scene of the crime—Gallipoli—stretching back from 1915 to 1903. In 1903 there is the Russian offer and the germ of the idea planted in the English mind of a combined assault on the Ottoman Empire and a division of spoils. In 1906 there are discussions in the CID and plans made for the Gallipoli operation. In 1907 there is the Anglo-Russian agreement which makes war on Germany, and by extension, the Ottoman Empire, inevitable. In 1914 we have the Great War and the Indian

Expeditionary Force springing into action to take Basra in an instant.

How is it any longer possible to say the Great War and Gallipoli came "*out of the blue*" or that Turkey "*committed suicide*" by entering it of its own volition?

Pat Walsh

From 'Your War' to 'Our War'

I came across an interesting British Great War publication recently called *Essays For Boys And Girls—A First Guide toward the Study of the War*. It was published in 1915 by Macmillan and was written by Stephen Paget. It seems to have been produced to educate the young of England about the War. Its first chapter was called 'Your War' so presumably that they might feel part of things (as RTE called their recent publication *Our War*, so that we might feel part of these things.) It contains the following quotation on its inside page:

"Gentlemen, I tell you, solemnly, that the day is coming when the soldiers of England must be her tutors; and the captains of her army, captains also of her mind." Ruskin: Address at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, December 1865.

Essays For Boys And Girls is a much more interesting and worth-while read than *Our War*, in fact. And to whet the reader's appetite we include the section on Ireland and the outbreak of war—which goes to show what a great relief the Great War was to England, after the Home Rule conflict had brought the State to the brink of civil war. The author went so far as saying: "*After that, we felt able to endure anything.*" And by December 1915, when he penned that line, England had endured the slaughter on the Western Front, Gallipoli etc.

The author informs his young readers in ecstatic terms: "*On Monday, August 3, 1914. The Day, suddenly, was here: the dream was come true. And remember, as long as you live, that our fear was lest the Government should not be equal to the occasion.*"

Far from being caught on the hop by a bolt out of the blue the Government was, indeed, "*equal to the occasion*". And to cap it all, Mr. Redmond was there to oblige. Read on (and try to contain your excitement) at this ripping yarn:

"The week-end Friday 31st July to Tuesday 4th August was such as no one then living had ever spent. For so widespread a sense of foundations destroyed and a world turned topsy-turvy we must go back to the days of the French Revolution. In Britain the markets went to pieces, the Bank rate rose to 10 per cent on the Saturday, and the Stock Exchange was closed. Monday 3rd August was a Bank Holiday, the strangest in the memory of man. An air of great and terrible things impending impressed the most casual visitor. Crowds hung about telegraph offices and railway stations as men stood in the street in little groups; there was not much talking, but many spells of tense silence. The country was uneasy. It had no desire for war; it suddenly realised the immensity of the crisis; but it was in terror of a dishonourable peace. The sigh of relief which went up after Sir Edward Grey's speech on the Monday, from men who stood to lose most

by the conflict, showed how deep had been the anxiety felt...

On Monday, August 3, 1914. The Day, suddenly, was here: the dream was come true. And remember, as long as you live, that our fear was lest the Government should not be equal to the occasion. For we said, If the Government cannot allay civil strife in Ireland, nor even stop the suffragettes from setting fire to parish churches, how will it abide the Day of His Coming? The Government, we said: for the man in the street loves to think that he "does not trust the Government". We did not have to wait long to know that we could trust the Government: we had Sir Edward Grey's speech in the papers that evening. They say that the House of Commons, while he was speaking, was a sight never to be forgotten; that His Majesty's Ministers bore the mark of the frightful strain of anxiety and overwork which they had been suffering; and that one of them, covering his face with his hands, broke down. That night, a vast crowd outside Buckingham Palace shouted and cheered for the King and the Queen; such a whirlwind of cheering as will be heard again when the War is over. But all the noise and excitement of London's loyalty were as nothing, compared with the loyalty of Ireland.

"For the long conflict over Home Rule had brought our nation, at last, face to face with Civil War in Ireland. Armed and drilled, Ulstermen against Nationalists, Protestants against Catholics, Ireland had reached that point at which any haphazard encounter might bring about Civil War. The Curragh Camp incident had put us in terror of what might come next. And behold, what came next was War between Austria and Serbia. With that thunderclap, and with Germany reckoning on the Irish peril, Ulstermen and Nationalists would no more fight among themselves than would the dead just out of their graves in the Orvietto picture. When the storm which broke over Serbia came rushing toward our country, the Irish people gave up, till the end of the War, their internal strife. In the House of Commons that Monday, after Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Bonar Law had spoken, Mr. John Redmond spoke as leader of the Nationalists. He took up Sir Edward Grey's words, which had been loudly cheered: "The one bright spot in the whole of this terrible situation is Ireland." He said that he hoped that the House would not consider it improper for him to intervene at this crisis: that Sir Edward Grey's words had deeply moved him:

'I say to the Government that they may to-morrow withdraw every one of their troops from Ireland. I say that the coasts of Ireland will be defended from foreign invasion by her own sons; and for this purpose armed Nationalist Catholics in the South will be only too glad to join arms with the armed Protestant Ulstermen in the North.'

"Thus, against all the reckonings of our enemies, the day which brought us War with Germany took from us the fear of Civil War in Ireland. After that, we felt able to endure anything" (pp.183-4).

Hip, Hip, Hooray for John Redmond! Oh, What a lovely war...

Pat Walsh

A Spooky Story

BLOODY SUNDAY

BBC Radio 4 UK in the *Document* slot examined the behaviour of British 'spooks' in Northern Ireland (22.03.10). The major item was Bloody Sunday in Derry in 1972. The programme was 'fronted' by Mike Thomson, who noted that the Savile Inquiry's Report into the facts of Bloody Sunday had not yet been published—though it has been some years since it wound up. The BBC probably designed this programme to soothe the feelings of those annoyed by the delay. Whether they listen to BBC Radio 4 is a moot point. But the Beeb can say it has considered the matter.

'Blood Sunday' itself was well examined. For the BBC, the villain of the piece was Colonel Maurice Tugwell, boss of 'psych-ops'. He and Hugh Mooney ran a group (IPU—Information Policy Unit) to discredit "*both wings of the IRA*"—and in this case, to slander innocent protesters. Tugwell produced, and read out, the Army statement claiming that four of the dead had nail-bombs on their persons. And four were on an 'IRA Wanted' list—meaning wanted for being members of the IRA. The London papers publicised this material. The script implies that they were gulled by a "*sophisticated Press Office*" run by the Army in Lisburn. But most of them wanted to run with such stories. The Unionist press in Northern Ireland ran with these absurdities too—the Irish, the US, and most of the media internationally, dismissed it as 'spin'.

Which, eventually, proved to be the case. But the British press (which had not been particularly scrupulous in the first place), as early as 1970, began a long, and intimate, relationship with the Army information officers. They tended to copy out what was handed to them. Some of it was nonsense; static electricity in female IRA operatives' underwear allegedly caused premature explosions. A Soviet submarine landed "*somewhere in 'Eire'*". It off-loaded arms, money, and a "*one-eyed American*" who oversaw their distribution.

More sinister matters included the immediate response to the bombing of McGurk's Bar in Belfast's North Queen Street. Within an hour of the bomb going off (and the instant killing of 15 people, and others later, along with many casualties) the IPU claimed it was an 'inside job'. There was a hint that the bomb had been made on the premises. Thereby implicating, and incriminating, the dead and those who had tried to save them.

Martin Lindsey (then of the *Belfast Telegraph*) said on the programme that he

was "*bitter*" at being gulled about this and other matters. There is no reason to disbelieve him. But at the time, it was, surely, music to his ears? The military spooks had the measure of their messengers—what was on the front pages of the *Bellylaugh* and the *Mirror* mattered. The *New York*, or *Irish*, *Times*, or *Irish Independent* did not. Belfast's *Irish News* was of no consequence whatsoever. The Army insisted on their story about McGurk's Bar being accurate. Seven years later a UVF operative owned-up to the bombing.

The 'Soviet sub' story was probably cooked-up along with the IRD (International Research Department). It was an anti-Communist enterprise run by MI6, according to interviewee David Miller of Glasgow University (and 'Spinwatch'—joint publishers with Aubane, of Brian J Murphy's *Origin and Organisation of British Propaganda in Ireland, 1920*—a 'must read'). Dr. David Owen, then British Foreign Minister, wound up the IRD (which was officially an arm of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office) in 1977, mainly because the FCO had very little control over it. MI6 continued to do what it felt like doing. MI6 is the external, non-UK, branch of Britain's Intelligence operations.

Despite the IRD being wound up the Establishment in London clearly regarded 'Northern Ireland' as a hang-over from Empire. Which can't be music to the ears of Unionists. (It should be noted that one aspect of Thatcherism that New Labour has been particularly happy about is the rehabilitation of The Empire. Brown told the Kenyans some years ago that it had done nothing but good in the world. The immediate response was a number of former Mau Mau claiming compensation from the UK State. One unfortunate man had been castrated, in what Enoch Powell at the time, described as a 'concentration camp'. The 'British authorities' clearly had a robust—not to say imaginative—approach to keeping the natives in their place. The British courts dismissed the claims on the grounds that the current government of Kenya is the successor to the colonial authorities. A creative, approach to the interpretation of evidence and the law. The published results of the Savile Inquiry may well be in the same creative category.)

The BBC, with this programme has nudged the Government in the direction of frankness. Presumably this means that the Establishment is experiencing contradictions in its policy in regard to Ireland. It is in two minds who to conciliate. The

usefulness of partition is exemplified by Cameron's lash-up with the Ulster Unionists. There has been a great deal of sniggering up the sleeve in regard to the Irish State's financial problems. (The current Dublin Government is making a serious attempt to tackle the matter.)

TUGWELL

The following information on Colonel Tugwell is from Spinwatch's http://www.spinprofiles.org/index.ptp/Maurice_Tugwell. Their opponents habitually emphasise the notion that British spooks are smart operators. The trail of death, destruction and misery, inflicted on their own operatives—think Robert Nairac—as well as the 'enemy' (the Miami Showband for example, tell tales of brutality and stupidity. The '4-Square' laundry service was one of the smarter—and stupider—ploys. Mere 'housewives' noticed that the service was improbably cheap. It's possible that the IRA had word out of the actual laundry on the Donegall Road about a mysterious new service. The IPU, despite Mr. Mooney, may have had the notion that a Belfast ('Linfield Village') Prod could not conceivably be inclined to Republicanism.

A lot of this nonsense was codified by Tugwell, in a memo on 'IRA Propaganda Organisation', (among other things) produced in November 1971. Here it is in all its glory with my inserted comments:

"... IRA propaganda has its base in Dublin where both factions run their own information centres, both with the title "Irish Republican Publicity Bureau". Each has a full time staff and has subordinate directors in Belfast, Londonderry and elsewhere. The campaign is pushed by numerous front organisations and by Republican sympathisers who, having themselves been taken in by the propaganda, are willing to spread the word. These organisations include:

"a. The Association for Legal Justice (which has been the principle agency for co-ordinating the campaign against alleged brutality during internment and interrogation). {In fact [the ALJ was a painfully respectable group of professional lawyers.]

"b. The Republican Clubs (which have always been fronts for the Sinn Fein political party and which now help to disseminate the propaganda of whichever faction they have chosen to support). {The Clubs were 'Official' Sinn Féin—the name was adopted about '66 to get round 'Stormont's' ban on SF. It led to situations where activists painted slogans like 'Vote RC' (!) on walls.}

"c. The Belfast Central Citizens Defence Committee (once given a cloak of respectability as representative of the Catholic population of the city, but now heavily involved in promoting IRA interests). {Presumably this is a reference to the CCDC's publication *The Lower Falls*

Curfew—and publications by other CDCs about the behaviour of the army and police. The Defence Committees were at the end of their tether at this point. Internment effectively finished them off. A war of aggression against Colonel Maurice Tugwell, and his ilk, was under way.)

"d. The Irish News (a newspaper that has long represented Republican opinion in Ulster and is now an organ for printing IRA propaganda). {Colonel Tugwell puts a generously broad interpretation on the word 'Republican'. Presumably this was to stir the troops to further depredations—nobody can have been so crudely deluded about Northern Ireland realities.}

"e. Catholic Ex-Servicemen's Association (is becoming increasingly involved with the IRA as a front organisation). {Fantasy—though after Bloody Sunday some of the younger members devolved towards their 'local unit' (of the IRA).}

"f. NICRA (Directed by Kevin McCorry) {'NICRA' is/was the NI Civil Rights Association—it organised huge anti-Internment demonstrations—but was already on the way to oblivion. It was dominated by the 'Stickies' / 'Officials' and Communists. The Sinn Féin / Peoples' Democracy Northern Resistance Movement elbowed it aside from mid-1972 onwards. Rather to the detriment of the over-all anti-Internment campaign.}

"g. Various Relief and Action Committees in Catholic Areas. {Croppies lie down?}

"h. Minority Rights Association. {Is this a reference to the MRG—the Oxford-based Minority Rights Group? As inferred above the Catholics in the North were moving from asking for 'British' civil rights to something altogether different—'minority rights' did not enter into the matter.}

"j. Various regional Citizens Defence Committees working to the CCDC.

"k. SDLP. {Some SDLP 'Stormont' MPs took vigorous part in the anti-Internment campaign—otherwise this is fantasy.}

"l. PD and other "New Left" organisations. {The PD—Peoples' Democracy—was in the process of becoming Sinn Féin's 'shadow' at this point. PD (now 'Socialist Democracy') claims it wasn't—but it was—it lost its Belfast City Council seats immediately on SF deciding to contest them. Other 'New Left' groups were tiny. The London-based Galwayman Gerry Healy's Workers' Revolutionary Party-to-be had a (largish) presence in Belfast (in its Young Socialists form) in the late 1960s. It wasn't properly speaking 'New Left' and didn't survive 1969. 'Militant' arose in Strabane in the early 1970s.}

"m. Vigilante or street committees, who organise allegations and fake damage, etc. {The 'vigilantes' who guarded the barricades were, largely, organised by the CDCs.}

"n. University groups and teachers.

"o. RTE and newspapers in the Republic to varying degrees, with the Irish Press particularly active.

"p. Committee for Truth {Fr Denis Faul—brutality allegations vehicle.}

"q. Association of Irish Priests (Ulster Branch) (Secretary Terrance O'Keefe,

Coleraine University).

"r. A number of RC priests, but Frs Brady, Faul and Egan are prominent."

Some of Tugwell's points are so broad as to be meaningless. Did "*University groups and teachers*" encompass every lecturer and teacher in the land? Does "*groups*" include the Ulster Unionist Associations, the 'Williamite and Glorious Revolution Society' (David Trimble's first entry into political organising)? The other points taken together suggest that Catholics in Northern Ireland should spend their time engaged in good works and suitable humility.

It is noticeable that the GAA is absent from the list. It may have been the absent "i.". This list was dreamed-up (a rather apt phrase) at a point when 'Stormont' was prepared to throw money at any group of Taigs which was not specifically IRA.

Given this fantasy-list it is not surprising that the UK's armed forces found themselves alienating almost the entire community. The IRA was definitely bested militarily—it did not have the resources of a very wealthy state behind it—on a number of occasions. But the 'Brits' recruited new armies for it by provocatively stupid actions. Given that 'everybody' living in the New Lodge Road area was 'IRA', lying about the McGurk Bar bombing and Private Clegg's adventures over twenty years later barely mattered. Roughly the same happened in practically every townland in Northern Ireland. Crossmaglen was quiet until well past the introduction of Internment, then the army decided to harass the locals, largely because they objected to internment without trial. Then the people of The Fews (the townland name) decided to hassle back—which they did with considerable vigour—for decades.

Neither Colonel Tugwell nor Hugh Mooney were prepared to be cross-examined at the Savile Inquiry. They severally submitted Statements, which can be read on the Inquiry's website. Tugwell (the comparatively lowly title 'colonel' is partly disguise) lives in Canada, but mere squaddies were brought from nearly as far afield to give evidence in the Maiden City. The whereabouts of his co-worker in the Information Policy Unit, Hugh Mooney, are unknown to the *Irish Political Review*.

Seán McGouran

The Origins and the Organisation of British Propaganda in Ireland 1920

by Brian P. Murphy *osb*.

Foreword: Prof. David Miller.

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Does
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Stack

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THE COURTS

We are repeatedly told by lawyers that Ireland is a Common Law Jurisdiction. It seems to be operated as such by the lawyers, even though the Constitution of Ireland Article 15.2.1 specifically states: "*The sole and exclusive power of making laws for the State is hereby vested in the Oireachtas: no other legislative authority has power to make laws for the State.*" The hallmark of a Common Law jurisdiction is a State in which some of the Law is made by Judges, for example in England. It is quite clear that Judges have no power to make law in Ireland and yet the lawyers and Judges have continued on, since the Constitution of Ireland was passed in 1937, to base their court rules and procedures on English precedents to such an extent that lawyers educated in Irish universities can and do obtain academic law appointments in England and English-educated lawyers find employment as lawyers in Ireland.

The Constitution of Ireland Article 1 states: "*The Irish nation hereby affirms its inalienable, indefeasible, and sovereign right to choose its own form...*" As a nation we have the right to our own constitutional legal system. The Judges, lawyers and legal draughtsmen and women have effectively stymied us with the connivance of the politicians. We should be looking at the best laws enacted by other constitutional states, such as France, instead of slavishly following English laws and precedents. Every citizen of France can buy the French laws in supermarkets and newspaper shops, in books of the laws such as *Code Civil* (Civil Law), *Code du travail* (Employment Law), *Code Penal* (Criminal Law), *Code de Commerce*, etc. etc. Everyone can know the law applicable to a given situation—just consult the book. These books are available to buy or to consult in a reference library. You may need a lawyer to go to Court, or to negotiate, in France but you do not need a lawyer to know the law. In Ireland today, as in England, the lawyers have allowed or caused the law to be complicated—which is neither fair nor just for the ordinary citizen. The Judges have Latin phrases, usually mediaeval in origin, and one in particular is very unjust:

"*Ignorantir legis excusat neminem*".
"Ignorance of the law excuses no one".

How does this stack up next to the doctrine that the intention to commit a crime must be proved? How can a citizen have intention, if the law is not, in fact,

known? Do we all have to have a lawyer at our shoulder when we do anything? The law is clearly an ass, and this was well said by the English about their own law. Does Ireland have to continue operating a Constitutional system in a Common Law manner?

THE POOR BOX

Speaking of Judges, what is the legal basis for District Courts ordering defendants to make a contribution to the 'Poor Box' or, in some cases, to the 'Garda Benevolent Fund'? What is the statutory basis for such an order? Who manages such funds and who accounts for them? Sentences of defendants found guilty are often reduced or suspended provided the defendant contributes (usually anything from €100 to €1,000 depending on the Judge's disposition that day!) to one of these funds. A case may even be dismissed by the Judge provided the defendant contributes—the solicitors will tell the sometimes wholly innocent defendant *"they prefer cash"*. Do they, whoever they are, issue receipts? Where does the money go? It adds up to millions of euros each year—all of it seems unaccounted for—at least in the public sphere. This pernicious practice seems to be on the rise and it appears to be a form of *"buying justice"*, and of course discriminates against those defendants who haven't got the cash. No lawyer, no reporter, no politician has attacked or investigated this increasingly outrageous practice. Yet when the media and certain Judges call on the Catholic Church to be ever more open and transparent—they don't seem to want to acknowledge the elephant in the court-room themselves. It simply doesn't stack up?

ARE PUBLIC SERVANTS NUMERATE?

The Department of Finance in recent years has not been noted for getting their figures right. No one seems to worry very much when their figures are wrong by millions of euros. It's not life or death after all! But it does get really serious when Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Barry Andrews TD states in the Dail that 23 children have died in care in the ten years up to 2010. He later had to admit that his figures were wrong! Well, he did not admit of course to the figures being wrong, exactly. He used "Public Service Speak" (which is a different language) when he admitted *"there was an issue over the figures"*. We know now there were at least 30 deaths and we know there might have been 40 or 50 deaths.

How is it that the Murphy Report last year aimed ninety-nine per cent of its three-volume report of events almost forty to fifty years ago and to the Catholic Church's involvement, while giving merely a few pages to the Health Board and Health Services Executive involvement and did not refer at all to any of these

deaths of children in State care? Were they abused? How did they die? Why were they not accounted for? Did the children literally not count at all? Minister Barry Andrews should be asked where exactly did he get his 23 deaths from? And was it (a) because the deaths were not recorded or (b) was the 23 figure a deliberate lie? Why exactly did the figure of 23 emerge? And what exactly is the true figure now?

NAMA FIGURES

The latest huge evidence that Public Servants can't or don't do sums is the revelation to an Oireachtas Committee by NAMA Chief Executive Brendan Mc Donagh that only one-third of €80 Billion loans taken over by NAMA from the banks are generating interest payments. This was originally *'estimated'* to be 40% of loans. The difference is €4,600,000,000. The banks are sticklers for figures. Whatever they do, they know their figures. And NAMA has had a long time to examine their figures before they arrived at their 40% figure. So we have only two conclusions: NAMA are incompetent, they cannot count and we cannot trust them; or else NAMA was supplied with fraudulently false information to the sum of €4.6 billion. Which is it? We are entitled to know. Did the TDs and Senators not ask? If they did, the media was not told. NAMA stinks on its record so far. It certainly does not stack up except it is a huge cover-up operation. So the Public Servants do not count children's deaths nor do they count money—when its taxpayer's money it seems.

CORPORATE ENFORCER

A man who was in the news almost every day for years is Paul Appleby. But for the past two years he has almost disappeared. He was endowed with draconian powers of inspection and was a favourite of the PDs, especially Minister Mary Harney TD. Typically his underlings would arrive at the offices of a small limited company. One or two of Paul's officials would be accompanied by two Garda. The typical offence would be 'not calling an AGM' or 'not filing the Annual Returns', or 'not keeping proper records'. Just to show he meant business, Paul might cause the books or files or computer to be removed. Or he might ask for so much information that the targeted small company's Managing Director would be overworked and driven demented.

But where was Paul Appleby when he was needed? Did he put any Bank Directors or Insurance Company Executives into gaol? Did he what? It was very easy to bully small companies over relatively trivial faults but he seems to have turned a blind eye to the false Balance Sheets and fake accountancy of the Banks and their Directors and Auditors. Even with Elder-

field, we haven't been hearing anything about the auditors signing off on now obviously fake accounts. Will it be just the one or two high profile notables in the banking section that gets the Garda call and what next? Don't hold your breath on gaol sentences.

ENERGY

The almost windless dry period in April this year demonstrates that energy sources need to be carefully balanced. Wind-generated electricity has fallen to almost nil and hydro-electric generating stations are running out of water very fast. In a period such as we have had, solar power would have made up for the lack of wind and water but the area of solar-power cells is, until now, not sufficient and is very expensive. The basic form of electric power generation has to remain oil and coal generating stations. There are huge coal reserves yet unmined and enormous suspected deposits still to be discovered. Coal will continue for the future to be a major source of power. Since coal was formed originally from decayed forests, the burning of it will simply return to the atmosphere the CO₂ originally absorbed by those primeval forests. So, to keep the environment in balance, it is necessary for the international community to ban the cutting down of the forests in Indonesia, Malaysia and in the Amazon basin.

Some form of international compensation will have to be organised for those countries whose forests we all need to absorb CO₂—and for the future generations of people to have fuel. The scientists and engineers want us to play around with nuclear power but its use is too dangerous to contemplate in its present stage of development. As for emissions of CO₂, it is fatuous to think we humans have any effect on the climate. The climate is caused entirely by natural events such as (mainly) fluctuations in the Sun's energy emissions and also volcanic emissions—not only on land but mostly under the oceans—along with earthquakes, forest fires, peat fires etc. etc. We flatter ourselves if we think that our ordinary little scratchings around have any effect on climate. Cutting vast areas of Amazon and other forests is of a different order entirely and it is quite outrageous that "Climate Change" conferences do not concentrate on the huge deforestation and leave our ordinary activities alone, but then where would the taxes come from?

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PRSI continued

some form of affiliation to the IFA—particularly those in the private sector, they would learn a thing or two about leadership and negotiations!

IFA Submission

The following is an IFA Submission to Government on National Pensions Policy made in April, 2008.

"IFA has discussed in detail with the Department of Social and Family Affairs the problem of lack of PRSI coverage for certain spouses (usually wives) at work on farms.

"Negotiations have been successfully concluded with the Department of Social and Family Affairs, and Revenue, in January 2008 on two key issues.

"First, the criteria used by the DSFA and Revenue in determining the existence of a partnership have been clarified and documented for the first time. Second, spouses who were effectively working in partnership in previous years, but who did not claim so when making their annual tax returns, will have the opportunity to claim for a spouses partnership status retrospectively. IFA has welcomed these reforms.

"IFA considers that there will be a need for ongoing dialogue with the Department of Social and Family Affairs on the implementation of the agreement that certain spouses' partnership can be recognised retrospectively."

In June 2008, Minister Hanafin announced that if a farmer's wife could prove she was a true partner in the business, she could make backdated PRSI payments and once she was under 66 would be entitled to the Contributory State pension.

The burden of proof in establishing a true working partnership was on the farmer's wife, but it could be done by providing documentary evidence such as her signature on cheques to suppliers or application forms for grants. Despite the 'Partnership' qualification, her name did not have to be on the deeds of trust for the business (Farm property). A queer partnership indeed!

In response, about 260 contributory pensions were granted to these women. However, there were some hardship cases where a wife was over 66 by the time she realised she was entitled to apply. However, the IFA claimed that under Section 110 Part 2 of the 2005 Social Welfare Consolidation Act that if a person did not meet all the specific requirements, such as the age qualification, the Minister had discretion to award the pension anyway.

About 180 women who met the other conditions but had already turned 66 applied for and were granted the pension. That was fine, argued the IFA since the law clearly allowed for discretion to be applied.

Then last year, the law changed. The all-important "Part 2" was deleted. No more over-66s need apply. But then the change was applied retrospectively. About half of the women who'd already been granted the pension had their payments stopped. The department demanding that 85 women pay back what they'd already been paid. The IFA claimed the department was even keeping the PRSI money the women paid in retrospection so they could qualify.

The farmers claimed that Hanafin denied that the women were granted the pension under the discretionary clause at all. The IFA allege she also said that a Minister shouldn't have discretion regarding who receives a pension.

Hanafin maintained the women were granted the pension by mistake. Claiming that the original decision to grant the pensions was based on a mistake rather than on discretion enabled the department to demand the refund.

FARMERS

According to Teagasc there are around 130,000 farmers in Ireland, which makes up almost 7% of the workforce.

The recent Household Budget Survey showed that almost 60% of farm household income now comes from off-farm sources. Farm households had a weekly disposable income of €160 per household member compared with €149 for non-farm rural households and €195 for urban households.

SELF-EMPLOYED

The Quarterly National Household Survey Q4 2007 estimates that the number of self employed persons increased by 39,100 to 361,600 in the year representing almost 60% of the annual increase in employment.

TOTAL WORKFORCE

The total number in the Labour Force for 2005 was 1,929,200, deducting the Self-Employed, including the Farmers leaves the figure at 1,567,600.

In the McCarthy Report (Special Group on Public Expenditure Programmes), which reported last July (*Irish Political Review*, November, 2009), Colm McCarthy estimated that the Government received €8 billion in PRSI contributions.

The Department of Social and Family Affairs (now Department for Social Protection) in its publication "*PRSI issue 207*" gave the following figures for PRSI payments in 2005:

Employer:	€4.3 billion	(70.9%)
Employee:	€1.3 billion	(22.1%)
Self-Employed*:	€ 481,452 million	(6.2%)

**includes Farmers*

These figures alone are a good indication of just how much the farming community contribute to our Social Insurance system: very little.

PRSI REFORM?

WATCH OUT

Finance Minister Lenihan is embarking on a plan to streamline the tax system. A unified rate of PRSI is being developed to encompass PRSI, Income and Health Levies for all future years from 2011 inclusive. But workers should be wary of the consequences of such a move, especially for the long-term.

The level at which the contribution will be applied remains to be seen. While the announcement does suggest that it will be applied at a low rate but on a wide base.

From a Government point of view the proposal is attractive because the cost of PRSI cuts could effectively be postponed. Unlike income tax cuts they needn't show up in the budget figures for some years.

That ability to make the cuts appear cost-free is also appealing to those trade union leaders who, despite the hard-line rhetoric, would much prefer to have a national agreement than a return to the tough grind of local pay bargaining. Minister Lenihan's proposal has the added advantage of seeming to favour middle and lower income groups at the expense of the fat-cats.

The trouble is that cuts in PRSI rates are not cost free. They will be financed out of the Social Insurance Fund which faces a deficit of some €4.4 billion by the end of this year, according to official projections. Any cuts in PRSI will have to be made up in some other way.

The promise is to cut the current 4% rate of PRSI to 2% and to abolish the ceiling which is set at €75,036 this year. Private sector workers actually pay 6% of their income up to that ceiling level. But that includes a 2% health levy. The PRSI element is actually 4%.

We got a taste of what's ahead in his December budget: cuts in dental and optical treatment!

This is a battle that private sector workers have to win, as PRSI affects of minority of the Public Sector, perhaps this is the reason it is such a low profile issue!

PRSI continued

farmers was completely retrograde and sexist in that it refused to recognise the role of women as equal partners in the running of a farm."

Is the bright young pretender to the Labour throne not himself being sexist, after all, a number of the applicants were male or has he a notion that only a male can run a farm?

IRISH EXAMINER EDITORIAL

"This week's decision by Minister for Social and Family Affairs Eamon O Cuív to overturn a decision made by his predecessor, Mary Hanafin, epitomises so much of what is wrong in this country. It proves, as if it needed proving, that the monkey with the biggest stick gets all the coconuts.

"It proves too that Fianna Fáil, always with an eye on the next election, are incapable of opposing powerful pressure groups even when they are wrong.

"That the decision was welcomed by the Irish Farmers' Association, Fine Gael and Labour only serves to underline how used to taking the line of least resistance we all have become and how reluctant politicians are to adopt an unpopular position even if it is the right one.

"In this instance it seems that because a relatively small amount of money is involved it was far easier to cough up rather than face the criticism supporting Ms Hanafin's correct decision would have entailed.

"Mr O Cuív rescinded a decision to withdraw or reduce contributory pensions given to farm spouses who paid PRSI retrospectively. Under the new scheme, a person only had to pay a year's contribution before reaching pension age to get a contributory pension. It must be assumed that, if they had not paid PRSI, they would not have paid income tax either.

"Though the number of people benefiting is relatively small, the unfairness, the social inequity involved is incredible. It does not diminish, disrespect or disregard the great contribution farmers' wives have made to family farms and rural communities to point out that there are tens of thousands of other wives, spouses or partners who worked long and hard, just like them, to support the family business, but will not get the whiff of an opportunity to buy a pension by making PRSI back-payments. How happy they'd be if they could..." (Irish Examiner, 9.4.2010).

The above editorial was the only critical comment made in the national press. The issue didn't even evoke a response in the

various Letters' pages or RTE.

The editorial was all the more worthy in the sense that the *Irish Examiner* devoted generous column space to the issue in a very sympathetic way to the farmers over the last six months. In the end, it took an editorial stance against one of the strongest lobbies in Irish politics on a point of principle—a not very common occurrence in the Irish media.

There wasn't a single utterance from the Trade Union movement: the 'gender brigade' have such a hold that even if the payments were wrong and inequitable, women are naturally entitled to whatever or however they get their hands on the money.

"Listening to the women interviewed on the radio, and watching them on television. I had to applaud their pluck. They were clearly formidable ladies, and I hope their tenacity gets them somewhere..." (Mary Smithwick, *Evening Echo*, Cork, 8.3.2010).

Mary Smithwick wrote this after moaning about having "*another three years tacked on*" to her working life under the new Pension framework proposed by the Government.

But for sheer and utter petty-bourgeois drivel, it would be hard to surpass the middle-class prejudice of Ms Sarah Carey of the *Irish Times*. Carey is from Co. Meath and comes of farming stock. She has worked for Fine Gael.

"In 2008, after years of lobbying by the Irish Farmers' Association, the Department of Social Welfare agreed that something had to be done about pensions for farmers' wives. Farmers' wives are so outside the system they didn't even exist until quite recently. Despite a lifetime of contributing to the family farm through their physical labour, book-keeping and increasingly complex form-filling, these women were systemic nonentities.

"Like the wives of all self-employed people, they were unpaid labourers whose productivity was unaccounted for in any formal way. They appeared neither as taxpayers nor social welfare recipients. In any measure of the nation's productivity, their contribution was unrecognised even though few would deny they were probably among the most productive workers in society" (*Irish Times*, 17.2.2010).

Holy God, she makes it sound as if the women on Irish farms are imprisoned in some Irish version of the Gulag Archipelago!

If Irish farmers and their spouse "*are so outside the system*" they damn well choose to be. Ms Carey is correct about one thing: "*They appeared neither as taxpayers nor*

social welfare recipients", that is for sure—they craved the social welfare receipts OK, but used every trick in the book to avoid their social responsibility as tax payers. And the Lords of the Land in County Meath were at the forefront of this social malevolence.

If they applied as much time and ingenuity to production from the land as they do extracting grants and subsidies; political agitation and caterwauling, we would indeed, be the food bowl of Europe.

Do the journalists who write these stories have even the foggiest notion of how Social Welfare and Pension payments work or do they just slap together whatever press release the IFA provides?

"More than 250 mainly elderly farm women had been facing ruin by the pension withdrawal," the Irish Farmers Association claimed" (*Irish Examiner*, 8.4.2010).

"Facing Ruin"? Aye, Indeed!

~~~~~  
"If I never got the pension I might not have missed it, but once you get it you rely on it... I said to myself, 'there is no way I will pay them back', she insisted... It was their own fault" (Mary Flaherty, Kerry farmer, *Irish Independent*, 13.4.2010).  
~~~~~

The farming ladies certainly have 'pluck'—or should it be 'neck', far more than their city worthies—including the 'liberated' gender. When you consider that the last Budget cut the personal rate of Social Welfare from €204.30 to €196—down €8.30. One Parent family payment dropped from €230.30 to €225.80—down €4.50 and Child Benefit went from €38.20 per week to €34.52—down €3.68.

In the course of 12 months, Minister Lenihan doubled the Income Levy, doubled the Health Levy, scaled back mortgage interest relief and cancelled the December social welfare bonus.

The Jobseeker Allowance for the under 20s is halved and rent supplements are reduced.

The Early Childcare Allowance paid in respect of pre-school children is abolished.

The Income Levy for those earning between €15,028 and €75,036 has increased to 2 per cent. Those earning up to €174,980 has doubled to 4 per cent and those earning over this will be subject to a 6 per cent levy. The Health Levy has also doubled to four or five per cent, depending on income.

Perhaps urban workers should seek

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Urban Ireland says *Enough!*

Minister for Social Protection Eamon O Cuív has been forced into a U-turn after tough lobbying from the farming community and Opposition TDs. The Minister announced his decision on 7th April 2010.

He was reversing an earlier decision to withdraw or reduce Contributory Pensions to farm spouses, most of them women, who had paid PRSI retrospectively in order to qualify for contributory pensions (see *Irish Political Review*, March 2010).

More than 250 mainly elderly farm women had been facing 'ruin' by the pension withdrawal, the Irish Farmers' Association (IFA) had claimed.

The Department admitted reinstating entitlements to 84 spouses would cost €250,000.

The spouses, 268 in all—many in their 70s and 80s—had been encouraged in 2008 under a state-funded business partnership scheme with their husbands to claim retrospective state pension payments.

"The married farming couples were encouraged to sign up to a government business partnership scheme in 2008, under which spouses were awarded pensions once their full PRSI quotas were paid up.

"Many complied, paying PRSI lump sums, to the state and were rewarded with retrospective pension payment cheques, some for tens of thousands of euro" (Irish Examiner, 5.4.2010).

In January, the then Minister, Mary Hanafin, said the granting of the pensions to the women arose from an administrative error which was an "awful mistake".

"Fine Gael TD Olwyn Enright accused Fianna Fail of engaging in a "vicious and unjustified attack on hundreds of farming families".

"...What makes this truly galling is that outgoing Social Affairs Minister Mary Hanafin told the Dail this was a technical error, but gave a different reason

to the Irish Farmers' Association," she said" (*Irish Independent*, 1.4.2010).

Many of the spouses paid thousands of Euros for gaps in their PRSI contributions and were awarded large sums, some for tens of thousands of Euros, in back payments.

Despite workers paying billions, yes billions of Euros into Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI), the practice of retrospectivity is unheard of. The wife or partner who commits herself to full-time homemaker will only ever receive the non-Contributory State pension of €219.00. The farm wives will receive €230.30 and back-monies for a bargain basement retrospective payment.

The farm spouses were told in January the Department wanted the money back, as it had emerged the wives were in fact not eligible because they had not paid at least one year's PRSI before the age of 66 under the scheme.

Mr. O Cuív stated that after a review by his Department and advice from the Attorney General, the move to withdraw

or reduce pensions for spouses concerned had been rescinded.

All pension arrears due would be paid and overpayments would no longer be sought, he said.

Pension scheme applications received or refused before 31st December 2009 would be dealt with under the legislation at that time, said the Department, and this would be completed within the next four weeks.

Applications received from 1st January 2010, would be processed under current legislation, it added.

"This will require applicants to have paid one year's Class S PRSI before their 66th birthday.

"This was the main sticking point that led to the withdrawal of pensions in January" (*Farmers' Journal*, 10.4.2010).

ALL-PARTY SUPPORT

"TDs across all parties claimed the Department U-turn was illegal and pledged to force Social Protection Minister Eamon O Cuív to reverse the move through legislation.

"Labour's Roisin Shortall said the rescinding of the spousal pension was an "awful slap in the face" for the wives..." (*Irish Examiner*, 1.4.2010).

Criticism of the Department was also voiced by several Fianna Fail TDs, with some pledging the issued could have been reversed in a Dail vote.

IFA president John Bryan welcomed the restoration of pensions to elderly farm women. He described Mr Ó Cuív's decision as "the mark of a caring Minister who was not prepared to stand over the injustice that had been done to these women whose pensions were taken away in January".

Labour's Agriculture spokesman Seán Sherlock described the decision as a victory for common sense. "The move to withdraw this pension from the wives of

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