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Trouble With Moderates . . .

Extremism is rampant in the North again. The DUP and Sinn Fein negotiated a new arrangement to take some of the heat out of the conflict over parades. It was vetoed by the Tory/Unionist merger, acting through the Orange Order. The Tory/Unionist position is now one of all-out, unmediated communal conflict over policing.

There can be no democratic objection to this. Democracy operates by the conflict of parties, and each party is under obligation to do battle with its rival by whatever means are available to it, given the mood and culture of the electorate. The Democratic Unionist Party has made a deal with Sinn Fein, and Paisley says it would be OK for Martin McGuinness to be First Minister if the Provos become the biggest party in "*the Northern Ireland state*". The Ulster Unionist Party is therefore honour bound—insofar as honour has anything to do with democracy—to try to unsettle the settlement made by its rival with its enemy, and restore the simple, unrestrained antagonism of communities.

But the UUP, even in its tactical extremism, remains the 'moderate' Unionist Party. That is a fixed idea of the system. Without it there would be chaos. It is an Article of Faith. Its function is to be believed and not to be subjected to reason.

Democracy operates through the conflict of parties. General Kagame has just won a landslide electoral victory in Rwanda. His majority is similar to that of Saddam Hussein in the last Iraqi election held before the USUK conquest. Saddam's victory was ridiculed officially by the EU etc. on the ground that his opponents were restricted by Government. General Kagame's victory has been welcomed officially by the EU etc., while it is informally admitted that the election was rigged. General Kagame is a despot, but he is our despot so we support him and say nice things about him while not going so far as to say that he was democratically elected.

General Kagame is the leader of the Tutsi minority in Rwanda. He raised a Tutsi army in Uganda and invaded Rwanda with it, wiping out Hutu villages on the line of march. The Hutu President was assassinated in a coordinated action. The big Hutu majority then turned on the Tutsi minority and exterminated them. The exterminated Tutsis quickly took control of the country. There were 800,000 of them originally. A million of them were exterminated in 'the genocide'. The minus 200,000 of them—those who did not exist to form part of the exterminated million—took command of the State, imposed a regime of terror on the Hutus (who after mass imprisonment and flight were still the majority), and they have decreed that there is no such thing as a Hutu in Rwanda, and use of the word *Hutu* has been criminalised as genocidal.

In the mid-18th century the British State recognised no such thing as a Catholic in Ireland. It has come on a long way since then. It now recognises only Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, with a fringe of eccentric others on the margin as spectators, except when it serves a reason of state to have one of them as a figurehead Minister of Justice.

Northern Ireland is nothing like Rwanda. Nobody here takes power on the basis of rigged elections. The election is not rigged, and the winner does not take power. And we do not have one body politic but two. Each is the body politic of a mimic democracy. There is party conflict within each, but there is no party conflict between the two.

Between the two there is communal antagonism. There is no common political ground on which that antagonism might be alleviated. The leaders of the DUP and Sinn Fein met

Obituary, Peter Hart (1963-2010)

Victim Of Academic Ideology ?

Peter Hart died before he got round to answering the crucial question of how he interviewed the dead man on whose evidence his account of the Kilmichael Ambush as mass murder depended. It was a simple enough question. The fact that the man was dead at the time Hart said he interviewed him is not disputable, nor is the fact that he was incapable of being interviewed for some time before he died.

Hart's book depicting the War of Independence in Cork as murder rampage driven by Catholic sectarian passions and family feuds was received with acclamation by the History Department of Cork University in an unquestioning spirit—a fascist spirit that dispelled doubt by howling down awkward questions. Reason was ruled off the agenda.

Then the awful thing happened. Hart was caught out on a mere fact, and his carefully constructed house of cards fell down. He was caught out inventing a fact.

We assume it was an invention, and that he did not interview the dead man. But we mustn't be dogmatic on the point. It might be that Hamlet was right. But Hart's admirers—many of whom had Marxist backgrounds—did not defend him on spiritualist grounds. They did not defend him at all. They just went silent and pretended it hadn't happened. But their silence proved that they knew it had happened.

Such is academia in Ireland today.

Hart published a second book, on Michael Collins. It was a much better book than the first. One could even say that it was not a bad book. But the fearless intellectuals who had acclaimed the first book as a classic, a masterpiece, took their revenge on the poor man for their humiliation over the first book by ignoring or slating his better second book.

His first book was Millenarian in spirit, and they responded to it as believers. His

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Callely: *The Exception*

Philip O'Connor

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as leaders of their communities, outside the political structures of the mimic democracy of the 'State', and made a conciliatory arrangement. And the Tory-UUP set about wrecking that arrangement by stirring up the Orange Order against it, hoping thereby to make up electoral ground on a No Surrender basis against the Lundys of the DUP.

In the party-political terms of our apartheid mimic democracy it all makes perfect sense.

This is what the Good Friday Agreement provided for. Something more was implied by the spirit of it and the circumstances which led to it. But the moderate Unionists insisted on something less than the letter of it, and they wanted as far as possible to destroy it in its implementation.

Thus David Trimble now complains that Ian Paisley arranged an amendment of the GFA at St. Andrews—one which gave the post of First Minister to the leader of the largest party. The GFA had made a different provision: the First Minister was to be representative of the

largest community representation in the Assembly. That meant that the leader of the largest party could not be First Minister, unless he also commanded the support of the largest voting bloc, Unionist or Nationalist. The GFA arrangement was thoroughly communalist—and would have postponed the day when a Sinn Fein First Minister would be elected in Northern Ireland.

"Peace" and "democracy" were the buzz words of the early days of the Agreement. A reading of it showed that it was at best a mimicking of democracy—otherwise it was a satire on it. But peace of a more substantial kind than has come about was achievable under it.

The spirit of it was that the Provos has made a substantial Constitutional point by their war effort, sustained over a quarter of a century. In the words of the real English Bible—the one written by the great Lord Chancellor four centuries ago:

"Like, or find fault, do as your pleasures are,

Now good, or bad, 'tis but the chance of War".

The Provos, by being unbeatable, had made themselves a Constitutional force. The phrasing of the Agreement implied that the IRA would play an active part in settling down the nationalist community under the Agreement before phasing itself out discreetly. And the Provo leaders undertook to ensure that there was an effective policing of Republican peace.

But, when that personification of moderate Unionism, David Trimble, signed the Agreement under extreme pressure from Prime Minister Blair, he took it as his mission in life to ensure that the Agreement should not be implemented in this way. And he was egged on by Dublin parties, and RTE, who had never troubled to figure out what Northern Ireland was. And the SDLP, freed from Hume's influence, soon joined the chorus. The IRA which had conducted the war must not be allowed to deliver the peace. It was a criminal gang, like the Krays in London and others in Limerick, and democratic Governments do not make Constitutional arrangements with criminal gangs. And so the Agreement was largely shredded in implementation. And an important element in the shredding was that 'dissident' Republicans should be encouraged to erode the Provos.

Then we had the strange sight of Paul Bew—on the escalator for the House of Lords—in cahoots with Anthony Mac Intyre, who was given a platform by the Establishment to condemn the Provos for selling out the national struggle.

And recently we had Radio Eireann wondering why Martin McGuinness condemns whoever is doing the present wave of bombing, when all they did is what he did. RTE was made mindless on the North by Jack Lynch and the Stickies, and that kind of thing is all that it knows how to say. Equally perversely, the BBC wondered why the Provos weren't keeping the peace in Ardoyne during the Orange Parade!

Margaret Ritchie, the new SDLP leader, says the dissidents must be dealt with by all-out informing by the Nationalist community. The Provos do not disagree. But she holds them responsible nevertheless because they agreed that state Intelligence should be done by MI5 rather than Northern Ireland Special Branch. MI5 relies too much on electronic surveillance, which has blind spots. Real security needs the personal touch of the Special Branch—after all, didn't it keep the peace for nearly fifty years?

Anybody with a sense of the reality of things in the Nationalist North knows

very well that the obstructed implementation of the GFA has had nothing like the impact on hearts and minds needed for Ritchie's policy. Informing still goes against the grain.

Our position, maintained from the start of things, is that Britain set up a catastrophic political situation in the North, and that asserting a moral obligation to inform is no solution.

(Incidentally, Ritchie's remarks were studiously ignored by the *Irish News*.)

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On June 10th Garret FitzGerald had an article on the North, called *Resisting Voice Of Unreason In Wake Of Killings*. He begins by telling us that four months before Bloody Sunday happened in January 1972 he had gone to Belfast at the invitation of "a moderate unionist minister" to act as intermediary in "the stand-off" between the Unionist devolved Government and the SDLP. He does not explain that the "stand-off" took the form of the withdrawal of the SDLP from Stormont and its establishment of an "Alternative Assembly", i.e. the basis of an alternative governing system in Strabane. It is unlikely that most of his readers would remember that detail.

He acted as intermediary, for several weeks, between the Government established by law, and the revolutionary system proclaimed by the SDLP—if it was in earnest, then it was revolutionary.

It seemed for a moment that Brian Faulkner, the Stormont Prime Minister,

"might be prepared to concede power sharing in government. However, provoked by the intensity of the IRA bombing, Faulkner backed off, choosing instead to sign internment orders for over 200 of those who had been detained several weeks earlier..."

"Power-sharing" is an imprecise term. Its minimal meaning must be the concession of a degree of formal political power by the party that wins an election to the party that loses. In its maximum form it gives a department of government to every party that gains a certain percentage of the vote and allows it to govern that department more or less independently, with the effect that there is no Cabinet.

In the Summer of 1971 Faulkner offered the SDLP an initial minimal degree of power-sharing. The offer was made in Stormont, which is on a hill outside Belfast, out of hearing of the life of the city. The SDLP members, who had conjured Faulkner into an ogre over the preceding years, were bowled over by his offer to them of the Chairmanship of a number of

A Senior Moment re Jack Jones

When one enters one's 60s, there is not the same typo-correcting reflex to tell you that 1993 would have been much longer ago than 2003. I now realise that I need to correct two sentences from my article in the August issue of *Irish Political Review*, to read as follows:

"I myself missed a golden opportunity to ask such a question (about CP membership) in 2003. As that year was the 90th anniversary of both the epic 1913 struggle led by Big Jim Larkin and Jack Jones's own birth and naming after Larkin, I was successful in my request that Jack be invited to address the SIPTU Delegate Conference in Galway."

Manus O'Riordan

Parliamentary Committees with real power, which he proposed to set up. We wondered at the time if Gerry Fitt, Paddy Devlin and John Hume, when they came down from the hill of Stormont and found themselves once more amongst their populace, would begin making the case for acceptance of Faulkner's offer—which he had every reason to think they had accepted. They didn't. On every occasion when there was a practical decision to be made which would have given substance to their claim to be "Constitutional nationalists", they did not make it. They did not lead. They had no confidence in their ability to persuade public opinion to support a course of action which they thought was good, but which went against the grain of prevailing opinion, or rhetoric.

So, having welcomed the offer, they soon realised they did not have it in them to commit themselves to it. They found themselves in a dilemma, looking for a way out. They dealt with their problem by never going back to Stormont after welcoming the offer. They declared a boycott of Stormont and went down the country to set up their Alternative Assembly.

Many years later they said they were obliged to leave Stormont because Faulkner introduced internment without trial, and we had to remind them that they had pulled out before Internment, and that their pull-out contributed to the situation which Faulkner tried to contain by Internment.

The incident which they used as an excuse for pulling out was the shooting of a youth in Derry by the British Army, which Faulkner did not command.

Has FitzGerald forgotten Faulkner's offer? Or did he never notice it in the first place? It seemed to us in those days that his mind was so overloaded with confused ideology when he looked North that mere facts could not register on it.

A few days after Bloody Sunday, FitzGerald was in Derry. He had a meal in

"an SDLP house". He was helping with the washing-up when—

"a woman said to me "Isn't it great that so many are joining?" "Joining what?" I asked bemused. "The IRA, of course", another woman answered. It was clear that the killings were already destabilising the North and our State also, as we saw on returning to Dublin. When we stopped en route we saw on the news the British Embassy in flames, as a crowd cheered on the arsonists..."

There was a Dail debate on Bloody Sunday. Jack Lynch said people "proclaiming to be members of illegal organisations" were going about saying they had been given a free hand on the North. Blaney said "the Six Counties were now ours for the taking". (This is FitzGerald's summary.) "My own remarks about what I described as Neil Blaney's "war policy" provoked him to describe me as a liar and a "ranting halfwit"..."

(It is hard to know whether to characterise FitzGerald as devious or obtuse.)

"During that debate a dangerous boil was lanced. The solidarity of our democratic politicians won through, against the tide of emotion about the Derry atrocity that could so easily have overwhelmed us. Understandably, reactions in the North were less rational. Nationalists did not feel part of a democratic system that they had an interest in defending..."

Were Northern feelings in accordance with Northern facts? Or were those Northerners in denial about facts? Was there a democratic system with which their feelings were out of joint, or did their feeling express the fact that there was no democracy in the North? That is something on which FitzGerald could never make up his mind. If the system in the North was not democratic, what point is there in blathering on about being democratic in it—when all that can be meant is that one should peacefully accept the lack of democracy?

And, if Blaney's was "*a war policy*", FitzGerald's was not a peace policy. It was a policy of tampering and mischief-making. He could neither let the North be—because he had a Northern Presbyterian mother, he said—nor take the trouble to understand what it was, so that he might interfere in ways that did not make trouble.

In travelling from Derry to Dublin, he could not leave the one State behind him when entering the other, and apply in each the standard of "*rationality*" appropriate to it. There was no common standard applicable to both. There is no universal political rationality. Political rationality is shaped by the complex of things that make a State functional—laws, customs, ceremonies, ideals, social institutions, political institutions. No Dublin politician—except Haughey—has taken a sober look at the North simply for the purpose of understanding what the hell it is. He concluded that it "*was not a viable political entity*", and did not tamper with it to make mischief, as FitzGerald did at every opportunity. That, no doubt, was Haughey's "*flawed pedigree*". In the company of fantasists and ideologists, he could see what was there. He was the odd man out. He did not belong. He was at least a one-eyed man amongst the blind, and was resented for the flawed pedigree that gave him an eye.

FitzGerald has a perfect pedigree for a Dublin politician. He cannot see the North for what it is—for "*an nith mar ta*", as a poet once commended an Old Fenian for doing. He makes mischief there, not knowing what he's doing, and he feels good about it.

In 1973-74 FitzGerald pulled a fast one on Faulkner's Unionists, and got devolved power-sharing in Belfast and a Council of Ireland. When the trickery was exposed, there was a strong Unionist demand that the Council of Ireland should be called off. FitzGerald (who was Foreign Minister in a Coalition and acted jointly with the late C.C. O'Brien) insisted that the whole must be pushed through. We said that Power-Sharing might be saved if the Council was deferred as a sacrifice to the exposed chicanery. But Dublin stood firm, and the SDLP stood firm, and the ground slipped away from under them. Power-Sharing went, along with the Council.

Eleven years after that FitzGerald was Taoiseach. He made a deal with Thatcher which anyone who could see the North as it was would have known was certain to drive the Unionists crazy. It did drive them crazy. John Hume said that was a

good thing: a boil needed to be brought up in order to be lanced.

If FitzGerald knew what he was doing, then he knew he was planting a goad in the Unionist neck. And that was "*Constitutional nationalism*"! It encouraged Unionists to make no real distinction between Constitutional nationalists and the other kind, and to see the difference as tactical role-playing.

Barry Desmond, A Labour TD, was not happy with the FitzGerald/Thatcher Agreement. He asked us to draft a speech for him to deliver in the Dail debate. We did so, and sent it by Special Overnight delivery—there were no Emails then, and Faxes were rare. The letter was held up in the post until after the debate. And our colleagues in Dublin found themselves being shadowed closely by Special Branch. FitzGerald pulled out all the stops to prevent dissent from being expressed.

Nevertheless Garret is Good. There is a Jewish belief that there is one Just Man in every generation, though nobody may know who he is. Everybody knows that Garret is the One Just Man for our generation. The difficulty is in seeing why. It is certainly not because of what he has done.

Editorial Digest

DERRY MERCENARY, Ken McGonigle, was shot dead in Afghanistan at the beginning of August. He is the second Derry mercenary to die in the area. Mr. McGonigle was a former member of the RUC and also plied his trade in Iraq. He was employed by mercenary company, New Century Security Services which is run by former Royal Irish Regiment Colonel Tim Collins. Collins left the military some years ago and for a while became a TV celebrity. (His address to his troops as they prepared to invade Iraq adorned the White House office of George W. Bush.) New Century was guarding Afghan prisoners when one of the prisoners grabbed a weapon and made a run for it. On the way he shot dead McGonigle and two US marines. Three of the prisoners were killed.

ALSO IN AFGHANISTAN, 10 aid workers were shot dead in the North of the country. These included British doctor, Karen Woo. They worked for a Christian NGO, the International Assistance Mission. This group is registered in Switzerland but only operates in Afghanistan. It has been there since 1966, under Soviet, Taliban and US

regimes, with the exception on one year when the US and its allies invaded the country. Miss Woo was engaged to be married to a Northern Ireland mercenary, Mark Smith from Newtownards. Among those also killed was their team leader, Tom Little. He was expelled from Afghanistan in 2001 for trying to convert Afghanis to Christianity.

CHAIRMAN OF POLICING BOARD

Barry Gilligan, a property developer, has had his home and offices raided by the PSNI's Organised Crime Branch. Also raided was a senior figure in the Housing Executive whose name has not been released. Primarily at issue is a proposed housing development in Nelson Street Belfast, where Housing Executive officials claim that the original plans for social housing have been replaced by plans for profitable private housing.

Clanmill Housing Association and St. Patrick's & St. Joseph's Housing Committee had planned to build 66 homes on the Nelson Street site. They had been granted planning permission and a grant of 2.9 million pounds. They were introduced to Mr. Gilligan by an official from the South's Foreign Affairs department to have the plans checked by his architect. Then they found that his company, Big Picture Development, had bought the site for 3.5 million with the intention of building 250 private flats.

ARNOTTS is the largest and oldest department store in Dublin, founded in 1843. Recently it got itself into huge debt through taking out loans for further acquisitions and faced being closed down. Now it has been taken over by the State-owned Anglo Irish Bank along with Ulster Bank. These have promised that the store will continue trading as usual and the jobs of its 950 employees will be safe. The takeover has been approved by the European Union.

Linda Tanhem of the Union Mandate said:

"Now that European Union approval has been granted for the takeover of Arnotts by Anglo Irish Bank and Ulster Bank, we in Mandate are looking forward to engaging on an ongoing basis with the new management of the company regarding the future of Arnotts as a retail business so that we can secure the jobs and terms and conditions of the staff who have contributed so much to the company."

An interesting letter appeared in the *Irish Times* by Brigid P Flanagan of Dundalk on 4th August about Arnotts' past.

"I was saddened to read of Arnotts' financial problems. Arnotts was respected in this family as a fair employer in the early years of the last century. My uncle was employed in Arnotts. He was a member of the Irish Volunteers. On Easter Monday

1916 he was in the garrison in Jacobs where he was the quartermaster general under the command of Thomas McDonagh. At the end of Easter Week, he was interned in Frongoch Camp in North Wales.

"While he was interned there, a gentleman went in to Arnotts to enquire about a job. Mr. Nesbitt told him that there were no vacant positions at that time. The gentleman then enquired about my uncle's job, which was obviously vacant. Mr. Nesbitt replied that my uncle's job was there for him whenever he wished to return. This attitude was in marked contrast to that of other employers. Many people who 'went out' on Easter Monday 1916 subsequently lost their jobs. Single ladies in poorly paid jobs were particularly badly hit."

GERRY KELLY, probably the sharpest of the Sinn Fein leaders, has announced that he is trying to arrange talks with the so-called Dissidents—Republican Sinn Fein, the 32-Co. Sovereignty Movement, Oglagh na hEireann, and anyone else he can get hold of. He is supported in this by Martin McGuinness. There has been a mixed reaction—especially on the Unionist side. Gail Walker, who does a good line in ranting in the *Belfast Telegraph*, demands that Sinn Fein informs on the others to the police. Presumably she knows that, whatever about the morality of such a move, it would inevitably result in armed feuds. On past form it is probable that she would not be averse to seeing Republicans killing each other on the streets of Belfast or Derry.

In the same issue of the *Belfast Telegraph* (10th August) is an editorial titled "*Dissidents do not warrant dialogue*". The paper fears that talks with Gerry Kelly may be a prelude to talks with the British Government:

"The assertion by Secretary of State, Owen Paterson, that the government will not hold talks, or negotiations, with dissident republicans to persuade to end their growing campaign of violence brings to mind the statement by Prime Minister John Major in 1993 that it would turn his stomach to talk to the Provisional IRA... Sinn Fein should use all its influence to ensure that the dissidents have as little support as possible. For the government to talk to them would be to give them a status they do deserve."

A different line is put in the same paper by another of its columnists, Brian Rowen, one-time Security Editor for BBC Northern Ireland:

"In a radio interview, Secretary of State, Owen Paterson, talked about smoking them out. 'We will only beat them as a team effort,' he said. All of that has been seen and heard before. It doesn't work... There are no security solutions. These things never end in military victory or defeat. They have to be talked through, however unpalatable that is."

PARADES LEGISLATION proposed by Peter Robinson and Martin Mc Guinness now looks unlikely to be enacted. It would mean that any gathering of 50 or more people would have to give at least 37 days' notice to the police. The police themselves are opposed. So are Trade Unions, political and community organisations, the Orange Order and presumably people with lots of friends!

Dolores Kelly of the SDLP said:

"There is no question of this Bill ever seeing the light of day in the form of workable legislation... It is so flawed, so devoid of merit or logic, so obviously in contravention of European human rights legislation that even the most cursory court challenge would blow it away."

Robinson and McGuinness are suggesting that the legislation may be watered down and made less widely applicable.

WAR TACTIC: According to Belfast's *Irish News* (Tues., 08.06.10) had a most curious item about 'Suicide Pilots'. The story was not about crazed Oriental chaps with an unhealthy attitude to their God-like Emperor. The pilots of the CAM (Catapult Aircraft Merchantmen) were Our Chaps—who, presumably, had the right attitude to the King-Emperor. The story is about a monument to these men being unveiled at the George Best Airport. It is close to the CAM's (technically 804 and 702 Naval Air Squadrons) war-time base at Pseudonym.

These pilots' aircraft were fired, like rockets, from "*modified merchant ships*", at enemy battleships (and presumably submarines). They used "*expendable Hurricane and Fulmar aircraft*". Merchant ships (presumably this tactic was used on the 'wolf packs' that attacked convoys relatively early in the 'battle of the Atlantic') were not, then, dependent on aircraft operating at great distances from their land bases. The main problem the pilots faced was that they could not land back on the decks of the ships they had been fired from. Or the decks of any other ships. They had to ditch their planes, and parachute into the often icy water, which might also have flaming oil floating on the surface.

Between the start of the convoy system in 1940 and mid-1942 (when the system of attacking convoys with 'packs' of U-boats, was abandoned) this sort of thing may have been a necessity of war. Food had to be got through to Great Britain—Northern Ireland didn't need to import food). But this use of redundant aircraft, and pretty obviously, redundant personnel, seems to have gone on for quite sometime after the 'Battle of St. Patrick's Day' 1942, the last big engagement with *Kriegsmarine* 'wolf packs'.

Hart obituary continued

second was written as if he had never proclaimed the Millennium. It was modest in its aim, reasonable in its mode, and free of howlers. It was a dull anti-climax. The deflated believers didn't want to know about it. Hart became a non-person for them.

Senator Harris was rather at a loose end in the 1990s. His National Liberation War against British Imperialism and the Provos in the early 1970s was a fiasco. His dogmatic Leninism of the later 1970s and the 1980s, with Sir Nicolai Ceausescu (the Communist dictator knighted by the Queen) at its centre, crumbled along with Ceausescu. He went overboard for Hart's Millenarian revelations—and he remains overboard. Facts just don't matter to him.

In his obituary (Sunday Independent, 25 July) he says that the shock news of Hart's death brought about a reconciliation between himself and John A. Murphy, former Professor of History at Cork University. (We did not know that they had fallen out. We thought they were as thick as thieves.) Murphy emailed him as follows:

"Hart was an original, a pioneer—coolly challenging accepted nationalist narratives, the personification of history as critical investigation versus history as unchallengeable tablets of stone. Signs by [sic], he incurred the venomous hostility of *An Phoblacht* et al. He was unflappable, charming and brave. But I don't have to tell you. At 46 he is a bright light prematurely quenched. I hope his erstwhile opponents will have the generosity to acknowledge that..."

When we were "*challenging accepted nationalist narratives*" forty years ago, when war was brewing in the North, we would have welcomed a word of support from Professor Murphy. He kept himself at a great distance from us. He was writing on tablets of stone and did not want them broken. And later, as far as we could tell, it was only as a Stickie Republican that he was critical of the Provos. We were shunned in our efforts in West Belfast (not in the groves of academe) against, not only the Provos, but the Stickies—and in danger particularly from the Stickies—and unlike belated academics we did not invent facts. It must have been very late in the day that Professor Murphy turned against the tablets of stone.

Having quoted Professor Murphy, Senator Harris writes in his own person:

"Both Kevin Myers and myself believe the savage polemics directed at the physically frail Hart by the ultra-nationalist lobby groups took a toll on the mildest of men. Hart was an historian with no axe to grind except the blade of truth..."

The "*ultra-nationalist lobby*" is us, propagators of the two-nations view of the

North forty years ago—when Harris denounced us for selling out the nation—and advocates of settling the North within the British system of political democracy. We are the thorn in his flesh, but he cannot name us because the Right of Reply rules have some force in the Republic.

But what infuriates most must be the determined silence of the academic faculties that acclaimed Hart as a sort of Messiah a little over ten years ago. He was marginalised by them. Perhaps we were the cause of it by confronting them publicly, and relentlessly, with the invented fact—a thing which they would never have discovered for themselves, or would not have mentioned it if they had stumbled over it. (Such is academic practice in Ireland today under Oxbridge tutelage.)

Senator Harris is right in a way. Little facts shouldn't matter all that much. There are Christians who say that the truth of the Gospels should not depend on the miracles being facts. And the falseness of Hart's book about Cork should not have waited for recognition on discovery of the invented fact—a little miracle in its own way. Regardless of that detail, it was a book such as might have been produced by a party hack filling out a programme, set for him by a Politburo, with irrelevant detail.

And that is what it was. Hart was a product of Professor Fitzpatrick's *Kindergarten*, his Trinity College Workshop. Fitzpatrick decided ideologically what the truth was about the War of Independence. It was not a war fought to give effect to an Election result. The political development from May 1916 to December 1918, culminating in the Election result, was to be discounted. The affair of 1919-21 was to be mere rebellion, driven by feuds of various kinds and a general hostility to Protestants. The students in the workshop, whose career prospects depended on patronage, were set to work out details to support the pre-set conclusions.

Hart's little mistake came about—whether it was free invention, or something else—it was something that should have been picked up by his academic supervisors. And no doubt it would have been picked up if academia in Ireland had not been so heavily ideologised that ordinary checking of facts no longer applied.

Hart was a busy bee. He was industrious. He would probably have made a competent historian if he had not been directed towards disaster by the ideologists in command of the academic sphere on which he depended for a career. When they failed to detect his little mistake—or in an understandable fit of hubris and contempt decided to let it pass—it was found out, they punished him for it by neglect.

Why the European Union Can't Get Real

If the European Union, not least because it can't be telephoned, seems a ghost, that is because it is in fact a ghost—the ghost of Europe. When it calls itself 'Europe' and believes it is Europe, it is acting out a fiction that will be described as such by future historians. They will compare it to the fiction of the 'Holy Roman Empire' that for many centuries spoke German and was ruled from Vienna. It will be obvious to them that the successive 'European Communities' that culminated in the European Union put an end to the historical Europe; killed it with the best intentions. No harm then, but a great help to understanding the European Union and its pathological behaviour, to recognise this state of affairs now.

Like Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, Europe was a civilisation, the third in the western line. Like all civilisations, it had a characteristic political structure, a characteristic religion, and a set of rules to live by largely drawn from that religion. Its political structure was, like that of Ancient Greece, pluralist: it was a community of autonomous, competing peoples and states. Its religion was Christianity.

Obviously, none of that is true of the European Union, which is more like the defunct Soviet Union of 15 republics. It has rejected Europe's community of autonomous, competing peoples as a bad thing leading to many wars. Instead it has a central power which makes more than half the laws of its 27 member states. It rejects Europe's recognition of the Christian God and Europe's set of rules drawn largely from Christian teaching, considering many of those rules to have been oppressive and unjust. Godless, it derives its rules of right and wrong and justice from no religion, but for the most part from the left-liberal ideology that reached it, imperiously, from America in the 1960s and 70s. From the start, in its succession of incarnations, the united-Europe enterprise has proclaimed itself as morally superior to what preceded it and as the means of providing Europeans with a better life than Europe did.

Yet, while distancing itself with disdain from European civilisation, the EU not only calls itself Europe but also goes through motions aimed at presenting itself as the continuation of Europe. It displays the survivals of Europe's great culture falsely as if they were heirlooms from its own past. Having neither made nor experienced any notable history since its inception, it has appropriated Europe's last great war. Living

in the shadow of that war, it harks back obsessively to its personalities and battles, its rights and wrongs. In a sort of cult of mass death, apparently to continue forever, it commemorates and mourns those who fell in that war and in Europe's previous great war, blind to the fact that this belies its claim to be Europe. After every war of its long history Europe wiped its tears and moved vigorously on.

In sum, the EU is a post-European new departure which has lacked the self-confidence to be openly that, let alone to call itself, on the analogy of its late but honest eastern counterpart, *The Liberal Union*. Calling itself instead by the name of the civilisation it has killed off, and hovering over its victim's last mass graves, it is not merely Europe's ghost, but a conflicted ghost, a spectre with a seriously undermining personality problem.

No surprise then that in the real world of grown-up powers and nations, it ranks as nothing and that the verb that describes its behaviour most aptly is 'flounder'. While supporting the Palestinians financially, it gives their oppressor Israel privileged access to its market. It sends troops to Afghanistan to kill Taleban who have never done it any harm nor threatened to harm it. Though present at the Copenhagen conference on climate change, those who made the decisions pointedly ignored it. It is now preparing to send 7000 diplomats around the world to say nothing that will cause loss of sleep to anyone.

Early in its career, when it was the European Community, this post-European entity, floundering fatally, made a mortal mistake. In 1981, when it comprised the nine West European countries that formed the essential Europe of history, it reached out beyond Central Europe and the Balkans to include non-contiguous Greece. It did this because it had heard and believed the story that Greece (rather than France, Germany and Italy, Charlemagne's empire) was where Europe had begun. By having Greece, it believed, it would be indisputably Europe. Little did it know that, in its morbid anxiety to be the civilisation it had rejected, it had imported the Achilles heel that about thirty years later would (as we shall yet see) wreck it.

By then, it is possible that, in a concluding—and I mean concluding—act of delirious floundering, it will have flamboyantly negated all its strenuous efforts to prove itself Europe. It will have fulfilled its declared intention of including in its membership that large Asian country beyond Greece that borders Syria, Iraq and Iran.

Desmond Fennell

www.desmondfennell.com

Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

REVISED NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Despite the severe economic crisis the Irish State remains intact. It is not living hand to mouth, but continues to plan for the future. However, the National Development Plan for the period 2007 to 2016 has had to be revised because of the dramatic deterioration in the economy since 2007.

The original plan assumed 4% per annum growth from 2007 onwards. In fact the economy has contracted dramatically since 2007 and it is anticipated that it will not be until 2013 that it is restored to 2007 income levels. The decline in economic activity has had consequences for infrastructure. For example, passenger numbers in the Luas Connolly-Tallaght line declined by 2 million last year. There were similar declines in the usage of Dublin Bus. In such circumstances it does not make sense to invest in rolling stock.

The road infrastructure has improved quite dramatically in recent years. For example, the Long Fellow uses the M50 every day at rush hour. It used to be a byword for traffic chaos, but has spare capacity now that an extra lane has been added and barrier free tolls have been introduced.

A BOLD LEAP FORWARD

However, the plans for Metro North, the Dart underground and the Navan rail line remain in place.

There will be a movement away from investment in road transport in favour of public transport. Whereas investment in roads will be double the investment in public transport this year, that will be reversed in the course of the plan. By 2013 investment in public transport will be greater than roads for the first time and by 2015 public transport investment will be almost double that of road investment.

There has been carping by some economists about "*vanity*" projects such as the "*Metro North*" project. The Long Fellow tends to agree with Francois Mitterrand who believed that the role of economists was to prevent politicians from achieving their objectives. He often reminded his economics advisor Jacques Attali that the public finances should never be used as an excuse for failure. The only obstacle to the achievement of socialist goals was the

conservatism of the French people and the most conservative element in the society was the French Communist Party!

The Soviet people struggled for survival in the 1930s when they built the fabulous Moscow underground. These projects have intangible benefits way beyond the economic. They lift the morale of the people.

OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, PROGRESS

One of the benefits of the economic slowdown is that there is spare productive capacity. This has meant that prices for new projects have dropped by 30% less than budget. Unfortunately, the contracts for some projects were agreed before the slowdown and therefore older and higher prices will still apply to these.

The Plan envisages spending 4.4 billion on social housing over the period. But, of course, much of the social housing may not need to be constructed as a result of the surplus housing stock that already exists and which has been taken over by NAMA.

There will be a large investment in Science and Technology: a fourfold increase since 1998. It is planned that the country will be a world leader in wind power in 6 years.

There will be a very large capital commitment in Education. Most of this will be in the Primary and Secondary sector (3.1 billion). The plan envisages an increase of 70,000 primary school places and 15,000 post primary places.

There will be a very large investment in waste and water infrastructure. It used to be the case that what is called "*unaccounted for water*" was about 70%. This is the difference between the water pumped into the mains and that received by the householder. Most of this is due to leaks from antiquated pipes. This statistic is currently at 43%. The National Plan envisages it dropping to 33% by 2016.

CATCH UP

The report warns of the pitfalls of planning in the midst of a recession. It insists that the State must assume economic growth. One of the posters on the [Irish economy.ie](http://IrishEconomy.ie) blog ("John the Optimist") fleshed out this point. In 1990 the economic consultants DKM predicted a fall in population from 3.5 million to 3.2 million in 2011 in the 26 Counties. The population of the Republic of Ireland is now in fact almost 4.5 million (and nearly 1.8 million in the North). This erroneous assumption had a big influence on infrastructural planning. In the last 10 years the State has been playing "catch up".

The "M" in the name DKM was, of course, Colm McCarthy.

Even in these straitened times the Capital investment programme represents about 4% of GDP which is above the EU average.

THE STATE'S BANK GUARANTEE

The intellectual case for the State's Bank Guarantee scheme has not been contested since the TCD academic Brian Lucey tried to convince the public that 28 billion of Anglo Irish Bank's customer deposits (i.e. the bank's liability) could be sold for 21 billion (see last month's *Irish Political Review*). Since then the critics dare not go into details. All that is left for them to do is to emote and express their moral outrage.

There is no better person for moral outrage than Fintan O'Toole. His column castigated the Minister for Finance Brian Lenihan for rescuing Anglo-Irish Bank.

Among his points was:

"Equally, and specifically in relation to Anglo, Honohan most certainly does not endorse a blanket guarantee. What he says is that a "disorderly" collapse of Anglo would have been catastrophic for the other banks "in the absence of any other protective action".

"The Government, in other words, could have let Anglo go while saving the rest of the banking system" (*The Irish Times*, 10.8.10).

This gives the impression that the Central Bank Governor Patrick Honohan was opposed to rescuing Anglo Irish Bank. Nothing could be further from the truth. Honohan favoured an extensive guarantee. He quite clearly says in his report that Anglo Irish Bank was of "*systematic importance*" in September 2008. It could not be allowed to fail.

Up until now the State has committed 24 billion to Anglo-Irish Bank. However, most of this is in the form of promissory notes. So the actual handing out of money will only be done over a 10 year period. Anglo has also borrowed another 11.5 billion from the Irish Central bank. Some of these vast sums will be recovered. However, the current Managing Director of Anglo Irish Bank believes the "*lion's share*" of this is gone for ever. But what was the alternative?

O'Toole is a little coy about this, but refers to a Merrill Lynch Report of September 2008 which mentioned an alternative to the Guarantee without specifically recommending it.

But Merrill Lynch did not know what we know now. In particular, it was completely unaware of the true extent of Anglo's financial problems never mind those of the other banks. Its alternative scheme would have been a hopelessly

inadequate response to the banking crisis.

The problem with Anglo was that it was borrowing short to lend long. At the end of September 2008 the value of its customer deposits (i.e. part of the bank's liability) was a massive 51.5 billion euro. On the other side of the balance sheet its loans to customers (the bank's assets) were 73 billion. These were not collectible within a short period. We now know that a high proportion (e.g. 50% of the value of loans to be transferred to NAMA) is not collectible at all.

If Anglo was to be closed down, the deposit holders would have had to have their deposits repaid to them almost immediately. Since Anglo could not afford to pay, the State would have had to step in. So instead of having a liability of 24 billion (most of which was in the form of promissory notes) it would have had an immediate liability of 51.5 billion. The effect of this on the State's credit rating does not bear thinking about.

Remember the 51.5 billion does not relate to Bond Holders: it is deposit holders. Reneging on this debt would have had catastrophic consequences for the banking system.

Since the Guarantee, the value of Anglo's customer deposits has fallen gradually to 27 billion. Part of the shortfall has been made up by the State. The bulk of the remainder has been met by other Central Banks, as well as 11.5 billion from our own Central Bank and about 7 billion from other banks. The amount of capital held by Bondholders has remained stable (there has been a small reduction of "only" 2 billion).

The Guarantee has kept as much private capital as possible in the bank. This would not be possible if the bank ceased to be a going concern and in this scenario all of the financial burden would have fallen on the State.

At this stage the Long Fellow is not aware of any serious commentator who has analysed the financial statements (which, of course, excludes Fintan O' Toole) that is calling for an immediate wind down of Anglo-Irish Bank. There have been calls for an orderly wind down over an unspecified period. But once such a declaration is made it can become a self fulfilling prophecy which can make the wind down anything but orderly.

The Bank will have already reduced its assets by 36 billion once its development and associated loans are transferred to NAMA. This equals about half the value of its loan book which represents the bulk of its assets. It is ironic that the advocates of an orderly wind down are also opposed to NAMA.

The Long Fellow believes that the current management team of the very much diminished Anglo Irish Bank should be supported in their task of salvaging what remains in the interests of the State and the taxpayer.

THE MEN OF NO PROPERTY TAXES

The banking crisis is manageable. The costs are enormous but they are once-off. The likely final bill represents an amount equal to about 18 months of our current budget deficit. In contrast to the Banking crisis, the consequences of not dealing with this deficit are ongoing and cumulative.

One of the lessons of recent times is that the tax base is too narrow. During the property boom the State became too dependent on transaction taxes. When the bubble burst and the economy contracted the State experienced a dramatic drop in revenue from property transactions which was exacerbated by falling incomes and reduced consumption.

The one glaring anomaly in our tax system is the absence of a tax on domestic property. Taxes on commercial property are quite onerous but there is no tax on unproductive residential property. In the absence of such a tax it seems inevitable that taxes on income and cuts in public expenditure are the only way of reducing the deficit.

The Government parties have placed the issue of a property tax on the agenda. The Opposition parties have declared themselves against such a tax, which makes the Long Fellow wonder about their fitness for government. It is particularly disappointing that the Labour Party—whose very name indicates that the worker is its priority—has set its face against such a tax.

There is no economic argument against such a tax. The absence of such a tax has given an incentive for bigger houses than are necessary and houses that are more dispersed. It is no accident that we have a longer road network per capita than any other European country nor that our network of water pipe is longer per capita than any other European country. There is an economic cost for large, low density housing.

The absence of property taxes was a factor in the creation of a property bubble.

Economists consider that residential property has an "imputed income" which the resident enjoys from the use of the property in the same way as such a person would enjoy income from the use of any other asset. An added advantage of such a tax is that it is impossible to avoid. You

can't hide a house in a foreign bank account.

Of course, there are cases where, for example, widows with a low income living in a large house would have difficulty paying such taxes. But maybe such people should not be living in large houses. It is surely a waste of a property resource.

There are also many cases in recent years where people have paid well over the real value for housing. It could be argued that these people have already paid a "tax" to the builder and developer as well as paying an exorbitant Stamp Duty tax on an overvalued property. This should be taken account of in the implementation of such a property tax. But such hard cases do not apply to owners of property more than 10 years old. Nor does such logic apply to current purchasers of houses.

PETER HART

The death of the revisionist historian Peter Hart was greeted with restraint by the mainstream media. *The Irish Times* drew a discreet veil over the controversy which drew him to public attention, but hinted darkly at the unpleasantness of his critics without naming them. This newspaper never openly engages in a dispute that it knows it cannot win.

The former *Irish Times* diarist and current *Irish Independent* columnist Kevin Myers made a brief reference in one of his columns to the historian's death but the uninformed reader would never have guessed that Myers championed Hart on the publication of the latter's book, *The IRA and its enemies*, in 1998.

Nobody could accuse Eoghan Harris of being restrained. However, the *Sunday Independent* columnist, although effusive in his praise, could not bring himself to give the details of the controversy. Like *The Irish Times* he denounced the unpleasantness of the historian's critics without naming them. But it was a little imprudent of Harris to say in the course of his eulogy that:

"Peter Hart's monumental achievement was to dig up these buried bodies."

This prompted a poster with the name *Gabha Oir* to respond on the politics.ie site:

".....and then interview them as his sources."

There was a time when the mainstream media could suppress such important information, but no more. On numerous blogs on the internet the one essential detail about Peter Hart's career as an historian was recalled. He had the capacity to interview the survivors of the Kilmichael Ambush after the last one of them had

died. That is not an easy detail to forget and internet bloggers were only too happy to inform the uninitiated of this fact; and that Hart never dealt with this issue before he died.

The Long Fellow had no sympathy for Hart when his intellectual fraud was exposed. But Hart did not work in isolation. His notorious book was based on his thesis which was supervised by the TCD historian David Fitzpatrick. He worked in an intellectual milieu which actively encouraged a revisionist approach to history. But when his fraud was exposed he was on his own. His colleagues could have defended him in public. That might not have been exactly reputable but it would have at least shown a certain human sympathy for a colleague who was a kindred spirit. On the other hand, they could have denounced him. They could have indicated that there is such a thing as intellectual integrity which applies even to those who share an ideological perspective.

But they did neither of these things. They preferred to preserve an ignoble silence.

GRIFFITH AND COLLINS

The annual Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins commemoration is held at Glasnevin Cemetery every year in August, the month that both of them died in 1922. This year the weather was particularly good and the setting was magnificent. The Board of Works has done a terrific restoration job and has built a very impressive visitor's centre.

Near the main entrance is the very modest grave of Roger Casement and Kevin Barry with a very appropriate plaque summarising the democratic basis for the War of Independence in defence of the 1919 Dáil.

The graves of Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith are within a few hundred yards of each other. The commemoration has a set format. Before the ceremonies at Glasnevin, Mass is celebrated in Berkeley Road in the morning. At around noon a wreath-laying ceremony is performed at Collins's grave which includes a decade of the rosary in Irish. There follows another decade of the rosary at the grave of Griffith and a wreath-laying ceremony.

As it happens, another Treaty negotiator, Eamonn Duggan is buried just behind Arthur Griffith's grave so a wreath is laid at his grave as well. This is always a slightly awkward part of the ceremony since those attending can't see behind Griffith's grave.

There then follows an oration which is always at Griffith's grave. The impression given is that the Committee is happier reflecting on Griffith's legacy than that of Collins.

The orations tend to be of uneven quality. In some cases the speaker tends to project his own politics on Griffith. A blatant example of this was Gay Mitchell (Fine Gael Euro member of parliament) who a few years ago used the opportunity to advocate a return to the Commonwealth.

The Committee organising the event is officially non-Party but it would be fair to say that there is a strong Fine Gael influence. In particular, Senator Pascal Donoghue and Dublin Central Fine Gael candidate does readings at the Mass and is a Master of Ceremonies at Glasnevin.

ELAINE BYRNE

This year the speaker was *The Irish Times* columnist and TCD academic Dr. Elaine Byrne. This seemed a rather eccentric choice. Byrne is best-known for her articles on Irish corruption and will have a book published on the subject later this year. The Long Fellow can only surmise that the intention was for her to extol the virtues of Griffith and Collins and by implication (or otherwise) contrast this with our current politicians and in particular the Government.

However her speech was surprisingly good. She had obviously put a lot of work into the subject. It turns out one of her ancestors was a member of Collins's Squad. In contrast to her *Irish Times* articles, the speech was very positive. She showed how Griffith and Collins overcame adversity and the demoralisation that was in the country following the Parnell Split. Unlike Gay Mitchell, for example, she had no illusions about Griffith. She said that he wanted full independence and was in favour of abstention from Westminster. There were also references to the 1918 Election, the First Dáil, the burning of Cork by the Black and Tans, Bloody Sunday, and the struggle to overcome British rule.

The main theme of the speech was about the Irish overcoming adversity and self defeatism. This begs the question what Byrne thinks she is doing writing for *The Irish Times* and pandering to its agenda, which is that the Irish are irredeemably corrupt and by implication not fit for self government.

It seems that when a person steps out of *The Irish Times* milieu he or she can sound quite normal!

Irish Squaddies

The following letter appeared in the Irish Times of 4th August

It was with a mixture of disgust and incomprehension that I read your London Editor's interview with Irishmen joining British army regiments (The fighting Irish, Weekend Review July 31st). Not alone were some of the comments disparaging of the ethos of the Irish army, but Mark Hennessy's report was an uncritical propaganda piece that came across strongly as endorsing the British army as a positive career choice for young Irish people.

The Irish army, which was born out of the struggle for national freedom from British rule, has given exemplary service to the United Nations for which we should all be proud. The contribution to a peaceful world which the Irish army has been engaged in for fifty years has served mankind better than those predatory armies engaged in illegal conflicts around the world.

Mark Hennessy's performance reflected badly on the Irish Times. I feel that as an Irish newspaper it should promote a distinctly Irish world view and should in no way promote foreign militarism.

Tom Cooper

COULD THIS BE FORGIVENESS

The small school uniform, almost intact, surviving the pupil fatally burnt.

Fused chain, Jesus on crucifix a runt.

The lunchbox, noodles to stone on impact.

In agony, the twisted glass bottle.

Pictured: charcoaled child still points to the sky.

Hiroshima-Nagasaki must die.

Did Japan's body need that last throttle.

Human flesh tested, Soviet advance halts.

Exhibition, Friends House, London.

Discreet.

Condemns nuclear bombing, but no one's fault,

worldwide disarmament is all they seek.

Sixty-five years on, war as peace exalts this rampaging power to maybe repeat.

Wilson John Haire.

14th August, 2010

es ahora *

[28 JULY 2010]

SHELL AND IRELAND

As we watch BP's Deepwater Horizon Rig disappear off our TV screens and media outlets we know big business has won. Was it really ever in any doubt? But nearer to home we have our own off-shore experience and "our conscience-keepers of the fourth estate" are definitely not doing their job. While all the focus has been on BP, there has not been a peep out of our environmentally friendly Government regarding Shell and its presence in Ireland.

And, besides BP in the Gulf of Mexico, there are other deep-water-drilling rigs out there and guess how many belong to Shell—well according to *Rolling Stone* (Issue 1107) magazine quite a few. While President Obama (never now to get that all-important second term in office) initially gave *the impression* that he was banning all deep-water drilling as the technology simply wasn't in place for such a disaster, that was just for PR purposes. Indeed Obama has been a staunch ally of the oil industry and had left "so many pro-industry regulators in charge of drilling that interior staffers call it *"the third Bush term"*...", according to Tim Dickinson in his *Rolling Stone* expose. Indeed according to Ken Salazar, Obama's Interior Secretary, "the moratorium is not a moratorium that will affect production which continues at 5,106 wells in the Gulf including 591 in deep water". Even more troubling, "BP has been allowed continue to drill in its other deep-water Atlantis rig—one of the world's largest oil platforms".

And the—

"Minerals Management Service (MMS) descended into rank criminality. They literally and figuratively were in bed with the oil industry. When agency staffers weren't joining industry employees for coke parties or trips to corporate ski chalets, they were having sex with oil-company officials. But it was American taxpayers and the environment that were getting screwed. MMS managers were awarded cash bonuses for pushing through risky offshore leases, auditors were ordered not to investigate shady deals, and safety staffers routinely accepted gifts from the industry, allegedly even allowing oil companies to fill in their own inspection reports in pencil before tracing over them in pen."

Ken Salazar declared in 2009 to *Rolling Stone* that: "There is a new sheriff in

town". And he was going to crack down on the MMS as Obama had pledged. The latter's "great" and "dear" friend was going to clear up the MMS and, dressed in his trademark Stetson and bolo tie, Salazar did make early moves that created "the impression that he meant what he said". Except that little was done beyond "referring a few employees for criminal prosecution and ending a Bush-era program that allowed oil companies to make their "royalty" payments—the amount they owe taxpayers for extracting a scarce public resource—not in cash but in crude."

Salazar also put "53 million offshore acres up for lease in the Gulf in his first year alone—an all-time high. The aggressive leasing came as no surprise, given Salazar's track record."

"This guy has a long, long history of promoting offshore oil drilling—that's his thing", said Kieran Suckling, executive director of the Center for Biological Diversity.

As Obama has asked for "some ass to kick", he might try the one sitting directly beside him—the oil snake himself Ken Salazar. The poor residents of the four States directly affected by the oil spill will never know probably who they also should try kicking. Sure Tony Hayward, CEO of BP (as he signs off for what *Shy News* called his "Siberian exile" (26th July 2010), looks a likely stooge, even the *Financial Times* (14th July 2010) called in an anguished piece by Clive Crook that "Britain should back down over BP" and leave Hayward and his American company to the courts—but not of course if "it opens a truly limitless vista of financial penalty". Some things have a price after all.

SHELL AND THE CORRIB GAS PROJECT

Most Irish media have been shy of criticising Shell, the oil company, and our Government for any fault that they maybe incurring. Only the Irish *Daily Mail* has consistently tracked the story and published pictures that no other paper has. On 1st July 2010, the paper ran a story about the Gas pipeline being rerouted. As the most vocal residents of Rossport have been demonised and imprisoned and had their living destroyed in their ongoing battle with Shell, the Government has sought fit to go after them—the citizens of our republic—and then negotiate with Shell behind closed doors and do deals that no one really knows about in as disgraceful a way as anything done by the American or Nigerian Governments.

According to that day's *Mail*, Shell will

now run the pipeline not across Rossport land as initially sought but instead—

"travel underwater up the estuary to the refinery under new plans unveiled by Shell. But despite the proposals moving the pipe further away from housing, critics have said a string of health and safety issues remain. It has been five years since the Rossport Five were jailed for their opposition to the Corrib pipeline route and now it will no longer cross any land in the village."

Shell unveiled its newly proposed route after their last proposal was deemed unsafe by An Bord Pleanála. The pipeline will now come on land at Glengad beach and re-enter the water, travelling the length of the estuary, before coming on land again before the Ballinaboy refinery. The original route would have seen the pipe cross the bay at Glengad and travel by Rossport on land up to the processing plant at the top of the Sruwaddacon estuary. Terence Conway of opposition group 'Shell to Sea' said that Shell originally opposed going up the estuary for environmental reasons and the new plan should not be approved.

"Shell originally ruled out going up the estuary on environmental and technical grounds so needless to say I find their latest plans very surprising indeed, he said."

"It shows how Shell can change their minds and get the experts to back them up. They may claim that they have moved it a few hundred metres away from houses but there are still serious health and safety issues around a pipe."

He said that the massive oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico shows that oil companies cannot be trusted to self-regulate on safety.

"When you take into account what has happened in the Gulf of Mexico that is born out of an unhealthy relationship between the regulatory authorities and oil companies. Where the oil company calls the shots and the authorities just accept it. We are seeing that here. And if you look at the safety record of Shell across the globe it is far worse than BP."

If only poor Mr. Conway really knew all the secrets of *BP and Shell* he might not be so quick to condemn only the oil companies!

Shell, in its own spin on the rerouting, claimed the new route will mean that the nearest house to the pipe will be 234 metres away compared to just 78 metres previously. The new plans will see the pipe laid under the Sruwaddacon estuary which has been deemed by the EU with the support of our Government a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Despite being pushed for the most part under the water, the pipeline will cross the lands of five landowners—one being Shell. It will cross private land at Glengad and also at

Lenamore, near the Ballinaboy refinery.

What is important, however, is that it will no longer infringe on the residents of Rosspport—the *Mail* reported. But for the Rosspport Five, the fight goes on as "technical preparatory work is to begin in the estuary with 80 boreholes being set. The Department of the Environment believes the dig will have little impact on salmon stocks and wild birds." SAC's are places designated by the EU authorities as being of such environmental importance being home to species of plants/birds/insects etc. that they merit the highest legislative barrier to any developments whatsoever. For the Department of the Environment to state that anyone can interfere with a SAC is just beyond belief. It reminds one of the actions of the MMS in the USA and that comes with lots of questions that the media should be lobbying at them. I, however, will not be holding my breath. But I hope the residents of Rosspport are looking at the awful consequences of the oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico and asking their *local representatives* some hard questions.

SHELL, THE LOCALS OF ROSSPORT AND THE COURTS

In the *Irish Daily Mail* 19th July 2010, there was a photo of a fine Irish country man being held aloft by two (of all things) hair-dreadlocked-men who looked like hippies of old. Shell to Sea campaigner Pat O'Donnell, 52, who was jailed last February was freed from Castlereagh Prison. He pumped the air with his fists and told his wife, family and supporters that it was joyful "to be a free man" once again. He had served five months of a seven month sentence and when sentenced he was unusually branded by Judge Raymond Groarke as "a thug" and "a bully".

"Judge Groarke's comments disappointed me but did not surprise me", Mr. O'Donnell said to the *Mail*. The latter is known in his home in Co. Mayo as The Chief and has been "a prominent protester against the Corrib gas project in north Mayo". Before the whole Shell situation erupted, Mr. O'Donnell had been a well respected fisherman with his own boat and had never been in trouble with the law. So much for our civil right to resist and oppose the doings of transcontinental oil companies in our Republic.

But Mr. O'Donnell had a strange tale to tell. In 2009, he told how four masked armed raiders boarded his boat and held him and a friend captive before sinking the vessel. But the Gardai told the *Mail* that they "found no evidence to back up his story. And they further said that the

protester declined to be interviewed when gardai visited him in hospital. They said the sinking was suspicious because a group of Shell kayakers were trying to board dredgers near Glengad beach at the same time."

This doesn't stack up. Mr. O'Donnell ended up in hospital and had his boat sunk—even the gardai accepted these incidents had happened. But the *colour treatment* given out to the media was accepted and repeated and that should give any investigative journalist or politician pause for thought. As more and more stories go viral, whistle-blowers will be more certain of coming out if protected as sources and the truth has an odd way of blowing apart a carefully constructed image of proprietary conduct by the oil companies and the Governments involved. In the next issue of the *Irish Political Review* I shall continue investigating this story and look to who gave out the initial contract.

THE QUEEN AND HER HONOURS

The *Irish Daily Mail*, 21st June 2010, was delighted to bring us news of the upcoming "conferring ceremony" of Michael Colgan's OBE at the diplomatic residence of the British Ambassador Julian King at Glencairn House in Sandford. Rather grandly we were informed that on the following day,

"The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire is being awarded on merit for exceptional achievements to cultural relations or service. In countries where the Queen is not head of state, recipients are bestowed with honorary awards. Julian will play host to an array of Michael's friends tomorrow, including the Fianna Fail Minister Mary Hanafin, actor Sir Michael Gambon, film director John Boorman, U2's manager Paul McGuinness, Harry Crosbie, Gay and Kathleen Byrne."

However as Michael observed with nostalgia: "I know that one person who would have been particularly pleased is my dear friend, the late, great Harold Pinter." Many of Michael's friends at the Gate will also be attending the ceremony. Actors Stephan Brennan, Dawn Bradfield and Alan Stanford will be along as well as playwright Conor McPherson. Michael reached out and told us: "I am truly surprised to receive this award ... but this award should be shared by all who have worked with me at the Gate." Julian, the *Mail* thoughtfully confirmed "is known for his fine hosting skills". Quite.

PRIVATE EYE AND THE QUEEN'S HONOURS

The recent Queen's birthday honours, seen in draft form by Gordon Browne and signed off by David Cameron, included

the usual awards for failure. (No.1265, 25th June to 8th July 2010) According to the *Eye*, Chris Hyman who earns £1.5m a year as boss of privatisation firm Serco, got a CBE for services to business and charity. Only a few months ago the Children's Commissioner said the 1,000 or so children who are locked up every year in Serco's Yar's Wood immigrant detention centre did not receive "even elementary" care for their mental welfare after "extremely distressing" detention procedures.

Next up was the *Eye's* favourite businesswoman Barbara Judge, aka the Atomic Kitten, who got a CBE for giving *Private Eye* so much to write about over the years (surely for "services to the nuclear and financial industries"? Ed) Judge, who chairs the UK Atomic Energy Authority, among other things, is a terrific example of what "honourable" means in the British honours system. In 1992, when she had to pay a \$90,000 fine in her native USA to settle a court case because she has used inside contracts with regulators to help the about-to-be-disgraced Savings & Loan boss Charles Keating, she can hardly have expected to be receiving an honour from the Queen of England. The Savings & Loan scheme was the Enron of the day and Keating was subsequently jailed for fraud, conspiracy and racketeering.

Judge was also in on other scams as the *Eye* has revealed but her service to many Governments seem to outweigh these blemishes on her CV. Douglas Oakervee, the former boss of Crossrail, got a CBE for "services to civil engineering". HM Revenue and Customs boss Leslie Strathie bagged a reward for failure and unpopularity by becoming Dame Lesley. Finally a prominent banker slipped onto the list too. Simon Robertson, knighted, was president of Goldman Sachs Europe from 1997-2005 during which time the bank came up with its wackier financial products and was a prolific tax avoider.

MRS HAROLD PINTER AND HISTORY

The fragrant Lady Antonia Fraser made a charming speech according to the *Eye* when presenting the Elizabeth Longford Prize for Historical Biography to Tristram Hunt for his life of Engels. Indeed, having once seen Tristram on TV myself, I can attest that he is every bit as fragrant and lovely as her ladyship. Lady Antonia pointed out the coincidence that Hunt, who has just become MP for Stoke, and her parents (Lord Longford and her historian mother Elizabeth) first met in the wee hours on the platform of that city's station—an encounter responsible "for that

entire scribbling dynasty of Longfords, Pakenhams and Frasers". The "aristocratic pedigree of the winner (he is the son of Lord Hunt) won't have been lost on Lady Fraser. But how cosy" as the Eye reveals. "Georgina Capel, Hunt's agent also looks after two of the judges, AN Wilson and the prize's joint sponsor (and Antonia's daughter) Flora Fraser".

PROFESSOR THOMAS BARTLETT

AND THE FALL OF IRISH HISTORIOGRAPHY

Ireland A History was published by Cambridge Press in 2010 and is just out. Apparently Professor Bartlett has already been on the Pat Kenny show but I didn't hear him. Probably just as well. The last I heard of Bartlett, he was a Professor in UCD and had rubbished Roy Foster's *The Irish Story* in a rather witty review in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 25th January 2002. I think the Aubane Historical Society might have reprinted it in their provocatively corrosive pamphlet, *Aubane versus Oxford: Professor Roy Foster and Bernard O'Donoghue*. 2002. But, as they say, that was then—this is now. Professor Thomas Bartlett states that he started work on this project while he was Parnell Fellow in Irish Studies at Magdalene College, Cambridge, then continued it back at UCD and brought it with him to Aberdeen where he is now Professor of Irish History—though he is also listed as being at Boston College, where he is Burns Library Fellow in Irish Studies 2009-2010. Impressive CV by any standards.

Yet this historian—and how he delights in that 'scholarly' profession—claims that the "genial" Jack Lynch had nothing to do with the arms importation which was done by Haughey and Blaney (page 507) and in (page 509) continues his assault on Charles J. Haughey by disgracefully saying that in 1979, when the latter came to power, "a thirty-year period of thuggery, skulduggery and sleaze was begun in Irish political life". But, when I looked at the source material used by this "scholar", I found that between David Fitzpatrick, Dermot Keogh, John A. Murphy, Ferriter, Dunne, Foster, Townshend *et al*, the whole revisionist project was there again in all its numbing rancour.

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The Spy Who Grew Up With The Bold, part 4

The Irish Republican Education Of Sir John Betjeman

The first three parts of this series were published in the March, April and May issues of *Irish Political Review*. The series is centred on a July 1942 Intelligence report penned by John Betjeman, who in later life would be knighted and named Poet Laureate by the Queen of England, but who at that time was officially acting as the UK Mission's wartime Press Attaché in Dublin. Betjeman's report had been addressed and submitted to Dr. Nicholas Mansergh of the Empire Division in the UK's Ministry of Information. The subject-matter was an anti-Fascist Manifesto from IRA prisoners in the Curragh Internment Camp, co-authored by my late father Michael O'Riordan, whose period of internment stretched from 1940 to 1943.

The informant for this particular British clandestine operation was named as Musgrove, who needed no further introduction in the report in question, since he was already well known to both Mansergh and Betjeman and already well established as a vitally important Intelligence source for them.

This series of articles is based on the documentary evidence itself, coupled with a number of conversations that I had in 2000 with both my father and the late John de Courcy Ireland. It was the latter who clarified that the informant in question would have been P.J. Musgrove, who had edited a controversial selection of Connolly's writings, under the title of *A Socialist and War*, for the Communist Party of Great Britain during its anti-War phase in early 1941. When, following Hitler's invasion of the USSR in June 1941, international Communism became pro-War, Musgrove went on to become Editor of *Unity*, organ of Communist Party of Northern Ireland. But Musgrove's own new-found pro-War enthusiasm was to involve a somersault of a particularly dramatic character when he became a British Intelligence informant in the service of Betjeman and Mansergh. Indeed, once I had informed him of this fact, some of Musgrove's wartime behaviour now began to make sense to de Courcy Ireland—in particular, Musgrove's persistent, but fruitless, efforts to get him to meet up with Betjeman.

When my father learned that he had been the subject-matter of a particularly

fascinating Musgrove-Betjeman-Mansergh Intelligence report, this in turn led him to recall that CPI veteran leader Seán Nolan had told him, on the occasion of the funeral of CPNI General Secretary Billy McCullough, that Betjeman had made similarly persistent, but equally unsuccessful, attempts to arrange a meeting with McCullough.

The disclosure of Betjeman's report also resulted in an associated mystery being cleared up in the process. During the 1970s the Belfast author, journalist and labour historian, Andrew Boyd, was to manifest a particularly virulent hostility—from a declared Left-wing, but what in reality was very much a nationalist perspective—towards the British and Irish Communist Organisation. Yet not far behind in Boyd's pet hates on the Left—despite the fact that the re-united CPI was now playing a nationalist role in Northern politics—was the post-War role that had been played by the Communist Party of Northern Ireland. This included the adoption of a *de facto* unionist position during the 1945 Elections on the constitutional question—namely, Northern Ireland's future within the UK state—particularly found in the statements of CPNI candidates McCullough and Betty Sinclair.

In the case of the CP, there was at least a personal basis for understanding Boyd's hostility. My father explained to me that, for a period, Boyd had been in the wartime leadership of the CPNI, but became increasingly convinced that General Secretary McCullough was a British spy. Boyd had become aware that British Intelligence possessed such detailed and confidential information on the Party's inner life that it could only have come from the very top. Boyd did not keep his thoughts to himself but vociferously charged the General Secretary with being a spy and, as a result, was forced out of the CP by an enraged leadership. But the 2000 revelations now made clear that Boyd's instincts that there was a spy at the top of the wartime Party had indeed been proved correct, except that he had charged the wrong man.

For it was not the General Secretary himself, whose good name should remain intact, but his confidant—Party Editor Musgrove—who had been supplying

Intelligence information to the British.

In October 1943, the keenly-spied-upon target of Betjeman's July 1942 report came across the person who had been spying on him, while completely oblivious of such activities. At the Communist Party Congress that was held in Belfast that month, P.J. Musgrove made little impression on the recently released Curragh internee Micheál O'Riordan. All that my father could recall of Musgrove was a quite subdued individual, dramatically at variance with the exuberant personality that had been described to me by de Courcy Ireland.

Betjeman had, of course, returned home permanently to England in August 1943 and, perhaps in part due to the absence of his handler, Musgrove no longer had the same sense of purpose as before. In any case, his position as an Intelligence operative was becoming increasingly untenable, and whatever rationalisation his conscience might have initially attempted in self-justification, he could not for very much longer continue serving both Communism and Churchill.

If he had persisted with such activities, sooner or later the CPNI would have rumbled the fact that its leading propagandist and Editor was a British agent and, to put it mildly, the Party would not have been pleased. During the course of 1944, the Dublin-based de Courcy Ireland lost all contact with Musgrove, only to discover subsequently that he had disappeared completely from Belfast. Where to, nobody in the CPNI was quite sure, but there was some speculation that he might have ended up in Australia, the homeland of the woman he had recently married, although nobody voiced any suspicions that he had been a British Intelligence informant.

I have hitherto suspended any judgement on Musgrove, but one is naturally driven to wonder at his motivation. The picture drawn of him by de Courcy Ireland was of a remarkably energetic man who would never settle for half measures. This was so in his 1930s solidarity campaign work on behalf of China and Spain. It was openly so when he stuck his neck out and risked imprisonment by the British authorities for a particularly seditious edition of Connolly's writings published a year and a half into the Second World War. When Musgrove became convinced that Churchill was finally on board for an anti-Fascist War, he went to the opposite extreme in becoming a British Intelligence operative. I do not doubt that he would have sought to justify such a dramatic

change of roles to himself. By demonstrating through his Intelligence reports that there was an ever-increasing anti-Fascist sentiment in the Republican Movement, he was dispelling British prejudices in that regard. Perhaps he felt that this was in Ireland's own interest as well as Britain's. It is not possible for me to speculate any further as to his frame of mind.

It is otherwise in the case of John Betjeman. Here we do know from his published correspondence so many of his private thoughts. We can thus track the development of an anti-Fascist consciousness that he was to acquire for the first time in wartime Ireland, having previously been a champion of Irish Fascism in 1933. In Republican Left circles during the war years he was to encounter people who had taken their stand against Fascism a decade beforehand and had risked their lives accordingly.

One Irish anti-Fascist with whom Betjeman became acquainted was the poet Ewart Milne who had served with Spanish Medical Aid during the anti-Fascist War in 1937. "He writes the sort of poetry that I don't know about", Betjeman wrote of him to John Piper on 20th December 1941. Among such poems was the profoundly anti-Fascist one written in 1937 itself, *Thinking of Artolas*, in which Milne lamented the death in the battle of Jarama of two very close friends—the Irish International Brigade volunteer and poet Charlie Donnelly and Milne's fellow ambulance driver, the German-Jewish refugee Izzy Kupchick:

*"Two who came from prisonment, Gael
because of Tone,
Jew because of human love, the same for
Jew as German."*

At War's close in 1945 Betjeman had continued a friendship in England with Milne, and also with Muriel MacSwiney, widow of the martyred Lord Mayor of Cork, whose own record of anti-Nazi struggle dated back to her membership of the German Communist Party 1930-33. Through all of these Republican Left associations, as well as from the agitation of the Connolly Group of Republican internees that he had been spying upon, Betjeman had gradually acquired an understanding of both a real Ireland and a real Europe that had hitherto eluded his consciousness.

It should be recalled that less than a year before the War, on 29 October 1938, Betjeman had rather fawningly written to Elizabeth Bowen: "Your book goes to prove my contention that the Anglo-Irish are the greatest race of western civilis-

ation." Such a concept of a master race—or *Herrenvolk*—placed above the rest of us was a very dangerous one, but the realities of living in de Valera's wartime Ireland would force Betjeman to drop it. Whatever deference he might continue to owe Bowen in respect of the superb quality of her Intelligence work, he would no longer interpret Ireland through any Big House window.

Indeed, Betjeman would even find the Anglo-Irish literature of an undoubted Irish patriot like Yeats equally unsatisfactory for this purpose. During the War years Betjeman grew to know and love the 'Hidden Ireland' that was revealed to him through his friendship with the Irish-language scholar and Republican poet priest, Monsignor Pádraig de Brún, as well as through the poetry of Patrick Kavanagh, whom Betjeman himself worked so assiduously to promote.

And there was another Ireland hidden more deeply still, revealed to him through the work of Michael McLaverty, "interesting because it describes life among those least-described people, the Roman Catholic third of the population of Northern Ireland" (*Daily Herald*, 4 June 1944).

Even in terms of understanding bourgeois Dublin, Betjeman found little of assistance in the works of the Anglo-Irish. It was James Joyce (in his earlier manifestation) that Betjeman would recommend instead:

"Lots of people have written long and turgidly about Joyce and they have not made him easier to understand... If you want to read a book by Joyce that is easy and understandable, get *Dubliners* out of the library. It is a marvellous picture of Irish middle-class life." (*Daily Herald*, 30 August 30 1944).

But, during Betjeman's wartime sojourn in Dublin, it was primarily to the works of Seán O'Casey that he turned—a Protestant, yes, but certainly neither Anglo-Irish nor West British. For O'Casey was both working class and an Irish Republican. It was in the *Daily Herald* of 25th October 1945 that Betjeman wrote:

"O'Casey brings with him that world of internal strife that only those who know Ireland know ... as no author has ever done before or since ... English people think of Irish literature as all to do with Yeats and twilight ... Yeats was a great poet as all agree. But he was 'literary', though he loved Ireland ... O'Casey is the voice of the Irish people or, at any rate, those who come from the poorer parts of Dublin ... O'Casey journeyed through Yeats and Shaw to Jim Larkin and James Connolly and the Irish Labour Movement."

Betjeman's Dublin-born daughter Candida performed a further service in her father's memory by bringing together an anthology of such prose writings. (John Betjeman, *Coming Home—An Anthology of Prose*, selected and edited by Candida Lycett Green, 1988.) These writings also indicate the depth of understanding that Betjeman had acquired as a result of his wartime Irish Republican anti-Fascist education. He was indeed the spy who grew up with the bold. And with that understanding he acquired a corresponding moral courage. Betjeman's father had once held this to be a quality that he lacked when it came to the issue of the anti-German racism that John had experienced during his childhood and youth. The father found the son far too ready to succumb to his mother's own combination of prejudice and make-belief in response to such racist outbursts. Betjeman would later recall in his 1960 poem *Summoned by Bells* that, when accused of having a German name,

"I asked my mother. 'No', she said, 'It's Dutch;

Thank God you're English on your mother's side.'

O happy, happy Browns and Robinsons!"

John's own given surname, as proudly retained by his father Ernest to the day of his death, had been Betjemann. During the First World War, however, John's mother dropped the final "n" to take the German "harm" out of it. Bevis Hillier, his biographer, records that in 1927 Ernest Betjemann wrote to his now 21 year old son: *"I see you sign as a 'one enner'. Very cowardly!"* But moral courage was something which Betjeman did indeed acquire during the Second World War. At War's close, he reviewed several books for the *Daily Herald* of 6th June 1945. Betjeman coupled his horror of the emerging details of the Holocaust with a highlighting of the fact the anti-Semitism had not been a uniquely German phenomenon but had been rooted in the culture of European Christendom at large, not least in that of England itself:

"The Jews of Europe have not even a village. Do you remember Browning's Holy Cross Day?—

By the torture, prolonged from age to age,

By the Infamy, Israel's heritage,

By the Ghetto's plague, by the garb's disgrace,

By the badge of shame, by the felon's place,

By the branding tool, the bloody whip,

And the summons to Christian fellowship."

Betjeman went on to comment:

"Robert Neumann's By the Waters of Babylon is certainly not Jewish propaganda. Yet I would quote this from it about Jews in our own day, and you can compare it with Browning who was writing of 1600, and see how little the human race changes: 'Concentration camp, fled over the frontier, disappeared, gone mad, imprisoned, shot while trying to escape, died of sun-stroke whilst scrubbing the pavement, died of heart-attack while waiting for a visa, died of a stroke during domiciliary search, fallen out of the train, fallen out of the bedroom window, fallen off a bridge, found in the gutter with a smashed skull, found drowned in a well shaft, found hanged in a lavatory, kicked to death in a barrack cell, dead, dead, dead.'"

Betjeman summed up that particular book as *"shocking and merciless. To have read it is to feel very much older, and there is a timelessness in the telling which makes seven centuries of pogroms seem but a blink in the eye of Eternity."* By emphasising the wider context of anti-Semitism, Betjeman next proceeded courageously to argue against any re-emergence of the anti-German racism that had afflicted his childhood:

"In What Buchenwald Really Means, Victor Gollancz points out that you and I are as much responsible for these Nazi torture camps as the Germans. We knew about them before the War. They consisted largely of German Christians, German Jews, German Communists, and German Trade Unionists... But whereas you and I could have protested without getting into trouble, Germans could not have done so without going to one of the camps themselves for speaking against the Nazi Government. It was easier for us to protest and now we blame the Germans for what the Nazis did to those of them who did not agree with them."

There were, of course, those who had in fact protested, and done more than protest. From Ewart Milne's commitment to the Spanish anti-Fascist War Betjeman was educated in an Irish anti-Fascism inspired by the principles of Wolfe Tone and *"human love, the same for Jew as German"*. Dublin is where Betjeman effectively grew up and out of his earlier flippancy. And his educators were the *"Bold Fenian Men"* of Irish Republicanism. Churchillian propaganda and its Dillonite echoes in Ireland present the image of Irish Republicanism as a simple tool of Nazi Germany. Betjeman arrived in Dublin sharing such prejudices, but the quality of his Intelligence work educated him to a different reality. That there was a good half of the IRA pinning their hopes on a German victory did indeed remain

the case. But Betjeman saw before him a continuum of anti-Fascist Republicanism ranging from more than a third of the IRA prisoners across to the man who held them prisoner, de Valera himself.

There was also a vitally important Republican force mid-way along that spectrum between prisoners and Government—men who had left the IRA in the 1930s rather than end up under Seán Russell's leadership, but who were no more prepared to say "What's good enough for Dev is good enough for me" than they had been in respect of Michael Collins and the Treaty. They were Ireland's SIS, and their key role was highlighted as follows by Eunan O'Halpin in his 1999 book, *Defending Ireland*:

"In the Munster area, hardened Republicans who would not dream of taking a Free State oath or of wearing a Free State uniform were secretly recruited to a clandestine intelligence-gathering, security, and 'stay-behind' organisation, the Supplementary Intelligence Service (SIS). Established by Major Florence O'Donoghue of G2 (military intelligence), one of the few War of Independence veterans who could bridge the political and personal Treaty divide, it was organised on the same battalion areas of the pre-1922 IRA in anticipation of an invasion of the south coast by either set of belligerents. In the event, its main function turned out to be that of gathering intelligence on clandestine activities. Its greatest service was the detection of the escape plans of the German agent Herman Goertz and the Special Branch renegade Jim Crofton in Kerry in 1941. The SIS members were 'never formally attested' and their names did not appear on any army roll. They were, consequently, legally not eligible for the 1940-1945 Emergency service medal later awarded to members of the defence forces. Special cabinet sanction had to be obtained in 1951 for the secret issue of medals to SIS members, who as committed Republicans were still shy of admitting their Emergency activities."

Moving fully across the spectrum from the *"slightly constitutional"* SIS to the constitutional Government itself, it is now appropriate to assess the relationship between Betjeman and the two key lieutenants of de Valera with whom he interacted and formed lasting friendships—Frank Gallagher and M.J. MacManus. The following pen-picture of the wartime Director of the Government Information Service has been given by Patrick J. Twohig in his 1994 book, *Green Tears for Hecuba*:

"Frank Gallagher was the Cork-born compiler, with Erskine Childers, of The Irish Republican Bulletin, propagandist newspaper of Sinn Féin, Dáil Éireann

and the Irish Republican Army until the 'split' in the Spring of 1922... As a young lad he had joined the staff of the *Cork Free Press* in 1913, under its proprietor, William O'Brien, M.P., and five years later was given the onerous task, while still only twenty, of travelling to London to inform the old man, at his room in the headquarters of the 'All For Ireland League' that it was the considered opinion of his staff in Cork that the old days had gone forever and that Sinn Féin was now and for the future the All-For-Ireland League... An outstanding journalist like Gallagher, who fought on the streets of Dublin against trained soldiers of the King, then dashed back to his office and staff to rush out the next issue of the *Bulletin*, is entitled to claim as he pleases, even when he believes that his publication, with its clever counter-propaganda, was a major contributor to ultimate victory... Frank Gallagher became the first editor of the *Irish Press* when it was founded by de Valera in 1931."

Churchillian history, and its Redmondite and Dillonite echoes in Ireland, would lead one to expect that, in the wartime encounter between de Valera's Director of the Government Information Service and Churchill's own Press Attaché in Dublin, it is the latter who would have had the advantage of moral superiority over the former. That expectation would be all the stronger on the part of anyone who recognises Gallagher as the basis for the caricature of the Republican *Bulletin* Editor Jack Dalton in Roddy Doyle's 1999 novel *A Star Called Henry*, and who is then taken in by Doyle's mendaciously hideous depiction of Gallagher/Dalton as one who would order the murder of an elderly Jewish gentleman for no other reason than anti-Semitic hatred at its most vile.

The reality was radically different. Betjeman had spent 1938-39 being as flippant as ever about what was happening in the world at large. By way of contrast, in his 1998 book *Jews in Twentieth Century Ireland*, Dermot Keogh brought to light just how tirelessly Gallagher had been working from January to August 1939 in bringing about the rescue of the Jewish Wortsmann family from Nazi Germany on the very eve of War's outbreak. Aided in this venture by Sinéad Bean de Valera, Gallagher subsequently received, during the severe rationing conditions of the War years, an annual Christmas parcel from the Wortsmanns, now living in the USA, as a gesture of appreciation to Gallagher who had helped them with "*hand and heart*" and to whom the Wortsmanns themselves had no doubt that they owed their very lives.

In *German-speaking Exiles in Ireland 1933-1945*, edited by Gisela Holfter in 2006, the German-Jewish refugee Monica Hennig has also portrayed the warm welcome she always received in Gallagher's home during her childhood years of wartime exile. For Frank Gallagher had in fact cut his political teeth in opposition to anti-Semitic bigotry many decades previously. The political mentor of his teenage years was William O'Brien, whose wife Sophie Raffalovich had been singled out by the Hibernian bully-boys of John Redmond's Home Rule Party with the campaign slogan of "*Down with the Russian Jewess!*", for which Redmond never once apologised.

Gallagher was to become central to Betjeman's relationship with the Government of an independent Ireland. As he prepared to leave Dublin, mission accomplished, Betjeman wrote to Gallagher on 16th June 1943 to thank him for all he had done, not least "*getting interviews with the Taoiseach, to whom I am greatly indebted—and do convey my thanks to him*" and hoping "*very much to see the Prime Minister before I go*". To the significance of Betjeman's direct access to de Valera, and its ongoing indirect mediation via friendship with Gallagher, must be added another deep friendship with de Valera's biographer, M.J. MacManus. It began soon after Betjeman's arrival in Dublin in January 1941, when he borrowed a car on long-term loan from MacManus. Its continuing strength was evidenced in a letter sent by Betjeman, on 18th September 1942, to Hamish Hamilton publishers urging them to send review copies "*to the Irish Press, the Government paper here, whose literary editor, M.J. MacManus, is a great friend of mine and personally friendly to us*".

There can be a little doubt that Betjeman received a political education from MacManus as he rehearsed many of the arguments he would reproduce in his 1944 biography of de Valera: "*Since the present war began many cultivated Englishmen have visited Ireland, to them—in a famous phrase—a small country that we know nothing about' ... They look for Fascism and they fail to find it. They look for hostility to Britain and they discover very little.*"

MacManus could remind Betjeman of de Valera's track record of opposition to Fascist aggression:

"De Valera, when President of the Council of the League of Nations (in 1932), warned the Assembly in a historic speech that all that has happened would happen if it did not put its house in order.

'If the hand raised against the Covenant is sufficiently strong it can strike with impunity'. Japan raised the strong hand against the Covenant in Manchukuo—and with impunity. But the voice that rang out in protest at Geneva was not that of the British delegate; it was that of Éamon de Valera; Sir John Simon was all for 'appeasement'. Abyssinia repeated the story. In spite of centuries—old ties between Italy and Ireland, de Valera supported Sanctions: Sir Samuel Hoare helped Laval to sabotage them."

And yet MacManus was restrained enough to keep the lines open to Betjeman by refraining from a more *ad hominem coup-de-grace* which would have pointed out that none other than Britain's wartime Prime Minister himself, Sir Winston Churchill, had been to the fore in calling for such appeasement of the Japanese and Italian Fascist aggressors.

That Betjeman was a British spy should long be beyond contention. For whatever reason, the chief of Irish Army Intelligence G2, Col. Dan Bryan, either failed to spot it or else decided to turn a blind eye. But there can be little doubt that others saw through Betjeman. Frank Gallagher wasn't fooled at all. Prior to Betjeman's final return to Britain in August 1943, Gallagher threw an Irish Government farewell party for him in Dublin Castle. In *Irish Neutrality And The Propaganda Of John Betjeman*, an essay published in *Éire-Ireland* Winter 1996, Robert Cole's assessment of the value of Betjeman's propaganda work for Britain in Ireland speaks of its success in ensuring that—

"important members of the Irish community including the Irish press ... were more inclined to accept that, despite the policies of the British Empire, the English stood for something worthwhile in the War".

But Gallagher recognised that there was a two-way process at work. In a very thinly disguised reference to the value of Betjeman's Intelligence reports from Ireland to Britain, Gallagher concluded his farewell speech with the following:

"To be an interpreter of two different people at once is not the easiest task in the world. John solved it by finding something to hurrosh for in all of us, disappointing as that may be to some of us who wondered what on earth he found to hurroo at in the other fellow ... Sure the Betjemans will, across the water, carry on their work of levelling out the peaks and valleys in the estimation of us into one sweet and pleasant plane."

To Cole's assessment of the value of Betjeman's **propaganda** work we can also add the following: The value of Betjeman's

Intelligence work ensured that key strategists in Britain's war-effort could see that the Irish also stood for something worthwhile. Intelligence reports that highlighted Irish anti-Fascist opinion, from de Valera himself down to such a high proportion of the Republicans he had interned, helped to stay the hand of Churchill whenever he was tempted to believe his own bellicose propaganda and caricatures.

The latter phenomenon was, of course, present to the bitter end when, in his victory speech of 13th May 1945, Churchill spoke of how he might have been "forced to come to close quarters with Mr. de Valera". He went on:

"However, with a restraint and poise to which I say history will find few parallels, His Majesty's Government never laid a violent hand upon them, though at times it would have been quite easy and natural, and we left the de Valera Government to frolic with the Germans and later with the Japanese representatives to their hearts' content."

Britain's Representative in Dublin Sir John Maffey was shocked at his Prime Minister's outburst, privately asking of the Dominions Office, as revealed by Robert Fisk in his 1983 book, *In Time of War*: "But how are you to control ministerial incursions into your China shop? Phrases make history here." And at least one member of Churchill's Coalition Government—the Minister for Labour, Ernest Bevin—clearly felt it was a speech for which amends would have to be made subsequently. O'Halpin's *Defending Ireland* reveals that, when he became British Foreign Secretary in the post-War Labour Government, Bevin made a point of publicly addressing an Irish diplomat at a 1948 function in Brussels with the following *de facto* apology for Churchill's speech:

"I want our Irish friends to know that, during all those months of preparation (for the invasion of Normandy) not a single leakage of information occurred through Ireland. In order to enforce our restrictions on travel and communication, which were very severe, we had to take the top Irish officials into our confidence ... They gave great co-operation unstintingly, and (Bevin repeated with emphasis) not one single leak occurred. This is a great tribute to the Irish Government and the Irish officials concerned."

In the meantime, as far as the radio propaganda war went, Maffey acknowledged that de Valera was "as great a hero as the Irishman who scores the winning try at Twickenham", following his reply to Churchill on 16th May 1945. When,

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Irish Times Letters

The following letter was submitted to the *Irish Times* in mid August, but has not been published as we go to print:

As an Irishman whose ancestors were prominent advocates of the Anglo Irish Treaty of 1921, I am appalled by the sentiments expressed in the letter of Senator Twomey published in the *Irish Times* of August 12th.

Senator Twomey begins his letter with a baseless calumny blithely accusing the "predecessors" of Fianna Fail Minister Brian Lenihan of the murder of Michael Collins and thus criticising the Minister's invitation to speak at the annual Beal na mBlath commemoration of his death. It is shocking that a Senator of this Republic should display such ignorance of Irish History and willingness to stir up Civil War animosity for political expediency.

Michael Collins was gunned down in the Civil War in August 1922. Fianna Fáil was of course founded in 1926. The Fianna Fail "predecessors" of Minister Lenihan, have thus the perfect alibi. Indeed some of the ancestors of Minister Lenihan's Fianna Fail "predecessors" such as those of the late Jack Lynch were on the pro-treaty side in the Civil War.

My Grandfather, the late Lieutenant General Seán Collins-Powell, bade farewell to his uncle Michael at the Imperial Hotel in Cork on the morning of his assassination and marched with his coffin to Glasnevin cemetery. As an officer in the Irish Army and Chief of Staff, my grandfather served under many Fianna Fail governments including that of the great Irish Patriot and Fianna Fail "predecessor" of Minister Lenihan, Sean Lemass. I remember my grandfather speaking about Lemass in terms of great esteem and affection despite his being on the anti-treaty side of the civil war.

A most despicable calumny appears in the final paragraph of the Senator's letter. It explicitly accuses Minister Lenihan and presumable all of Fianna Fail of not sharing the ethos of the men who founded the state and declared a republic. That the Senator questions the policies of Fianna Fail is not at issue but at a time of national crisis to question implicitly Minister Lenihan's patriotism in this underhand manner and to stoke the fires of civil war goes too far.

I am quite sure my grandfather would applaud the decision to invite Minister Lenihan to speak at the commemoration of the death of his illustrious uncle. The men and women of my grandfather's generation, on both sides of the Civil War, had every reason to hate their fellow countrymen. Yet they managed to put aside that hatred for the good of their country and came to respect and even admire their erstwhile civil war opponents. Surely it is time that the Senator did the same.

Patrick Martin

A Comment

A similar letter, which Patrick Martin sent to the *Irish Examiner*, did receive publication. While the letter above was not published, the following letter did appear in *The Irish Times*.

The letter below is the type of letter which *The Irish Times* much prefers. It denigrates both the pro- and anti-Treaty traditions in the country. The subtext is that we're all awful and we should apologise for the state we've left the country in and return it to Queen Betty.

And so Bodenstown (i.e. the Wolfe Tone commemoration) is a farce (presumably because of Fianna Fail's presence at it). But let us make a farce of Beal na mBlath by having Fianna Fail at that as well. It is obviously a good thing to "blaspheme the cause and disgrace the memory of those they commemorate".

And, of course, "Irish political life is beyond parody and satire".

The last couple of words are a reference to Samuel Johnson's dictum: "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel".

It is a perfect summary of *The Irish Times* view of the world.

"Senator Liam Twomey (August 12th) is unhappy that a Fianna Fáil minister is addressing the annual Béal na mBláth commemoration, and states that Brian Lenihan's speech will give Fianna Fáil an aura of acceptability that they will only abuse.

I disagree. Fianna Fáil has the annual farce at Bodenstown. Let them have Béal na mBláth as well. Let them continue to blaspheme the cause and disgrace the memory of those they commemorate, while once again showing that Irish political life is beyond parody and satire.

We have all moved on since the Civil War. "The Republican Party" are welcome to their last refuge.

Mark McGrail"

tongue-in-cheek, de Valera gave Churchill "all credit" for successfully resisting the temptation to "have violated our neutrality", he would have known from Gallagher how much that temptation would have been countered by the increasing accuracy of Betjeman's Intelligence reports, both personal and professional.

The question is no longer whether Betjeman was a British spy. What must now be asked is whether or not he was a spy who was "turned".

In Betjeman's personal correspondence, as edited by his daughter Candida, there is a strange letter from him to Frank Gallagher, dated 28th February 1946, in which he deferentially accepted editorial direction from Gallagher on a draft manuscript in much the same way as four years previously he himself had given editorial direction in respect of a manuscript drafted by his Intelligence recruit P.J. Musgrove. The footnote by Betjeman's daughter is as intriguing as it is enlightening:

"In F.G.'s capacity as head of the Information Services and writer on Irish politics, it seems that he got JB to write on Anglo-Irish relations in a positive way for some sort of public exposure. It is uncertain what came of it."

It is unlikely that Betjeman became a double agent in the sense of also spying for Ireland. Rather it was the case that, as an Intelligence agent reporting accurately on Ireland, such good British Intelligence was itself the best Irish propaganda. So convinced did Betjeman himself become of the merits of this propaganda, that he was prepared to continue producing it upon his return to Britain. He was not so much "turned" as "won over".

There is nonetheless one example of Intelligence provided to Dublin, and revealed in Fisk's book, in which the hand of Betjeman can be guessed at. Within a few days of de Valera's reply to Churchill, the latter's son Randolph informed Frank Gallagher that his father "didn't like it and ... was very quiet for a long time after hearing it". It is quite extraordinary to think that Randolph Churchill would lay bare before the Irish Government just how successful they had been in demoralising his own father and Prime Minister. It becomes less puzzling when one recalls that Randolph and Betjeman were life-long friends, having shared a house together in the 1930s.

But it is as a propagandist that Betjeman himself continued to work in Ireland's interest. On 8th June 1945 Betjeman wrote from his Berkshire home to Geof-

frey Taylor that "I spend a lot of time defending Dev here, for his consistency, if not for his tact". Yet, as if in anticipation, Betjeman had already replied publicly to Churchill's charges against de Valera and Ireland—four months before his Prime Minister had even delivered his victory speech! In the *Daily Herald*, on 24th January 1945, Betjeman wrote:

"The Irish are not mad and spooky and vague and dreamy, as some of them would have us think, but extremely logical. It is we who are the other things ... If you remember this and read the story of *Eamon de Valera* by M.J. MacManus you will be starting on the right foot ... Neither world wars, economic wars, nor even the sentence of death that we once imposed on him (de Valera), have deterred him. Inevitably, Mr. Mac Manus's book is concerned with what will seem parochial matters to those outside Ireland, but when 'Dev' emerges as President of the League of Nations we get a glimpse of his greatness. The book is adulatory, as any biography must be which is written while its subject is living by one of his supporters. But it will dispel many illusions. You will see that de Valera is no Nazi, no sympathiser with Germany, no bomb-thrower, and I suspect that he regrets the old hatred of England which once made doubly difficult our negotiations for a working basis with Ireland—a basis which de Valera, on his terms, still earnestly desires. The history of the English in Ireland does not make elevating reading ... There is reason for this hate. Irish history is full of 'If only England had'..."

Nothing of what can be said in Betjeman's favour applies to Nicholas Mansergh. While Betjeman had been won over to work both with and for Gallagher, Mansergh was working against Gallagher with a vengeance. *The Emergency—Neutral Ireland 1939-45*, the 2006 book by Brian Girvin, has a chapter entitled "Irish Volunteers in the British Armed Forces". Girvin reveals how Mansergh was at the very heart of a particularly vindictive British dirty tricks operation against Ireland's interests. Indeed, the author would seem to share the premise of Mansergh's whispering campaign: that Ireland needed to be punished for its neutrality, by having it portrayed as anything but friendly:

"For the duration of the War and for a long time after highly inflated figures were circulated for propaganda reasons by the Irish government and its supporters in many parts of the world. It was in the interests of the Irish government and its supporters to enhance the numbers who had volunteered from Éire and deflate those who had come from Northern Ireland. Implied though never overtly

stated was the suggestion that despite Irish neutrality Éire made a major contribution to the Allied war effort and therefore should not be disadvantaged because of its neutrality...

"Someone as level-headed as Seán Lemass told one British visitor in 1943 that there were 100,000 Irish men in the British armed forces and a further 100,000 in civilian work... The estimates escalated as the war came to an end. In Dublin Sir John Maffey came to the conclusion that Frank Gallagher, head of the Government Information Service and de Valera's confidant, was orchestrating a campaign to present Irish neutrality in the best possible light, especially in the United States. On 2 August 1945 Maffey had a bad-tempered exchange with him during which Gallagher argued that the Allies were wrong to assert that Irish neutrality had affected the outcome of the War. Gallagher promoted the view that Irish neutrality had not disadvantaged the British or the United States in any way, indeed that its impact had either been even-handed or positive for the Allies. British officials believed that the Irish campaign during 1945 had been effective... Not long after the War ended one British diplomat reported that a clergyman preaching at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin at an armistice commemoration had used the figure of 160,000 volunteers... Even more remarkable for the Irish standpoint was a series of articles written by Randolph Churchill (Winston's son) which appeared in the *Irish Times* in November 1945. These articles had been commissioned by an American press syndicate to review the position of various countries at the end of the War... When Randolph Churchill came to Dublin to research his article, Irish officials went to considerable length to convince him that the Irish position in respect of neutrality had been the correct one. They had been so successful that there was some concern that Churchill's enthusiasm for the Irish cause might have been overdone..."

"The UK Dominions Office sought to counter Irish neutrality assertions but found reliable figures hard to come by... The need for reliable data increased as Frank Gallagher and the Irish diplomatic service circulated what were considered inflated figures to suit their interests. A decision was taken to revisit this issue and determine the exact numbers involved. The Home Office calculated that approximately 100,000 Irish nationals were working in British war industries, confirming (Irish Department of External Affairs Assistant Secretary Freddie) Boland's 1942 claim. At the end of 1944 the Dominions Office concluded that a 'very approximate' figure might be 40,000 to 70,000 in the armed services... The Dominions Office remained unsure how to proceed with the matter, though it was decided to work through the Ministry

of Information to deflate the Irish numbers being circulated... It was also decided that Britain could gain little from publication, but that informal circulation might temper the Irish case. This was thought an appropriate task for the Ministry of Information, which was authorised to confirm that volunteers from Éire numbered no more than 50,000, and that this was a generous estimate. The purpose was to counter Irish exaggeration. (N.E. Costar, Dominions Office, to Nicholas Mansergh, Empire Division, Ministry of Information, February 1945)"

In the case of John Betjeman, however, it had indeed been in Dublin that he grew up with the "*Bold Fenian men*". It was

through his increasing knowledge of Irish Republican anti-Fascism that he himself became an anti-Fascist. Having come to Dublin to serve England, his emerging objectivity led him—by way of contrast to Mansergh—to the wartime service of Ireland itself. In his farewell speech in Betjeman's honour, Frank Gallagher jokingly spoke of how Irishmen might wonder what on earth might be found to hurroo at in the other fellow. But when that other fellow had been Betjeman himself, Gallagher had every reason to hurroo.

(concluded)

Manus O'Riordan

immoral as provoking a war against a harmless nation which has as good a right to a navy as you have? If you wish to compete with German trade, work harder. Balfour: That would mean lowering our standard of living. Perhaps it would be simpler for us to have a war. White: I am shocked that you of all men should enunciate such principles. Balfour (again lightly): Is it a question of right or wrong? Maybe it is just a question of keeping our supremacy" (Henry White and Allan Nevins, *Thirty Years of American Diplomacy*, p257-8).

That account sums up entirely what the attitude of the British State (or those who counted within it) was to Germany's commercial competition in the decade leading up to the Great War.

Naval Warfare

In his chapter on naval warfare from the book *A Great Sacrifice—Cork Servicemen who died in the Great War*, Mr. Mark Cronin commemorates the participation of Irishmen in the naval war against Germany and Turkey. And this event is taken for granted as something that just happened—in the order of "*ours not to reason why ours just to do or die*". However, this naval war may never have taken place if the Irish Parliamentary Party and the Liberal backbenchers had fully exposed the secret dealings of the Liberal Cabinet during the decade before it was launched.

Prior to the production of the Bill for Irish Home Rule in 1912, and before the Irish and Liberals entered into battle with the Unionists over it, the opposition to war could have derailed the secret preparations that the Liberal Imperialist cabal in the British Government, in alliance with France and Russia, were making to destroy Germany.

But the efforts of the Opposition were to fail—or rather their efforts were to be diverted into the great struggle for Irish Home Rule which, in itself, helped produce the Great War on Germany in something of a symbiosis. This is because, whilst the Home Rule struggle became a diversion to the eyes of those who were threatening to interfere with the planning of the Great War on Germany, the threatened cataclysmic culmination of the Home Rule struggle that subsequently developed produced a necessary diversion on the part of the British State in the shape of the intervention in the European war that was threatening—so as to avoid the Home Rule cataclysm by making the European war into the Great War it became through

Part Two

British participation.

That war was very much the product of English commercial jealousy of Germany and it was motivated by the fear that, given a level playing field in the world, the German talent and expertise for business would gradually result in commercial primacy over England. That is the underlying sense that runs through hundreds of British Imperial views at the time, from politicians, businessmen, the press and other agents of state.

The commercial primacy of another power in the world aside from the British Empire was not the situation that the Royal Navy had been built for. The Royal Navy had been constructed, and made the most powerful military force on earth, in order to protect the British commercial dominance of the world market. If Germany or America had obtained dominance in the world trade, the British navy would surely not have stood idly by facilitating it.

Just before The Hague Conference on Disarmament (failed) was to meet in 1907, Henry White, the American Ambassador to Italy, was charged by the American Secretary of State to go to London to ascertain confidentially the views of the British Government as to the discussions of Disarmament at The Hague.

Allan Nevins, the biographer of White, records a conversation overheard by White's daughter, between Balfour and her father:

"Balfour (somewhat lightly): We are probably fools not to find a reason for declaring war on Germany before she builds too many ships and takes away our trade. White: You are a very high-minded man in private life. How can you possibly contemplate anything so politically

This was the period of the naval scare in Britain, when concern about German shipbuilding reached frenzy, and a panic developed that the German Navy would soon be a match for the Royal Navy. Although Germany was building warships at a rate no faster than laid down in the Naval Law of 1900-1, and well below that of England, Tories kept up a barrage of propaganda about the danger from German naval expansion. The naval scares and panics induced a general fear across the country about Germany spies, invasion etc. And in this climate Grey and his Liberal Imperialist colleagues bullied the Gladstonian section of the Party, which was anti-war and anti-spending, into agreeing to pay for the arms race—"*two keels to one*".

In 1910 Germany had the smallest navy of any of the great powers and only half the number of dreadnoughts that England, Japan, or the United States possessed. Between 1900 and 1913 England spent £481,505,000 on her navy; France spent £197,612,000; Russia spent £173,449,000 and Germany spent £248,757,000. (See Charles James O'Donnell, *The Irish Future With The Lordship Of The World*, pp186-201, for a good analysis of the respective strengths of the navies of the great Powers.)

General von Bernhardt, whose work—given the title *Germany And The Next War* when it was published in England in 1914 for the purposes of showing aggressive intent from the 'Prussians'—wrote in 1911, of the effect that the British 'two keels to one' policy was actually having in Germany:

"If we consider this behavior in connection with England's military preparations, there can be no doubt that England seriously contemplates attacking Germany should the occasion arise. The concentration of the English naval forces

in the North Sea, the feverish British haste to increase the English fleet, the construction of new naval stations, undisguisedly intended for action against Germany... the English espionage, lately vigorously practiced, on the German coasts, combined with continued attempts to enlist allies against us and to isolate us in Europe—all this can only be reasonably interpreted as a course of preparation for an aggressive war. At any rate, it is quite impossible to regard the English preparations as defensive and protective measures only; for the English government knows perfectly well that Germany cannot think of attacking England: such an attempt would be objectless from the first" (p231).

This book was published with a title that suggested Germany was bent on war when it was written with almost the opposite intention.

The Times said in 1924 (when it was safe to tell the truth):

"The responsibility for the consequent increase in the British fleet was ascribed solely to the German armaments. In reality, however, Germany was building no faster than the rate laid down in the Naval Law of 1900. The Liberal Cabinet of Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey painted the German danger in the blackest colours, in order to goad their unwilling followers into increased sacrifices. It was the year of the Navy Scare, the fleet panic. British newspapers, theatres, cinemas, scared 'the man in the street' with the bogey of a German invasion" (*The Times*, 23 October, 1924.)

Much of the working up of the naval scare was done by the Tory Press which believed that the Liberal Government was not up to the task of destroying the German commercial threat. But London society was a small and inter-related place and there would have been Tories 'in the know' about the secret preparations for war that the Liberal Imperialists were engaged in (along with the indispensable Unionist-minded military men who were carrying out these plans).

This whole situation produced a great volatility in political life in Britain, since senior Tories would have been aware of the dirty little secret of the Liberal Imperialist cabal but would have gone along with the naval scare to make life difficult for the Liberal Cabinet in relation to its own backbenchers. And at the same time the Liberal Imperialists would have been unable to declare what they were really doing in relation to war preparations in fear of their own backbenchers.

By 1910 suspicions began to appear in the rank and file of the Liberal Party that

the Cabinet was engaged in secret alliances with Russia and France and was preparing for war against Germany behind the back of Parliament. John Dillon (still acting as an English Radical before the Irish Home Rule Bill was produced by Asquith) tore the First Lord, Reginald McKenna to shreds in the Commons over the misleading of the country in these affairs.

Francis Neilson, an English Liberal MP at the time, later wrote:

"Dillon was, perhaps, the best informed man in the highest about what was taking place in France and Russia. After the general election of 1910... Dillon questioned Asquith and Grey as to our commitments and what secret pacts have been made with our allies. Satisfactory answers were not forthcoming as it was not in the public interest to give the information. Still, in each reply made by ministers, there was a denial of secret pacts and a repudiation of all notions that we were committed to send an army to France" (*The Churchill Legacy*, p106).

In the 1911 debate over the increased Naval Estimates, John Dillon actually exposed the great secret of Liberal Imperialist Foreign Policy to Parliament—and where it was leading. But at the same time he indicated that the coming of the Home Rule struggle was encouraging the Irish Party and the Liberal backbenchers to turn a blind-eye to it. Here is the relevant extract from the debate:

"Mr. Dillon said that the Government must not suppose that the figures in the division that night any more than on the last Monday night really showed the state of feeling either in the House or in the country, but there was hanging over the House a dominant issue which had made the Irish Party—and he believed the majority of the Radical party—resolve that they would do nothing which would in any way weaken or discredit the Government until that great issue was disposed of. Although it was a bitter dose, they were prepared to swallow measures which if they were free they would oppose to the bitterest extremity... The two Power Standard was now a commonplace expression... What was the origin of the two Power Standard? It was invented against Russia and France, but since then there had been established an *entente* with France and an agreement with Russia. The result, however, was not to get rid of the two Power Standard or any diminution of armaments. The Russian agreement was spoken of as a great instrument of peace, but there was immediately an unparalleled jump in the armaments of this country. They were now told they must have the three Power Standard, because the Opposition had declared that there was no safety unless they prepared against the Triple Alliance. Did they propose to fight the Triple

Alliance single handed? Was not language of the kind used by the Opposition calculated to convey the impression that was what they were preparing for? (Ministerial cheers). What about France? He thought that one of the glories of the British Government was that it formed the *entente* with France.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE—It is not the same as an alliance.

Mr. DILLON said that was so, and some members of the House had a very uneasy feeling that there was a secret alliance with France... The charge that the honorable member made against the Government was of yielding to influences which no Liberal Ministers ought ever to yield. They came down to the House and on misleading information, induced their Party by promoting a scare to agree to expense beyond all necessary requirements. Ministers had said that Germany had recently and surreptitiously entered upon a policy of acceleration in order to get ahead of England and set the country on fire... All that occurred showed Germany... had acted throughout in perfect good faith, and that it was impossible to acquit the British Government of having acted in a provocative manner. It was no wonder that the German Government should be suspicious and hostile to them. The only party who had the right to complain in the whole course of this transaction was the German Government." (*Freeman's Journal*, 17 March 1911.)

Arthur Lee was the Unionist spokesman on naval affairs. In 1905, when a Sea Lord at the British Admiralty, he said in an after-dinner speech, widely reported in the German Press, that he would have no hesitation in destroying the German Navy before even bothering to declare war.

Perhaps he had spent time in the company of Admiral Jackie Fisher. Because it was common knowledge in Royal Navy circles that Fisher wanted to "*Copenhagen*" the German fleet—a reference to Nelson's bombardment of Copenhagen and the destruction of the neutral Dutch fleet in 1807 without warning—if he was allowed the opportunity.

Fisher, according to his Memoirs, had even pleaded with the King to use his influence with the politicians to give him the go-ahead and prevent the war he knew the Cabinet was planning to wage on Germany—and which Fisher realized would be costly in both blood and treasure. Admiral Fisher knew that all the talk of Germany building such a powerful navy that it would dominate the seas was nonsense and he was becoming increasingly '*brassed off*' with the criticism of his navy. Having a logical mind Fisher reasoned that, if the politicians were so concerned

with the growing naval strength of Germany, then the logical thing to do was to cut off its development in a preventative attack so that a catastrophe might be avoided in the future. But Fisher did not count on the fact that the Liberal Imperialists had bigger fish to fry than the German Navy.

The important point in John Dillon's intervention in the Commons was that, because of the alliances constructed with France and Russia, the Two-Power Standard was really no longer applicable or justifiable. The understandings with Russia and France gave the Triple Entente a battleship strength of four times that of Germany. But the Liberal Party did not see it this way because it did not know—or did not want to know—that the 'understandings' between England France and Russia were, to all intents and purposes the alliances of a war coalition. So Dillon's incisive questioning of the need for soaring Naval Expenditure was not followed up and no subsequent opposition of real consequence emerged within the Liberal Party to what was being done.

There is a clue to why this was in the first part of Dillon's speech. The "*dominant issue*" Dillon referred to, which prevented more vigorous opposition being mounted to the Naval Estimates was the Parliament Act, which was to open the way for Home Rule. There was a general drawing together of the disparate elements within the Liberal Party, and an Irish Party acquiescence, which enabled the Liberal Imperialist coterie to get their way. And this process of doing "*nothing which would in any way weaken or discredit the Government*" accelerated with the introduction of the Home Rule Bill.

In the same debate Swift MacNeill, another Irish Member, made a very telling point to the House of Commons in relation to British Foreign Policy and war:

"From generation to generation, you have allowed treaties involving the highest international obligations—involving questions of peace and war—to be taken absolutely out of the hands of the House. It is no exaggeration to say, so far as international policy is concerned, you have rendered the House as little effectively powerful as any man walking over Westminster Bridge. Over and over again treaties involving matters of life and death, involving questions of first-class importance, have been ratified behind the back of Parliament."

It had been the fear of the democracy obstructing the traditional conducting of foreign affairs and war that led to the

establishment of the Committee of Imperial Defence so that these things could be kept within the ambit of the traditional circles of power. Essentially the Liberal Imperialist development represented the same thing—the preventing of such matters falling into the hands of the democracy: a leading part of the Liberals made it known they were trustworthy and was then taken in and trusted with these affairs.

And so, when John Redmond concluded that the great British democracy had changed, he may have been right—but what he did not say, or could not say, was that this was largely an irrelevance in the important affairs of State that were to gather up his Party, and his heart's desire, into the maelstrom of war and spit them out when they were used up. Swift MacNeill and his colleagues in the Irish Party put their faith in British democracy when it indicated they would get their heart's desire and then could no longer see

any wrong or danger in it.

If Dillon and the Irish Party Members, with the Liberal backbenchers, had kept up their probing of the Liberal Government there may never have been a Great War in August 1914. However, the way in which both these potentially oppositional elements in Parliament were mollified was through the production of the Home Rule Bill for Ireland in 1912 and the consequent conflict with the Unionists, which drew all Liberals and Irish together and made them all dependent upon the Liberal Imperialist Cabinet who were, all the time, getting on with the planning of the war.

In this way Irish Home Rule and the Great War were inextricably linked and naval warfare was the main British component in waging it.

Pat Walsh

(In Part Three next month we examine the Berlin-Baghdad Railway in relation to British Naval Warfare)

DUNKIRK:

"The Truth Cannot Hurt The British Now" ¹

On 12th June 2010 in the series, "*Archive on 4*", BBC Radio 4 broadcast "*Monsieur Non*".² The hour-long programme was to mark General de Gaulle's historic speech, 18th June 1940,³ rallying his countrymen to resist German occupation.

In the event, Professor Jackson explored de Gaulle's psyche and his veto of UK's application to join the Common Market. He asserted: "*In fact it's not too far-fetched to suggest that De Gaulle's apparent perversity was at least partly responsible for Britain's long-standing ambivalent feelings towards Europe and the EU over the last fifty years*". From what followed, it appeared that it was neither "*Europe*" nor the "*EU*" which were the main objects of British ambivalence, but de Gaulle, a French patriot in 1940 and in 1963, and his beloved France.

"*Monsieur Non*" began with comics satirizing de Gaulle and his veto, but two sentences suggested an older enmity. Harold Macmillan's affront: "***The French will always betray you in the end***", was followed sixty-nine seconds later by the assertion: "***In 1940, the French armies had been humiliatingly defeated in a battle that lasted barely six weeks***".

The latter remained, stark, brutal and without manifest justification.

THE ALLIES, 1939-40⁴

France had military allies, Poland, Britain, its colonies and Commonwealth.⁵ Dixon⁶ identified fundamental common weaknesses; for example all "*cherished a pathetic belief*" in the cavalry charge.

"In that respect it might truly be said that their ideas were eighty years out of date, since the futility of cavalry charges had been shown as far back as the American Civil War—although horse-minded soldiers contrived to shut their eyes to the lesson.^{7,8,9} In the event Poland, for all her forty divisions and twelve large cavalry brigades, was overrun by Germany in less than one month."

"Likewise the French, though possessing many tanks which were as good as ... those of the Germans, were steadfast in their belief that horsed cavalry could destroy German armour in the Ardennes. (For this reason they refused to accept the suggestion that felled trees might be used to delay the German advance.) Like the Poles, they were sadly disillusioned about the outcome of a conflict between horses and tanks."¹⁰

He also challenged allied military intelligence:

"On January 10th 1940, a German aircraft carrying the liaison officer of the 2nd Air Fleet lost its way and crash-landed in Belgium. By an extraordinary chance the officer was in possession of the complete operational plan for Ger-

many's attack on the West. He tried to burn the Plan but failed to complete this task before he was captured. In this way, its contents became known to the Allies.¹¹

"Hitler's response was to devise a new plan, which involved attacking France through the Ardennes rather than through Belgium as originally intended. This episode was damaging to the Allies for two reasons.

"Firstly, in the belief that the captured plan was a deliberate deception, they failed to modify their own plans.

"Secondly, contrary to advice received years earlier, they clung to the belief that the wooded area of the Ardennes was impassable to tanks."¹²

THE ALLIANCE AND BELGIUM

On 4th November 1939, the Secretary of State for War noted: "*Belgium had, ever since 1936, adopted an attitude of strict neutrality and was at the utmost pains not to engage in any Staff conversations that might be misconstrued by the Germans.*"¹⁴

Once attacked by Germany, 10th May 1940,¹⁵ the Belgians joined France and Britain and the "*three armies fought side by side, but with different objectives*".¹⁶

* The Belgians were fighting to defend Belgium and thought they should surrender if that proved impossible.

* The French wanted to counter-attack away from Belgium into France, and regarded surrender as a regrettable necessity that might come if that counter-attack failed.

* The British refused to think about surrender, but planned to "*get away to England*".¹⁷

"On 19th May the British government learnt that Gort¹⁸ was preparing to retreat to the sea".¹⁹ (Calder affirmed this, but was not precise as to date.²⁰) Gort was ordered to attack southwards, but persuaded the Chief of Imperial General Staff that it was impossible. He—

"thus initiated the end of the Anglo-French alliance and saved the British army."

"By 25th {he} had abandoned any attempt to co-operate with the imaginary strategy of the supreme commander".²¹

Further,

"Gort's subordinates had not been briefed about the Allied chain of command or to take seriously the British government's order that they should co-operate with the French".²²

"Learning of the British decision {to cut and run} Leopold²³ capitulated on 27th May {sic},²⁴ making necessary some rapid deployment, particularly in Brooke's corps...."²⁵

Had he been so aware, he had few alternatives apart from surrender. Nonetheless, he was widely denounced.²⁶ With customary maleficence, Brooke described him as having "*little backbone and no inclination to assume the responsibilities, from which he could not escape*".²⁷ Within a few days, *The Times*²⁸ published an article by a former Ambassador to Belgium, which, while far from flattering Leopold, admitted that his patriotism and his dedication to Belgian neutrality were unquestioned, despite fears of being attacked by France and Germany.

The Belgian Government disavowed Leopold and decamped to London, "*bringing with them the riches of the Congo*".²⁹

"Since [Leopold's surrender] our³⁰ troops under General Blanchard and General Prioux in close collaboration with the British Army under Lord Gort has had to face increased danger."

"... Dunkirk was transformed into an entrenched camp firmly guarded by French marines.."

"The BEF and its French allies had withdrawn several miles to shorten the lines ... but were still intact."³¹

Boulogne and Calais had been lost, despite British intervention. On 22nd May two battalions of Foot Guards, with support, landed at Boulogne; the Germans attacked and on 24th the Guards withdrew³² without informing the French and under cover from a "*panic stricken rabble*" {the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps}. "*The Guards, everyone agreed, were magnificent!*" On leaving, the Royal Navy fired inadvertently on the French; then sunk a block ship in the harbour mouth, ensuring that the French, "*who fought so gallantly*" could neither be supplied nor rescued by sea.

On the night of 23rd May, Canadian Major-General MacNaughton visited Calais and Dunkirk; he "*could not agree to send his country's first and best fighting men into hopeless action*".^{33 34}

The "Allies" then held territory of 70 kilometres of coast around Dunkirk; to Lille about 125 kilometres inland, "where the main battle was fought". Leading authorities agreed that the British "*retreat was made possible by the last stand of the French First Army round Lille*".^{35 36 37 38}

³⁹

Lord Strabolgi's⁴⁰ assessment was fair, if a little fulsome:

"I wish to begin, and I am sure I speak for the whole of your Lordships, by paying tribute to the gallantry of those French divisions, especially those round Lille under General Prioux,⁴¹ who rallied, inflicted terrible losses on their ruthless

enemy, and made possible this magnificent withdrawal of our own men and certain of the Belgian survivors. No praise is too high for our French Allies, and never must it be heard for one moment, in your Lordships' House or elsewhere, that there was a failure of the French soldier."⁴²

Then he addressed the inadequacies of the British Government's actions:

"How has this thing happened, my Lords? I have had the honour of speaking with some of the men who have returned: the trouble was the lack of aeroplanes and of guns. That lack will be made good in the future. I felt great sympathy with my noble and learned friend Lord Caldecote in having to make the statement. What I say now does not give me any pleasure: a heavy responsibility lies on the shoulders of himself and his colleagues of the former Government for this lack of necessary equipment; and that is all I will say on this occasion."⁴³

It would be reasonable to expect that in the depths of defeat, news media and politicians would "close ranks".⁴⁴ Over 45 years it seems almost equally reasonable that patriotism be tempered with greater realism. In 1985, *The Times* effectively paid tribute to "*A French Feat of Arms*" by reproducing a report of 1940,⁴⁵ which recorded "*a splendid feat of arms of the French forces under the command of General Prioux, a considerable proportion of whom had hewn a path through enemy lines*".

"VOX POPULI"

"Personally, I feel happier that we have no allies to be polite & to pamper",⁴⁶ the King wrote to Queen Mary after the fall of France and in these sentiments was at one with the vast majority of his subjects.⁴⁷

Data collected by the Ministry of Information indicated that, of thirteen of its regional offices, six reported strong criticisms made by returning soldiers. The BEF's Director of Military Intelligence⁴⁸ General Mason-Macfarlane warned the ministry that "*for the sake of the British Army's reputation, ... the blame for Dunkirk should be placed where it belonged—on the French and on the British politicians*". In an anonymous broadcast of 29th May 1940, he departed from his script and made good his threat; he was "*warned off the air*".⁴⁹

(Mason-Macfarlane appears to have held one, senior "battle-front" command. On 17th May, 1940 Gort, worrying about his right flank, appointed Mason-Macfarlane to command a "scratch force to defend it". Thus Gort weakened the BEF's intelligence and general effectiveness.⁵⁰)

"UNCONQUERABLE FIDELITY"

Ponting's *Churchill* utilised unimpeachable historical sources to illustrate British duplicity.⁵¹

"Britain's chances of fighting on were immeasurably improved by the rescue of most of the BEF from Dunkirk, although the manner in which this was achieved further worsened relations with France. Churchill failed to tell Reynaud, when the latter was in London on 26 May, of the British decision to evacuate what they could of the BEF. A successful evacuation depended on maintaining a bridgehead and this depended on the French (and if possible the Belgians too) fighting on. The British were once again putting their own interests first, not those of the alliance. On 27 May Churchill told the Cabinet:

'It was clear that we could not allow the security of our Army to be compromised in order to save the First French Army.'"⁵²

"Two days later Churchill reinforced this message, telling his colleagues:

'British troops should on no account delay their withdrawal to conform with the French.'"⁵³

CONCLUSIONS

The British predicament in 1940 is usually presented as one of self-preservation.⁵⁴ That may have been overstated, for, if Germany offered peace terms to Britain and to France: "*Even Churchill was prepared to cede part of the Empire to Germany, if a reasonable peace was on offer from Hitler.*"⁵⁵

On balance, Britain's desertion might be justified, but gross defamation of its allies and pious claims of divine intercession, cannot.

In the House of Commons, where "*miracle*" tended to be used ironically, Churchill proclaimed modestly: "*A miracle of deliverance, achieved by valour, by perseverance, by perfect discipline, by faultless service, by resource, by skill, by unconquerable fidelity,*"⁵⁶ is manifest to us all."⁵⁷ And three sentences later: "*We must be very careful not to assign to this deliverance the attributes of a victory.*"⁵⁸

Later, he told the House:

"Belgium invaded and beaten down; our own fine Expeditionary Force, which King Leopold called to his rescue, cut off and almost captured, escaping as it seemed only by a miracle and with the loss of all its equipment; our Ally, France, out; Italy in against us...."⁵⁹

Members were inspired: "*Who can say to what extent a miracle has been wrought to save the right and to save those powers, who support the right? It is a profound*

mistake for Ministers or even for Members of this House to address the nation in terms which seem inconsistent with the highest conception of Christianity:"⁶⁰ and another: "*Stress has been laid to-night on material resources. I want to lay emphasis on spiritual values. What a miracle happened at Dunkirk following immediately on our first day of National Prayer.*"⁶¹

In addition to the temporal interventions mentioned above, on 24th May Hitler ordered his armies to halt for two crucial days.⁶² 63 64 65

Ruairí Ó Domhnaill

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- ² Presented by Professor Julian Jackson, of Queen Mary University of London.
- ³ Paradoxically, there is no recording of the speech. A contributor to "*Monsieur Non*" held that the speech was not considered sufficiently important; another source: that it was recorded but considered too bellicose by Churchill, who feared that it might jeopardise peace with Germany and he ordered it to be destroyed. (v.p.)
- ⁴ Scruton, "*Dictionary of Political Thought*" 1982 p.13, saw this "*Alliance*" as an exceptional type.
- ⁵ except Ireland.
- ⁶ Norman Dixon, professor emeritus, psychologist and former Regular Army officer.
- ⁷ LIDDELL HART, B.H. *History of the Second World War*. London, Pan Books, 1973, p.21.
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- ¹² *The Times* Saturday January 13 1940 p.8 Col. A.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ MINNEY, R.J., [Ed.] *The private papers of Hore-Belisha*. London, Collins, 1960, p.254.
- ¹⁵ *The Times*, May 11, 1940; p.6; col.A.
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- ¹⁷ HARMAN, N. *Dunkirk: the necessary myth*. London, Coronet Books, 1981, pp.58-9.
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- ²⁰ CALDER, A. *The people's war: Britain 1939-1945*. London Pimlico, 1992, p.106.
- ²¹ Taylor 1992 op. cit. p.485, p.486.
- ²² Harman 1981 op. cit. p.103.
- ²³ Leopold III, King of the Belgians.
- ²⁴ 28th May *The Times*, May 29, 1940; p.6; col.A.: May 8, 1945 p.4 col.A.
- ²⁵ CARVER, M. [Field Marshal Lord Carver] *Britain's army in the twentieth century*. London, Pan Books, 1999, p.183.
- ²⁶ Calder 1992 op. cit. p.93.

²⁷ FRASER, D. *Alanbrooke*. London Harper Collins, 1997 p.122. cf. Harman 1981 op. cit. p.93.

²⁸ *The Times*, May 31, 1940; p.7; col.G: *The Failure of A King* by Sir Robert Clive.

²⁹ Taylor 1992 p.486 n.2.

³⁰ Although "*from Our Own Correspondent*", this appears to be a copy of a French report.

³¹ *The Times*, May 30, 1940; p.6; cols A & B: Eden Memoirs,

³² *The Times*, March 15, 1965; p.7; col.A.

³³ Harman 1981 op. cit. p.125-6.

³⁴ Churchill announced—perhaps tongue in cheek—"The Canadians had actually landed in France but have now been safely withdrawn, much disappointed, but in perfect order, with all their artillery and equipment." [HC Deb 18 June 1940 vol 362 c53].

³⁵ BARNETT, C. *The collapse of British power*. Stroud, Sutton Publishing, 1984 p.582.

³⁶ PONTING, C. *Churchill*. London, Sinclair-Stevenson, 1994, p.446.

³⁷ Carver 1999 op. cit. p.183.

³⁸ Liddell Hart 1973 op. cit. p.85.

³⁹ *The Times*, 1st June 1940, p.7 col.B.

⁴⁰ Labour Peer.

⁴¹ On 3rd June Prioux and Blanchard were honoured "*as testimony of the gratitude of the nation*". (*The Times*, Tuesday, 4th June 1940 p.5.col.C.) In 1943, Prioux was hailed as the general "*who took a prominent part in the battle of Dunkirk and who later adhered to the Vichy government, is to retire next week under age*". (*The Times*, Thursday, Jun 24, 1943; pg. 4; col.G.)

⁴² HL Deb 04 June 1940 vol 116 c459.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *The Times*, Jun 01, 1940; p.7; col.B.

⁴⁵ *The Times*, Jun 01, 1942; p.6; col.A.

⁴⁶ Royal Archives (Queen Mary's Collection) George VI to Queen Mary, 27th June 1940.

⁴⁷ WHEELER-BENNETT, J.W. *King George VI: his life and Reign*. London, Macmillan & Co. 1958, p.460.

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⁵¹ Ponting 1994 op. cit. pp.446-7.

⁵² CAB 65/13, WM(141)40, 27.5.40.

⁵³ CAB 65/13, WM(146)40, 29.5.40.

⁵⁴ Nonetheless, Parliament sat on just 24 days in May and June.

⁵⁵ PONTING, C. *1940: Myth and reality*. London, Hamish Hamilton, 1990 p.96, p.99.

⁵⁶ Emphasis added.

⁵⁷ HC Deb 04 June 1940 vol 361cc.790-1 e.g. *The Times*, News Jun 05, 1940; p.6; col.A: Editorial p.7; col B. Editorial: Jun 10, 1940; p.7; col B. News: Jun 29, 1940; p.4. col B.

⁵⁸ *Ibid* c.791.

⁵⁹ HC Deb 20 August 1940 vol.364 cc1132-274: c.1163.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* c.1213.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* c.1248: *The Times*, Jun 10, 1940; p.4; col C. letter: *National Prayer*.

⁶² KEEGAN, J. *The face of battle: a study of Agincourt, Waterloo and the Somme*. London, Pimlico, 1991 p.309.

⁶³ Taylor 1992 op. cit. p.486 fn.1.

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⁶⁵ *The Times*, May 30, 1940; p.6; cols. B&C Eden Memoirs.

Does
It
Up

Stack
?

[27 July 2010]

BPPLC

Though this particular oil company (whom Greenpeace does not even try to bark at) has been renamed BP for quite some time, it was interesting that when things started to go very wrong in the Gulf of Mexico that the Obama administration reverted to calling it "*British Petroleum*". What was very strange for me was listening to the British Prime Minister David Cameron, while visiting Washington recently, who also started using the terminology of America—much to the fury of Adam Bolton of Sky News who kept saying "*BP*" while interviewing him.

The other stark news for BP was that it sold a huge chunk of its company to another American oil company—political coercion most probably. And then David Cameron started calling Britain the "*minor partner*" in the so-called Special Relationship—much to the intense irritation of Bolton again, who really tore into the rather hapless Prime Minister. It is such a pity that the EU doesn't watch the new Obama Washington more closely in its dealings with Britain and get real about them continuing to be a competing currency and a source of mischief there. But then Germany and France seem to be sleep-walking into a gigantic mess—most of which has been created by the British.

Meanwhile out in the Gulf of Mexico BP is still hard at work on the sea-floor trying to stop the oil leak. They almost succeeded a few weeks ago, they said, but the oil is still flowing out. The international media has passed on the juicier stories and the fishermen around the area are left to deal with their broken lives and generations-old businesses. Some fishermen have already committed suicide in despair at the tarry muck and chemical dispersants that have enveloped their workplaces, their boats and their equipment. Tourist operators in the area are going broke. The environment is despoiled for several generations or more.

It has happened, it will have to be dealt with—it is being dealt with. But what does not stack up is that deepwater drilling is now known to be a process which technology has not yet caught up with and yet deep-water drilling is allowed and encouraged to continue unabated in several parts of the world. Particularly at risk are the

deep sub-ocean drillings in the Arctic area near earthquake fault lines. They seem to be determined at all costs to make money even if they wreck the planet. "*Climate change*" and "*Global Warming*" are just smoke screens for frightening us, but more importantly taxing us the people and keeping our focus away from the really destructive work of the big oil/gas trans-continent companies.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN IRELAND

The population of Ireland has increased over the past forty years but not at all as much proportionally as the numbers employed in the public service. It has been said that one in four people in the public service does the work and three in four see the work is done. This is certainly true for public service workers such as Council workers who work in the public eye: just look at a gang of Council workers the next time you are passing in the street—chances are three quarters of them are just standing there or leaning on a shovel while one-quarter of them actually do the work. Look into any public service office and all of those standing are not working. Then look at the empty desks. Some are at meetings (mostly not working) and others are absentees who are not working. "*Not working*" is an endemic culture in the public service and it is almost all due to very bad management at the top.

There are archaic work practices also such as the man to make the fire for the tea and the man to do the digging which is now done by a hired JCB. It's not long ago that every artillery team in the Defence Forces had a man just standing near the gun. What was he there for? One man for every piece of artillery—he was there to hold the horses! The horses had not been there for 100 years but the man was still there to hold them! The multitude of clerks needed when every memo and every letter was done in copperplate handwriting are all still in the public service offices footling around. They do not know why they are there. They are there to make up the numbers because the managers up top want a multitude of subordinates to define the manager's importance.

It would be a great idea if the book 'Parkinson's Law' was to be published again and widely distributed to the public. "*Work takes up the time available for its completion.*" It would be another great idea if all public service management jobs were to be open to public advertisements so that the jobs could be filled by the most competent people as is done in the private sector. And most jobs in middle management in the public service could be left unfilled and abolished when they became vacant. Any manager worth his salt can manage up to ten subordinates and no County Council nor Department of State needs more than ten divisions to be managed.

THE IRISH ECONOMY

Entrepreneurs, big and small are well able to manage their own resources if they were left to do so and if encouraged by the public service and the Trade Unions. But there is an anti-entrepreneur climate in the Public Service and the Trade Unions. Entrepreneurs are seen as the enemy. For example, one entrepreneur, a farmer, who wants to sell packaged free-range hen's eggs, is waiting for his proposed trade to be certified as being in the food industry. Simple, you would think? But not so! The Department of Agriculture has so far spent five months deliberating on whether hen's eggs can be classified as "food" or not for the purpose of issuing a certificate to trade!

Likewise with planning permission for tourist-related developments. It may make some sense to have Industrial Zones for factories to congregate near power and water supplies and waste disposal but what is the logic of declaring an area to be scenic and a "*heritage area*" if difficulties are then erected against entrepreneurs who want to provide facilities for people to enjoy these scenic and heritage areas?. Landscaping has now made the provision of such facilities possible without any detracting from the scenery. For example, Cork County Council is to be congratulated on the development of The Old Head of Kinsale where the hotel, restaurant, bar, shops and golf club is almost invisible when viewed from landwards or seawards and the development has added enormously to the tourism of the area. This example should be followed all over Ireland in a positive drive to provide world-class tourism products to suit all levels of tourist spending.

The fishing industry, which is closely allied to tourism, should be encouraged by having no quotas applicable to fishing boats of twenty-five metres or less. One of these boats will support five or six families as well as supporting onshore back-up-businesses. If such encouragement was given to boats based in, and fishing out of and landing fish in, ports on the south and west coasts from Carnsore Point to Moville in Donegal there would be a great economic stimulus. The fishermen would do the rest. Last Sunday on RTE at 8.30 (25th July 2010) there was a new programme titled *Skippers*. We followed four boats fishing our seas and it was heartbreaking to see them having to throw back *dead cod* because of the mad-quota system. One skipper said it was just heartrending thinking of all the starvation in the world and here we were throwing fine cod—which cannot be bought in the shops/

restaurants though it is by far the most popular fish here.

Our Government thinks the produce of our seas are negligible and don't factor them into discussions with the other EU members who laugh at our ignorance. Just sail towards France, Spain etc. and there are literally hundreds of small boats bringing in their catch in early mornings for their local markets. Fish is huge business. Then watch our Taoiseach, Brian Cowen, TD talk nonsense about job-creation with his public service mentality and *know* it is not going to happen. All our other political parties are the same, so watch RISE (Rural Ireland Says Enough) and see the coming back-lash.

One other thing—try and watch 'Skip-pers' because it is on for the next four Sunday nights. Some of you may learn something about our rich marine heritage though something tells me it won't be a hit with you Dubliners. All the urbanites think of, along with those *eonsuchs* the Greens, is the survival of predator species introduced back into our county at considerable cost and between bats and bloody seals who are now so huge in numbers that if they are not culled soon will see our salmon stocks completely plundered.

Complementary to the fishing would be the encouragement of entrepreneurs or Local Councils to build small marinas in most bays around Ireland's coasts in the Portugal model. All along the coast of Portugal, and also in north-west Spain, a huge number of small marinas have been built, availing of EU grants and State grants, and a feature of most of those marinas is that although they are for yachts, they also must allocate spaces to local small-boat fishermen (usually boats up to twelve metres in length maximum) which ensures local employment and a year-round supply of fish and shell-fish for the tourist restaurants—which attract the yachting people who spend in the local shops to supply their boats with fresh produce. All very sustainable and it all stacks up to a good economic model that will only keep growing.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

What does not stack up is the Government's "*successful*" car scrappage scheme. Ireland has no car manufacturer. Any economy must know that to succeed economically, the State must export more goods and services than it imports. Cars have to be imported and it was a hopelessly wrong policy for the Government to introduce the car-scrappage scheme to help its friends in the motor industry. Just think of it—if a man who has been made redundant comes home to his wife or *vice*

CALLELY continued

not a team player. In December 2005 he was forced to resign his Ministerial position and move to the backbenches. The clear message that went out to his voters was that this was not a loyal FF man, this was not a team player. The FF voter being what he is, Callely's earlier massive vote disappeared, and in the 2007 Election he lost his seat

After losing his seat, Ahern appointed him to the Senate. This astonished everyone, including and perhaps most of all local FF. But Ahern, the conciliator, also saw Callely, for all his faults, as the type who could retake a seat for FF in the very un-FF, Redmondite cricket-playing world of Clontarf, and this was his reason.

Callely is not a typical politician, let alone a very typical FF one. His fiddling of expenses is of a kind with the rest of his career. I do not agree that "*everyone is at it*". This is simply not the case. His colleagues, non-FF opponents etc. all regard him as a political aberration. His unscrupulousness and Mé Féinism are legendary in FF, and even in other parties locally people held Seán Haughey in high esteem while regarding Callely as something of a dog. This included, as I know, Richard

versa and hands their partner a hammer and says "*Darling go out and trash the car because I have been laid off*". It is idiotic. And that's what the Government did to thousands of cars. We are poorer for the loss of the cars and even poorer again for the costs of importing the new cars. The scrappage-policy has "*succeeded*" in only increasing Ireland's imports and thereby increasing our debt!

DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE AND HIS IRISH ESTATE LISMORE CASTLE

The Duke of Devonshire must be quaking in his Barbour Wellingtons. Not that long ago, the locals got a bit uppity and asked him for his deeds. At that time he was not only claiming ownership of the Blackwater and its stocks of rich salmon and trout but also the sea-bed off Youghal. When it came to the crunch, he couldn't find them and told the natives that his ownership of his Irish estates go back to the Magna Carta. As Ireland isn't even mentioned in that piece of English parchment—it was thought that the Duke was trying to pull a fast one but it was left go for the moment.

Not so the Spanish. The Duke of Welling-

ton (FG) and Derek McDowell (Labour). Callely is simply in a category of his own, and while Dan Boyle and others are being very polite in their comments on the situation, they all treat him as such.

I am sure many politicians make the best of their expenses. But in many cases this is not least to fund the expensive, intense constituency activity required in a multi-seat PR system (Tony Gregory was one of the highest recipient of expenses in the last Dáil). I do not believe that the outrageous behaviour of Callely in this regard is typical of anyone but himself. If he had been claiming expenses for political purposes (like Gregory), I don't think people would have had such a problem with it.

But the sense was that in Callely's case it was purely personal enrichment. To find a comparison, you would have to go to Westminster where the boys and girls were paying off mortgages, building duck ponds etc. and charging it all to the expenses system in a different league to anything uncovered in the Oireachtas. But then RTE and *The Irish Times* do not encourage us to dwell on that . . .

Good riddance to Callely!

Philip O'Connor

ton after Blucher defeated Napoleon decided to go for a vast estate in Andalucia which his family has been occupying "illegally" for the last 200 years. Now the local town-hall is preparing a legal challenge over the ownership of the 850 hectare *hacienda* which they say the British family of Arthur Wellesley has no right to.

The Dehesa Baja estate has been in the family for nine generations and Prince Charles has hunted partridges there in the 1970s while courting Lady Jane Wellesley, the daughter of the eighth Duke of Wellington, the 94-year old current holder of the title. But local historian Miguel Angel Espejo has unearthed evidence he claims that shows the family has no legal right to occupy the land. "*The 1813 decree which gave the first Duke of Wellington two areas of land in Granada makes no reference to Dehesa Baja*", he said.

Socialist mayor of Illora, Francisco Domene, 33 is launching a legal bid. "We are fighting so the people can enjoy the land and use the land which belongs to them." Youghal is watching closely as is the present Duke of Devonshire.

Michael Stack. ©

CALLELY continued

class vote (its slender base)—and also the local working class FF vote—always favoured the idea of an FF-Labour coalition (and preferably a FF-Labour dictatorship eliminating the other forces), but Labour headquarters (Dick Spring) was having none of that and insisted on building a vote based on Divorce.

Fine Gael in the constituency achieved what was regarded as a miracle during the FitzGerald era, when it elected two TDs, George Birmingham and Richard Bruton. While Birmingham, a barrister, secured the traditional Clontarf FG vote, Bruton built up a vote on a purely individual basis by incredibly hard work right across the constituency. Birmingham is long gone back to the Law Library, and the sole FG seat is Bruton's, which is largely seen as a 'personal vote'. There is little FG organisational presence, and this absence of organisational *nous* came home to roost in the recent botched Bruton bid for the FG leadership.

Haughey always sought FF hegemony over the working class vote in his constituency (as well as nationally). Left-wingers could explain his success in this only as "*false consciousness*" on the part of the working class electorate. But Haughey was building on something very solid. Every street where I lived (Kilmore in Coolock) had FF activists, the most dynamic of whom were people who had come from "*the country*" or from down the road in Haughey's older working class home base of Donnycarney, and had been housed in the council estates in Coolock built by FF in the late 1960s.

These local FF activists were not "*corrupt*" in any way I could see, and were involved in every imaginable community leadership and improvement initiative on these estates. It was a party nationalist to the core in an old-fashioned de Valera sense. A cultural atmosphere surrounded their activities, with much music, sport etc. playing major parts. Haughey had attended St Joseph's Christian Brothers School in Marino, which is also where Paddy Maloney of The Chieftains learned his music. "Joey's" as it was called was a hotbed of the local GAA, the Gaelic revival, Irish music, the FCA etc. Two of Dublin's strongest GAA clubs were closely associated with it—St Vincent's (Donnycarney) and Parnell's (Coolock).

They played a leading role in bringing Dubliners to the GAA, and both clubs remain the main centres of social activity in the constituency.

Dodgy FF'ers used to come in to the area at election time, successful heavies from the construction and car businesses and smoothies from the world of accountancy and the law—the Irish bourgeoisie that Haughey was creating and that was coming into being under the hegemony of FF. When Haughey became a successful businessman in the 1960s, through the accountancy firm Haughey Boland, he was seen as a local boy made good, taking on the old money on its own ground.

In the 1970s-80s the local Tenants' Associations and other grass-roots working class organisations in the constituency were predominantly pro-FF (although they had arisen from the Housing Action agitation of the 1960s and the Rent Strikes of 1969-73 against a previous FF regime). Haughey developed a careful vote management system in the constituency to elect three TDs, and he succeeded in this, with new voter bases being nurtured in very non-traditional places for FF like Clontarf, and the constituency being divided up into several 'natural' vote catchment areas.

It was out of this world that Callely crawled. He was seen as a man on the make, who married Clontarf "*quality*" which bank-rolled an ambitious man-wife team, had interests in property and maintained useful "old money" connections. Callely was 'ambitious' in a very personal, and thoroughly individualistic, sense (allowing that he and his wife constituted a single personal and business entity). His rise from the late 1980s was marked by a very extremist form of clientelism. He also nurtured the Clontarf vote on the basis of protecting snob values, patronising the rugby and cricket set, and opposing anything that threatened this (social housing, drug treatment centres for example). But he was soon seen to have no sense of FF solidarity, and—much to the horror of even the most hardened local FF activists—once he had established his base in Clontarf he moved in on Seán Haughey's working class base and began taking votes from him in a most opportunistic manner. Everyone in politics in the area was astonished by "*Ivor the Driver*", and particularly by his unprincipled and unscrupulous poaching of Haughey's vote.

While the PR system dictated this type of intra-party competition (Birmingham/Bruton had the same problem once the FG vote returned to its natural limits after the retirement of Fitzgerald), the egotism of Callely's approach was in a class of its own. He built up support in Haughey's area by locally opposing things Haughey had to support, as they were Government policy—cases in point were his opposition to drug treatment centres (this was during the heroin crisis of the 1980s-90s), the opening of a residential refuge for women escaping domestic violence etc.

Haughey's record on these issues was a fairly honourable one, and ultimately he lost his Dail seat for a term to the Driver. I was close to these events as my wife, Helen Lahert, was the Democratic Left (ex-WP) candidate in the area and led the campaigns in favour of both things (and became friendly with the honourable Seán Haughey in the process). Helen ultimately did better than I had ever done in the 1980s, winning 1,400 socialist votes for the DL shell in the 1997 Dáil election.

The most amazing thing about Callely (and the most becoming) was the quality of his fall. By the 1990s he had become one of the highest vote getters in Ireland, topping the poll in 1997 with over 11,000 votes—26% of the First Preferences in a four-seater. Ivor ruthlessly accumulated votes like he was accumulating money, breaking the solidarity of FF in the constituency. In 2002—a good election for FF—his vote fell dramatically as a result by nearly 40%. I remember this happening on the ground—the FF base began to walk away from him because of his party disloyalty.

Initially Ivor was kept well away from power, but given his big 'personal' vote this position could not be maintained, and he was finally given a junior ministry in Bertie Ahern's FF-PD Government in 2002, first in Health and then in Transport. He acted in government as he acted in his constituency. His treatment of his civil servants led to a string of unheard of resignations from a Minister's office. He also had a reputation of being unable to work even with his Government colleagues. On several occasions he opposed Government policy—even that of his own Department—openly and for purely opportunistic reasons, leading to an unprecedented public statement on RTE by a senior Minister rebuking him. He was

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Callely: *The Exception*

The Ivor Callely expenses episode is being exploited by the media (led by *The Irish Times*, RTÉ etc.) as simply another example of the fecklessness of Irish politicians, and the alleged systemic nature of the "corruption" problem. Establishing its "systemic" nature is the major aim of the media commentary on it, and the sub-text of this is, of course, that we are unable and unfit, fundamentally, to run ourselves as a Republic.

Is corruption a problem? It depends what you mean by it—manipulation of markets, commission to salesmen and bankers, claiming expenses you are not entitled to, 'backhanders' from businessmen eager to secure deals etc. The only thing that differentiates "*corrupt gain*" from "*fair profit*" are the rules—and the implementation of those rules—governing daily transactions in a capitalist system.

The issue of "corruption" in politics arouses a particular form of moral outrage based on the view that politicians are different because they are the democratically elected representatives of the people whose job it is to write the rules (without disrupting the smooth functioning of capitalism) and to provide the moral oversight of the workings of the public system.

But everyone knows there are other issues involved that cloud this. A few years ago Tony Blair 'admitted' to the House of Commons that the British State had spent £1b in direct personal bribes in one year to secure arms sales to the Middle East. The House accepted Blair's justification that this was in the "*national interest*" and the issue disappeared. It was not covered at all in the Irish media. Haughey was hounded from office for far less.

Callely has been caught claiming travel expenses from his home—which he registered for expenses purposes as his holiday home in Cork rather than his residence two miles down the road from the Dáil, where he actually lives. There were many other venal claims involving mobile phone equipment etc. The Senate Committee responsible for the behaviour of its members discovered all of this and dealt with the issue within its powers to do so. While the Senate was doing what it should do, the media had a field-day, raising the Callely case to being symptomatic of the behaviour of politicians. This is nonsense.

I will comment on the Callely story because I have some connection with it.

Callely is neither symptomatic, nor representative, of anything. I lived for many years in his constituency, which was also—until 1992—Charlie Haughey's constituency, though Callely entered the scene after Haughey had gone. I had dealings with both men (in his constituency

Haughey was a gentleman), and also with Haughey's son Seán (who I stood against in local elections as a Socialist in 1985—I got about 600 votes). In those days (the 1980s), the working class vote in that Northside part of Dublin overwhelmingly went to FF, with the roughly 35% who didn't vote for them—essentially an anti-FF vote—splintering in all sorts of wild and wonderful ways (including, on that occasion, me).

I tried to do something about this, to put substance into an alternative line of politics, but my socialist endeavours had little purchase against Haughey's social democratic FF, unless you fell back on a liberal position (divorce etc. etc.), which was what invariably happened, and which didn't interest me, so I concentrated instead on making a living during the 90s. Labour had a small base in Dublin North Central among some Trade Unionists, but did not build its vote on this basis.

Haughey had a more appealing programme than Labour for Trade Unionism—Social Partnership. So Labour sought its breakthrough by appealing to the liberal vote. This "*labour seat*" was the seat Conor Cruise O'Brien had held in the 1969-76 period. It was then vacant for a decade until held briefly by the maverick Noel Browne for a few years. It was vacant again for another decade until the solicitor Derek McDowell took the seat in the Spring Tide of 1992, with his votes coming mainly from posh Clontarf and more working class Artane, with scrapings from the harder FF areas bringing him over the line. He lost the seat again a few years later.

Labour was essentially ephemeral and an exotic add-on in Northside Dublin. In my experience, the core labour working

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