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## Reflections On A State

Brian Lenihan was a marvellous man. Unpretentious. Affable. He sat at the piano played Chopin on the spur of the moment. Pity about The Mistake. Pity about that Delusion in which he spent his last years. That was Olivia O'Leary's instant obituary on *Drive Time*.

Colm McCarthy's more considered obituary (Sunday Independent 12 June) holds that "*Brian Lenihan was an exceptional minister for an exceptions time*". Pity about The Mistake.

"Brian Lenihan was a spectacular victim of bad advice in September 2008".

"It would be disingenuous to describe Irish policy through the few short years of Lenihan's tenure at Finance as a success story. It has ended in failure: the State is unable to borrow, reliant, in Morgan Kelly's resonant phrase, on the kindness of strangers..."

So Lenihan was a disastrous failure—though one should try to find some kind things to say about him when he has just died.

Lenihan's Mistake was to give a State guarantee to the money in Irish Banks in order to stop it from flooding out of the country as the media know--alls whipped up a panic.

Morgan Kelly predicted doom. It was a safe prediction. The most certain thing about capitalist booms is that they will burst. The only way to prevent a boom from bursting is to prevent the boom. But, given the nature of the contemporary world economy, it is doubtful whether a Government based on a system of democracy could do anything much to prevent its economy from being hustled into a boom when international capital wants to give it one.

When the wild capitalist expansion that was released by the ending of the Cold War was taking off, the Malaysian Government took pre-emptive measures to prevent its economy being swept along by it. The leader of the Opposition movement to open the economy to world capital was charged with corruption and imprisoned. And we howled about the "*crony capitalism*" of Dr. Mahatir and condemned the trial of his opponent for corruption as being itself corrupt. (That is, the *Irish Times* howled, and the *Irish Times* is us now as far as the world is concerned.)

Malaysia does not now have the woes the inevitably come when the exhilaration of the boom collapses. But that is something we have not commented on.

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## Mr. Angry Lashes Out!

Peter Sutherland is an angry man. He is angry with the world. It's not behaving as he tells it to. He has published a report on the WTO Doha Round and he says "*It is being published as an urgent warning*" that the Round that has been discussed for 10 years may not be agreed at all and if that happens Peter regards the consequences as some sort of apocalypse for the world.

The talks have stalled because the new economic powers in the world, China, Brazil, India and others now have the political muscle to have as much Free Trade as they want—not how much others think they should have. No more compulsory free trade for them. This is the sea change that has overtaken the WTO. Peter claims that the world is losing out big-time by the delay in completing the Round but that hardly impresses the countries concerned as they have never done so well during this delay and are doing better every day! And economic advice from an Irishman and a European at the present time does not exactly inspire confidence. '*Physician, cure thyself*' might be a response from some people.

If Peter was still in charge he seems

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### Obituary

## Brian Lenihan

Last month Brian Lenihan died at the age of 52. He was born into a Fianna Fáil family. His father—also Brian—and aunt, Mary O'Rourke, served in Cabinet. His grandfather Paddy was a Fianna Fáil TD and his brother Conor served as a Minister of State. Brian Lenihan's academic attainments, first in Belvedere College; then Trinity College Dublin; and finally Cambridge promised an inevitable progression towards high political office. But his path was not smooth.

He narrowly won the Dublin West by election in 1996 following the death of his father at the age of 64. However, he was passed over for promotion under Bertie Ahern and it was not until 2002 that he was appointed Minister for State for Children. It was only in 2007 that he became a member of the Government as Minister for Justice.

Brian Cowen appointed him Minister for Finance in May 2008 and it will be his time in this office that Lenihan's legacy will be assessed. Nothing in his political career could have prepared the new Minister for Finance for the economic

crisis, which was about to unfold. It had two distinct but related elements: the fiscal crisis and the banking crisis.

### FISCAL CRISIS

The collapse in the property market had led to a dramatic and sudden deterioration in the public finances. Lenihan approached the fiscal crisis in a decisive fashion. Indeed, it could be said that he was too decisive! In his first year as Minister for Finance he brought forward the Budget to emphasise the seriousness of the budgetary situation. However, with

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

Will Labour Back Low Pay

*Seamus Healy Press Release*

(back page)

**Due to pressure of space a number of articles and letters have been held over,  
including Manus O'Riordan's article on Jim Larkin's 1934 Affidavit**

The bust predicted by Morgan Kelly happened. There was no way it could have failed to happen. But the general knowledge that it was bound to happen is pretty useless in a market situation, unless it can be said precisely when and how.

In 2007 the Government, in accordance with a Department of Finance analysis, began to make preparations for the bust. It began to arrange for a "soft landing" when the boom bust, voluntarily subverting economic activity so that there would be a shorter distance to fall. But the bust came suddenly and from an unexpected quarter in 2008, before the "soft landing" measures had time to have much effect.

But it is doubtful, in any case, that long-term preparations by the Government to cut back economic activity during the boom in preparation for the bust is sustainable in the system of representative government. What the electorate would see is economic opportunities being sabotaged by the Government.

For all anybody knew, the bust might have come many years earlier. Nobody

knew because, in the market system, it is the business of the market alone to know. No human institution can know as well as the market what the situation is. Human institutions overriding the market only confuse the infallibility of the market. The business of Governments is to facilitate the market in doing what it wants to do. That is the ideology of the market, and it was unquestioned in Irish politics during the long period of boom.

If Fianna Fail had gone to the country in the 2007 Election with a policy of restricting economic activity it would have lost. The Opposition were pressing for a removal of restrictions, such as a big reduction in Stamp Duty on property transactions.

That's democracy. And that's capitalism. Since the end of the Cold War, and the consequent enlargement of the world market, the two have been decreed to be identical.

The newspaper—is it necessary any longer to say *The Irish Times*, to which Fianna Fail awarded the status of official

newspaper of the state, its "*newspaper of record*"—the newspaper on June 24th:

"This summer marks the fourth anniversary of the beginning of the international financial crisis. It was, quite coincidentally, around that time when the Irish economy began to falter and hopes for a soft landing disappeared..."

So there was an international financial crisis. And mistakes made by the Government brought about an unconnected but coincidental crisis in Ireland!!

The Irish crisis must be disconnected from the systemic capitalism that achieved freedom in the world when the Socialist system collapsed twenty years ago—otherwise the Irish crisis might be taken to be an indictment of the globalist capitalism of which the newspaper has been an enthusiastic advocate.

The 'coincidental' crisis of international finance was set off by the collapse of Lehman Brothers, and that collapse was made possible by the ending of banking restrictions imposed by the State in the USA.

US Treasury Secretary Geithner now says that US banking de-regulation was made necessary by earlier British Government action, which deregulated the City of London. Started by Thatcher, and continued by Blair and Brown, that de-regulation was attracting banking to move operations from the USA to London. America had to deregulate to stay in the game. And of course Ireland trailed behind.

There are three major currencies in the world: the dollar, the pound sterling, and the euro. Sterling and the dollar have been bound in intimate antagonism ever since the US rescued Britain from the hopeless condition it got itself into by bringing about a World War in 1939-41 without having any serious intention of fighting it in earnest. Britain was an economic dependency of the US for many years after 1945 and sterling was sustained by a fixed relationship with the dollar. That "*special relationship*" was necessary. It was the best Britain could hope for after its mad War. But it was always resented. The will to independence never withered.

The European Union and the euro came on the scene. The EU threatened to end the possibility of British balance-of-power politics in Europe. Then the EU invented the euro. And, instead of consolidating Europe as a distinct region of a multi-polar world, which it was big enough to do with a large measure of self-sufficiency, it embarked on the game of world-domination, expanding eastwards and looking for wars

to fight. And there were notions of making the euro the major world currency.

That was ten years ago. And now the euro is wondering if it can survive.

The outlandish mistake made by the EU was to establish the Single Market at Britain's behest and allow Britain to remain part of it without joining the euro.

Wiseacres in London now shake their heads and say it was obvious that a monetary system without a political framework to control it could not work. And the Prime Minister says that Britain will do nothing to rescue the euro, which is none of its business, but it treasures the Single Market. So there can be a Single Market without a single currency; a Single Market which consists of two currencies in necessary conflict with each other, with the currency that is outside the euro committed to disrupting the euro.

Who could have thought back in the 1990s that Europe would make such a mess of itself? Or that Britain, with so few visible means of support, could still have done so well for itself and been so destructive of others?

What gives Britain the edge in playing the global finance market that now dominates so much of world affairs? The fact that this market is largely the creation of a British ruling class over three centuries, and that behind all the display of democracy Britain retains something like a ruling class which has a feel for situations and discreetly nudges the democracy this way or that at critical movements.

We commented some issues back that Ireland is a pure democracy with nothing like a ruling class to direct it, and also without functional habits of behaviour developed through centuries of experience. It is a pure democracy, individualistically meritocratic to an extreme degree, and therefore without the resources for playing the tricky game of finance capitalism which has no rules.

Fintan O'Toole responded, in his column in *The Paper*, with a demagogic assertion that we have a ruling class of genius: *Ruling class has used its incompetence to flee the consequences of its incompetence—an awe-inspiring feat*". And—

"If they'd put half the talent they've displayed in protecting their own power into running the country, we'd be living in paradise..."

It would be too much to expect a revolutionary populist loud-mouth, who is given about 100,000 euro a year for venting hot-air, to see that a ruling class

As part of its unrelenting campaign against Sinn Féin, the *Irish News* has hyped family complaints about the appointment of Mary McArdle as an Adviser to the Culture Minister at Stormont, Caral Ni Chuilín. Ms McArdle was part of an IRA team that attempted to assassinate a Catholic magistrate on his way home from Mass. They failed to kill their target, but his daughter was shot and died. Ms McArdle served time in jail for the offence. The paper opened hostilities with a front page lead story, *Stormont Role For Mary Travers's Killer* (25.5.11). The story was continued the following day, with a page devoted under the strap headline *The Mary Travers Murder* and an Editorial. There then followed nine further days of campaigning, with up to four pages a day devoted to the issue. The SDLP was happy to join in.

## Mary McArdle

I have over the last few weeks been following the news of Mary McArdle. I came to the thought that Mary has every right and Caral Ni Chuilín has every right to appoint Mary as her adviser. Mary like others would not have been in prison if there was no conflict here, a conflict brought on by injustice and inequality by the state and caused by the British occupation of the North of Ireland. Many have played a role in the conflict: many judges, police officers, British state ministers—all don't have clean hands when it came to dealing with the Northern Irish conflict. It is also wrong of Margaret Ritchie to call for a ban on people with murder convictions being employed as special advisers. I think she is using this to attack Sinn Féin. When the SDLP signed up to the Good Friday and St. Andrews Agreements they knew people involved in the past conflict would have a role to play. It was David Trimble who once said that if you judge a person by their past, then they have no future.

Seán óg Garland

runs the country, and profits from it of course, and that people who just make money for themselves are not a ruling class. And that all that Ireland has got in the way of an "elite" is people who just make money for themselves.

An elite closely involved in the running of the country as well as in the making of money, in such a way that it could sense the approach of a financial crisis and nudge the country into taking measures to reduce its impact—that is what we have not got. And the main business of *The Newspaper* during the past quarter of a century has been to avert the danger of a class like that coming into being. And the secret Directory that runs the Paper has used "revolutionary" spoofers like O'Toole for that purpose.

Socialist ideology has been trivialised into begrudgery, and the Paper knows very well how to exploit native begrudgery for its own purposes.

If we had a responsible ruling class, functional in politics and the economy, the Paper would condemn it as "crony capitalism" through the pens of its hired revolutionaries.

And in this matter the enthusiasts for a kind of Capitalism that is completely atomised, in which each capitalist is a completely separate competitive unit, entirely in conflict with every other

competitive unit—enthusiasts for a kind of purified capitalist competition that is incapable of existing—are often indistinguishable from the socialists who are mere begrudgers. We think of the Progressive Democrat who has been nominal Editor of *The Paper* in recent years, who has seen it go downhill, and who in her retirement speech said that the people have a right to know.

But there is an elite in the economy about which the Paper does not think the people have the right to know. It is the elite which sustained the Paper during the decades when it had no visible means of support, had no national readership, and was stocked by very few shops in the country.

Ireland had a ruling class for a couple of centuries—a class which exercised political and economic power on a monopoly basis, and accumulated great wealth of various kinds, monetary and institutional. In the end it failed to sustain its position as a ruling class, due to a disdain for the natives which became politically dysfunctional as the democratic impulse gained pace. It remained colonial in outlook. It was astonished when the Home Country conceded statehood to the native combination of votes and guns. Many of them went home at that point. A few had joined the natives before the event and

had taken part in the separatist movement. Some reconciled themselves to the event once it happened and began to take part in native affairs. But a solid economic enclave remained behind, treated very liberally by the country which for centuries it had ruled very illiberally. It tended to the golden chains, retained the aloof manner of a superior people, and eventually had its pretensions acknowledged by erratic revolutionaries like Eoghan Harris.

The golden chains of Imperialism are a sensitive subject. Even though Connolly warned about them, socialists who know better that he did do not care to mention them. They seem to have accepted the maxim of the Roman Emperor who said "*pecunia non olet*"—money doesn't smell. Money is impersonal. But, in the real world, one finds that money is very personal indeed, and that it is only a fool and his money that are soon parted.

The wealthy Protestant economic enclave maintained its position easily during the first generation of independence, when national life was disrupted by Britain forcing a 'Civil War' on the issue of the Crown—which was not wanted by the Treatyites any more than the Anti-Treatyites.

After a generation it still had its economically privileged position, its Paper and its University. But, when the former Treatyites returned to office, after long absence, in 1948, they began to put on the squeeze. Fine Gael set about destroying Trinity College—the Ascendancy bastion occupying a big area at the centre of the metropolis—by depriving it of subsidy funds.

Insofar as there was an established Catholic business class, and one that was devoutly Catholic, it was Fine Gael. And Fine Gael, having recovered from its Treatyite fever, was resentful of all the concessions it had felt it necessary to make to the enemy in 1922 and wanted to remedy them. If Trinity had been brought down, the British enclave would probably have given up the ghost, and the Paper would have gone as a matter of course.

But then Fianna Fail returned to power and saved Trinity. Fianna Fail did not represent an established class. It represented the people of the country in all their variety, and the sense of liberal Republicanism which animated them. That is why it could gain overall majorities.

A new business class then began to develop in the populace, within the Fianna Fail ambience. Charles Haughey was active in that development. It began to erode the institutional strongholds of the wealthy Protestant enclave. And the Paper,

in protection of its interests, launched the long crusade against this Fianna Fail development of a national capitalism, hiring socialists for the purpose.

The tightest form of "*crony capitalism*" in Ireland is that which the *Irish Times* serves but does not mention. It is not much mentioned at all. Respectable people know, but only mention it in code and *sotto voce*. It is therefore a great surprise to find that most respectable person of all, the late Garret FitzGerald, Garret the Good, wrote about it in his last book, *Reflections On The Irish State*. He says that in 1922 there were 275,000 Protestants in the 26 Counties, "*almost all Unionists*". Though consisting of only 7% of the population, they were given almost half of the seats in the Senate, yet "*the new state was felt by most of them to be a cold place*" (p147).

Naturally so. It was not *their* State. Beyond that appalling fact, any further complaints were mere carping. It had been *their* State for two centuries: a Protestant State for a Catholic people. That it should cease to be *their* State, and also cease to be a Protestant State, was just too much for pampered flesh to bear.

The collapse, though sudden at the end, had been threatening for a generation, beginning with dis-Establishment of the Anglican Church in Ireland (though the Constitutionally Anglican monarch remained sovereign in Ireland), which was followed by the setting up of representative Local Government in 1898, and the state-subsidized abolition of the landlord system after 1903. The foundations on which that ruling class rested had been worn away, mainly because of its own conduct. It refused to weave itself into the life of the populace—because it thought life would not be worth living if it did that—and so the populace made its own politics out of its own life.

Nevertheless this failed ruling class continued to believe that its State would not let it down.

At one point it seemed inevitable that the Home Rule Party would take over, and that life in Ireland would be degraded into the most vulgar kind of apeing of English provincialism. (The Ascendancy saw itself as metropolitan and Imperial.) But Home Rule was seen off. And then, there were the Four Glorious Years of the Great War, when much of the world was made a shambles in the usual British way.

The Sinn Fein victory at the 1918 Election was not regarded very seriously. The *Church Of Ireland Gazette* and the *Irish Times* were certain that England knew how to deal with these Irish when they tried to get above themselves. The

trauma struck suddenly with the Truce, to be only slightly relieved by the Treaty.

FitzGerald finds that the Protestant population fell by 45%, or 1.2% to a year, in the half-century, 1861-1911, a period including Church, Local Government, and Land Reform by the British State. (The Catholic population fell by 30%.)

He finds that between 1911 and the first Irish Census in 1926, the Protestant population fell by 32%, or 24% a year, double the rate of decline of the preceding half-century. This period included the Home Rule conflict, the 1916 Insurrection, the vote for Sinn Fein, the War that the Irish had to fight when Britain took no account of the vote, and the War to impose the Treaty—which was urged on by the *Irish Times* and the *Church Of Ireland Gazette*.

FitzGerald then says that, in the years 1910-36 "*the young Protestant population*" fell by 36% and the Catholics by 22.5% (p148).

Then, "*throughout the period since the end of the 2nd World War the rate of emigration of the young Protestant population has been consistently lower than for Roman Catholics*". And this was the case with all age groups.

The decline in the Protestant population after the establishment of the State was not due to economic discrimination and lack of job opportunities:

"It is particularly notable that throughout the whole history of the independent Irish State, the Protestant population of the Republic has fully maintained its favourable socio-economic position" (p150; But is it quite *socio-economic*?—IPR).

Taking Commerce, Insurance & Finance, Management & Administration, and the Professions, he says that in 1926—

"the proportion of the Protestant population in these three socio-economic groups was over twice the figure for Roman Catholics, 32.5% as against 16%. But, by 1991, the proportion of working Protestants in these three groups had risen... to 39.5% of the Protestant population" (p150).

while

"the proportion of Protestants engaged in clerical occupations... fell from 14.5% to 8%..."

"And in a wide range of other occupations Protestants in 1991 were also three to four times over-represented... This was the case with doctors and paramedics, writers and journalists, actors and musicians, professors and lecturers, government administration, industrial designers, and those engaged in consultancy and research..." (p151).

And they were—

"overrepresented between two and three times... amongst farm managers; ships' officers; architects and technologists; as well as in insurance broking, insurance, and business and professional services, and in films and broadcasting.

"So it is not surprising that a Protestant community so well placed in the society of the Irish State... should have experienced a lower level of emigration during the half century than the Roman Catholic majority."

"Looking back over the past 80 years it is clear up to the end of the 2nd World War many Protestants in the Republic remained uncomfortable with their lot, with the result that, despite the greater job opportunities available here to a community which was greatly over-represented in the business community and the professions, many young Protestants of that period preferred to make their lives elsewhere. However, in the post-war period that sense of discomfort, for some even alienation, rapidly disappeared, with the result that the more favourable job opportunities available to this well-to-do and well-educated community came fully into play" (p149).

"It is, I think, also interesting that not alone have the advantages thus enjoyed by the Protestant minority in the Republic never been challenged: so far as I am aware they have never been publicly adverted to here..." (p151).

So it seems that the historic ruling class of Ireland as a Protestant State survived the loss of its State 90 years ago and has maintained itself as a wealthy economic enclave in the Irish state, and that it has been happier in the Irish state during the past generation or so, as the Irish State was overcome by existential doubt about itself, which the *Irish Times* propagandists played a considerable part in inducing, and has actively increased its privileged economic position.

Garret the Good would hardly blurt these things out if they were not the case. And he would hardly have commented on the fact that "*they... have never been publicly adverted to*", if he did not think they ought to be adverted to.

It should be evident that, if the decayed and rejected ruling class preserved itself as a wealthy enclave in the national state, it could only be by means of "*crony capitalism*". The long campaign of the *Irish Times* against what it saw as an incipient crony capitalism amongst the natives had the purpose of shielding the crony capitalism that it represents. The growth of the native crony capitalism was prevented by the noisy, but spurious, anti-corruption campaigns conducted by the paper of the successful crony capitalism.

What part the successful crony capitalism played in the financial crisis is something that has not been investigated as far as we know.

## Europe

Pat Cox, on the day he was admitted to Fine Gael membership so that he might seek nomination for the Presidency, was asked on Radio Eireann what he thought of the EU now. He said it was ineffective in the crisis because it now had politicians in place of statesmen. That is true. But it was Cox more than any other individual who undermined EU statesmanship. As leader of the EU Parliament he undermined the Commission, which was the centre of EU statecraft, by means of trivial 'corruption' charges that were sensationalised by the British media. Britain was the power, but Cox was the voice. The outcome was that the Commission, whose business was to tend to the welfare of the EU as a whole, was disrupted, and the Council of Ministers took over. The Council consists of the various Governments who all tend to their own interests in conflict with each other and is dominated by the bigger states.

And the EU Parliament, through which Cox undermined the Commission—what has it been doing, or even said, about the crisis?

## Northern Ireland

"*What madness is this?*", the *Irish Times* asked editorially on June 24th about the conflict in the Short Strand. The editorial began:

"After 30 years of incipient civil war and ten years of gradual peacemaking in Northern Ireland, forces are at work within both communities that would tip society back into conflict... Perhaps the most worrying aspect of this week's violence was a willingness by both communities to sustain it."

What happened was that the Short Strand, an isolated Catholic enclave on the South side of the Lagan surrounded by Protestant territory, was attacked and defended itself. The situation of the Short Strand is such that it must always be prepared to defend itself. And there is no evidence that in this instance it did anything but defend itself.

As to "*incipient civil war*"—civil war that has been starting for thirty years but never got started—Professor Roy Foster said that Britain gave Ireland "*the priceless gift of the English language*". The *Irish Times* should try to learn it.

Regarding the "*civil war*": Britain, when retaining the 6 Counties within the

UK established a regime there which could only have had the purpose of perpetuating Protestant/Catholic conflict. The Protestant community, organised by the Orange Order and the Unionist Council, was set up to police the Catholic community outside the democratic system of the state. Academic propagandists have in recent decades been describing this set-up as "*the Northern Irish Sate*", in order to shift responsibility away from Britain. But Northern Ireland has never been anything but a region of the British state, under the absolute sovereignty of Westminster, but arranged in a peculiar way to serve the purposes of the British State. Factual description of Northern Ireland in these terms has been absolutely forbidden in the *Irish Times* by decree of the Directory, so that conflict between the nationalist community and the State can be misrepresented as a Protestant/Catholic civil war.

The war of 1970-1998 was fought between the IRA and the British State. The State sought to "*Ulsterise*" the war, so that it might be presented as a merely communal war—"*tribal*" was a word that was often used. This journal tried for twenty years to get the North brought within the democratic system of the British State. The *Irish Times* allowed no expression to that project.

For 50 years that Catholic community was "*the minority*" in a bogus democracy. The bogus democracy was abolished in 1972, after two years of warfare. It was not replaced by any other system that might be described as democratic. After a further sixteen years of warfare, the "*minority*" status of the Catholic community was abolished, and a devolved arrangement was made in which power was not so much shared as divided. The arrangement remains undemocratic, insofar as Northern Ireland plays no part in the politics by which the state is governed.

The Protestant community, which agreed to exclusion from the democracy of the state 90 years ago, and took on the role of policing the Catholic community, has found its position eroding as a consequence of the strong socio-economic development of the Catholic community in the course of the war. (It is a commonplace that war and development often go hand in hand, but there is a reluctance to admit that that happened with the Catholic community in the North, though it is obvious.)

The Protestant community has naturally been demoralised by the flourishing of the Catholic community. That is how the

system works. And the organised Protestant working class of thirty years ago has gone to seed by reason of Catholic development and industrial decline. It is fed up and without an outlet for its feelings, apart from hating Catholics.

Nobody has a clue about why they attacked the Short Strand just then. Vincent Browne finds it particularly sad that they should have done so just at the moment when such an exemplary figure as Rory McIlroy was hitting the headlines. But, seeing the part that George Best and Alex Higgins—both working class Protestants—play in the iconography of a community in decline, it is likely that the emergence of a local Fenian as a high flyer in a global sport, and not just a Gaelic one, added to the feeling of despondency and decline. The dynamics of Northern life are beyond Vincent Browne's comprehension. No doubt he feels that he would not be such a good person if he allowed himself to understand them.

## Mr. Angry

continued

certain that there would have been no such delays. *"Too often"*, he says, the WTO that he left behind *"has managed to be regarded simultaneously—if not generally by the same observer—as both unaccountable and hopelessly democratic and indecisive in its decision-making"* (Irish Times, 26 May, 2011).

Too much democracy is clearly a nuisance to Peter, but the odd thing is that the WTO never votes. If democracy necessitates voting, then it is one of the most undemocratic institutions in the world. It operates by consensus which in practice means whichever grouping can get its act together carries the day by fair means and foul. That can no longer be done to the satisfaction of Peter and the West so we have an alleged crisis that seems like the end of the world to them.

Peter is also *"Scathing about the lack of political leadership shown by the United States, Brazil, India and China"* (ibid). Peter does not lack neck, metaphorically—and literally. The first requirement of leadership in these days of democracy is the ability to get elected. Peter has never been elected to anything. He tried and failed to get elected to the Dail. But that does not prevent him from berating the elected representatives of billions of people.

And, apparently, they are even worse

than bad leaders: *"Our leaders too often abandon the higher moral ground to the critics of free trade who arrogate to themselves the greater virtue when their opposition to free trade ought to cloak them instead in a mantle of unwitting wickedness"* (ibid).

This is strong stuff. Not only are the leaders of the world not leading properly they give way to wickedness and seem too stupid to realize it. I am surprised he does not find some Biblical quotation on the God-given advantages of Free Trade. All honour and obedience to Free Trade would be the 11th Commandment if Peter had his way.

And of course no lecture on the virtues of compulsory free trade is without its appeal to the fairy story about protectionism in the 30s causing WWII. He says that the current *"recession affected everyone, but the world avoided 1930s-style protectionism that then drove the world over the edge of the abyss"* (ibid).

By today's standards all counties were protectionist in the 1930s. Yet they did not all go to war with each other. And I do not recall that Britain's declaration of war over Danzig was occasioned by economic policies of any sort. Hitler was the great Keynesian of his day! Ireland was protectionist but it did not get more warlike the more protectionist it got. Quite the contrary. Of course, it had an economic war declared on it by the original Free Trade state when it sought to be more independent and to keep money it was entitled to keep.

Peter, like so many others sees politics as essentially derivative of economic policies. And when politicians do not see it like that, they are stupid—and worse—in Peter's eyes. He reduces human life to economic activity and if that was acted on fully we would have a totally barbaric world.

At the height of his fame, when setting up the WTO, I recall he addressed an annual meeting of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. That was a nice touch. A Free Trade world for his kind of people, those guided by economists, and religious charity and sermons for those who lose out! Give me politicians any day, whether they be good, bad or indifferent. They are all angels compared with Sutherland and his ilk.

Jack Lane

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## Brian Lenihan

continued

the benefit of hindsight, if he had waited a few months he would not have encountered as much resistance because it was only towards the end of 2008 that the severity of the domestic and international crisis became clear.

Nevertheless, the decisive measures which Lenihan and the Government took were impressive. Towards the end of the life of the Government, commentators such as Garret FitzGerald suggested that the main Opposition parties tone down their criticism in case they found themselves in Government with the political task of implementing similar unpopular measures. Before the last election Eamon Gilmore refused to make a commitment to reverse any budgetary measure implemented by Lenihan. And, immediately before the last Election, Fine Gael and Labour made every effort to facilitate the passing of the Budget so as to avoid the political responsibility of having to implement their own policies. Thanks to Lenihan the current Government will not have to make any urgent budgetary decision until the Autumn of this year.

### BANKING CRISIS

The decisions which Lenihan took in response to the banking crisis were more controversial. He has been pilloried for the Bank Guarantee of September 2008. But Fine Gael and Sinn Fein supported it at the time. Labour opposed it on the pedantic grounds that it gave too much power to the Minister. This party's alternative of nationalising the banks was a guarantee in another form but would have given less flexibility to the State.

The consequences of not supporting the banking system in this country would have been far worse than the actual consequences of the Guarantee. We cannot step into a parallel universe in which the consequences of a different set of decisions are examined. All we know for certain is what exists in this world. We can say that there is still a functioning banking system in this country. That is not something that could be taken for granted in September 2008.

David McWilliams said that the Irish banks were on the precipice of a cliff, joined by a rope around each of their necks. If one bank fell, it would drag the others down with them.

About two years after the Guarantee, Professor Patrick Honohan's report indicated that a Guarantee had been necessary,

but suggested that it was too extensive. However, this appears to be a pedantic criticism since the previous Government found it necessary to honour even the un-guaranteed Senior Debt of the banks. And the current Government, for all its bluster, has not departed from that policy.

The key finding of Honohan was that the damage to the economy had already been done by 2007. If this is accepted, Lenihan can hardly be blamed for the crisis since he was not in Government prior to this.

#### NAMA

The Bank Guarantee bought time. However, the markets did not believe that the banks' loans were collectable. Accordingly, the State took the loans off the banks and valued them independently. This had the advantage of consolidating the loans, which will facilitate their redemption. It also made the valuation of Irish banks transparent.

The structure of NAMA was quite ingenious. It issued bonds to finance the purchase of the Banks' loans and the banks were able to use these bonds to obtain funding from the ECB. But the liability incurred by NAMA did not appear on the State's books. In short, the purchases were, in effect, financed by the ECB. However, it appears that elements within the ECB and the wider EU did not appreciate the cleverness!

#### IMF/EU BAILOUT

Throughout the crisis Lenihan demonstrated his competence and never lost his nerve. He received no help from other EU leaders. On 18th October 2010 Angela Merkel and Nicholas Sarkozy precipitated a run on the Irish banks by discussing the possibility of Senior Bondholders 'sharing the pain'. This put the Irish Government in an intolerable position. It was not allowed to write off existing senior debt and yet the possibility (posited by Merkel and Sarkozy) of future debt being written off prevented it from obtaining new funding.

In mid-November the ECB started to pressure Lenihan to seek a bailout from the EU. The Government was totally opposed to seeking such assistance and pointed out that it had no need to go to the markets to borrow until mid-2011, as it had plenty of funds in hand. At that point, the ECB started leaking against Ireland, precipitating market uncertainty and speculation.

On 16th November 2010 the German Finance Minister, Wolfgang Schauble, tried to bounce Lenihan into holding a press conference announcing an IMF/EU bailout. Lenihan quite rightly demurred. However, a couple of days later the Central

Bank Governor Patrick Honohan went on RTE's *Morning Ireland* to announce its inevitability.

The formal application on 21st November 2010 was a disaster for Fianna Fáil. It was also damaging to the State. Whether it could have been avoided in the light of German and French manoeuvring is a moot point. However, the responsibility for that difficult decision rested with the Taoiseach Brian Cowen and not Brian Lenihan.

#### LENIHAN THE MAN

One could argue about the decisions that Lenihan made, but nobody can dispute his courage and integrity. His instinct, at all times, was to defend the interests of the State.

This writer remembers him at Beal na Blath last August. The Minister had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer the previous December. He was greeted warmly, but with respect. There was no backslapping. A piper led him to the

platform and the large crowd parted to give him space. His walk was brisk but a little stiff. Was he in pain? The speech was thoughtful. He made the point that praise of Michael Collins did not imply the denigration of de Valera and added that the Civil War divide was more fluid than is generally understood. His grandfather, who became a Fianna Fáil TD, had supported the Treaty. He said that Collins at 32 was not the finished article. We do not know how he would have developed. However, this writer was disappointed that he quoted approvingly from the discredited historian Peter Hart.

Lenihan did not show his failing health that day. He stayed long after the ceremonies had finished. Engaging with people outside the Fianna Fáil family gave him energy. He did not want the day to end. But eventually the crowd dispersed. The darkness descended and he walked bravely into the night.

**John Martin**

## Palestine:

### *Gilmore to betray heritage of First Dáil?*

#### PALESTINE RECOGNITION CAMPAIGN

In 1988, the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the combined political leadership of Palestinians, then in exile in Tunis, declared its goal to be the establishment of a Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, i.e., in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. With this declaration, Palestinians accepted the objective of a state on just 22% of their historic homeland, with Israel continuing to exist in the other 78%. Nearly 100 states recognised it and granted it full diplomatic relations. Other states, including Ireland, while not going as far as recognition, established some form of diplomatic relations with it. The PLO has now launched an initiative to secure recognition of this State at the UN in September this year. Israel rejects this, and Israeli Premier Netanyahu, in a speech to the US Congress continually interrupted by howls of approval (no Congressman dare be off-side of the Jewish lobby), declared a resounding "NO" to giving up settlements in the West Bank, to East Jerusalem as a capital of any Palestinian entity, to evacuating its military forces from the Jordan valley, or to any return of ethnically-cleansed Palestinian refugees to their homes. It appears that 78% of Palestine is not enough for Israelis.

The PLO position is supported by all of Palestinian political society, from Fatah

to Hamas, as well as the smaller and independent voices which won seats in the last elections in the Occupied Territories. It is also supported by organisations of "civil society", notably the Trade Union movement and various NGOs. The campaign represents an act of self-determination by Palestinian society, with an overwhelming democratic mandate.

#### IRELAND CHANGING SIDES ON PALESTINE?

Ireland was for many years to the fore in Europe in supporting the Palestinian claim to statehood.

In the "*Bahrain Declaration*" as early as February 1980, announced by then Foreign Minister Brian Lenihan snr., it became the first European state to declare explicitly that the Palestinian people had "*a right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State in Palestine*". In July of that year, and following an initiative of the Haughey Government, the EU in its "*Venice Declaration*" finally and for the first time adopted a position in support of a Palestinian State.

The pro-Palestinian position of the Irish state has been upheld by every Government since, including the FitzGerald Government of the mid-80s. Micheál Martin, Foreign Minister of the last Fianna Fáil Government, continued in this tradition, condemning the Israeli massacre in Gaza



in 2008-9 and the Israeli murder of the Turkish flotilla peace activists, as well as questioning Israeli accession to the OECD in 2010. Just before the recent General Election, he upgraded the "Palestinian Representation" in Dublin to a "Mission". (See two recent publications by Sadaka—The Ireland-Palestine Alliance: David Morrison, *Ireland should recognise a Palestinian state in the 1967 borders* and Philip O'Connor, *Palestine in Irish Politics*).

Following the General Election, Taoiseach Enda Kenny declared that Ireland had just experienced a "democratic revolution". While there has been a large cross-party "*Oireachtas Friends of Palestine*" for several decades, the last Dáil for the first time saw the formation among Opposition TDs of a grouping "*Oireachtas Friends of Israel*". Many of its nine or so luminaries now form part of the Government, including Ruairi Quinn and Joanna Tuffy of Labour and Alan Shatter, Lucinda Creighton and Leo Varadkar of Fine Gael. This represents a new departure in the history of the Dáil.

How the new democratic Ireland would treat the issue of the Palestinian right to self-determination and whether it would continue the traditional Irish stance was put to the test when the new Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Eamon Gilmore, faced questions in the Dáil for the first time on 22nd March 2011. In response to Pádraig Mac Lochlainn of Sinn Féin on the Palestinian UN recognition campaign, Gilmore declared:

"It would be premature to declare such recognition now in advance of actual control of the territory in question, a condition to which we in Ireland attach great importance. It is also important to recall that the Palestinian leadership, while clearly working towards the declaration of a state in the near future, has not yet done so. The timing of such a declaration will be an important decision for it to take and may involve potential negative consequences on the ground... I very much hope to be able to extend Irish recognition to an actual functioning Palestinian state during my time in office... The two-year Palestinian Authority plan to prepare for statehood is due to be completed in the autumn. The response of the European Union to such a declaration of statehood will be a key issue in discussions among EU foreign Ministers. I will be participating fully in those discussions and I am conscious of the necessity to contribute positively to them rather than to anticipate their outcome. My focus will be on advancing them in order that in this country we can provide recognition. I hope in conjunction with other European Union member states" (Dáil Debates, 22nd March

2011—<http://debates.oireachtas.ie/dail/2011/03/22/00007.asp>).

Éamon Gilmore's commitment on Palestine over the years has been an admirable one, so there can be no doubt that the position he stated to the Dáil represents a compromise with the Zionist lobby in Cabinet.

If Ireland abstains at the UN in September or, more likely, tags along behind some wish-washy EU line (Germany has already stated its opposition to the Palestinian initiative), this country for the first time since De Valera's stance in the 1930s—which opposed Britain's Zionist plans and upholding the rights of the Arab people not to be swamped by European settlers—will find itself grouped with the reactionary states on this issue, led by the US.

The most extraordinary part of Gilmore's position—which he seemed to elevate to the status of a principle of Irish foreign policy—was that: "*It would be premature to declare such recognition now in advance of actual control of the territory in question, a condition to which we in Ireland attach great importance*".

Mac Lochlainn tried to challenge this, responding:

"... The Irish people, by way of their vote for Sinn Féin in the 1918 election, voted in favour of their independence. We had the First Dáil and declared our independence to the world, with a programme for Government based on the 1916 Proclamation... At that time the world did not recognise our legitimate democratic right to freedom and there were dramatic consequences..."

He was abruptly stopped from developing the point by acting *Cathaoirleach*, Joanna Tuffy, Labour TD and vice-chair of "Oireachtas Friends of Israel".

#### GILMORE ON THE FIRST DÁIL

A pedant might argue that, as the Irish Labour Party did not contest the 1918 Election, it could not be held to the strategies that the First Dáil pursued. But, in fact, while Labour had no TDs in that first historic assembly, Gilmore himself has honoured its significance, explained why Labour did not contest the 1918 Election, and emphasised the key role that Labour played in support of that first independent Irish Government. In a speech on 20th January 2009 recalling the First Dáil, he stated:

"On January 21st 1919, as our first TDs gathered here, life for most people in Ireland was very hard. Europe had just been ravaged and re-divided by a bloody, senseless, imperialist war which claimed the lives of 50,000 of our fellow Irishmen. Another 10,000 people had died from flu

in the previous year. Hundreds of thousands lived in slums and abject poverty.

"The General Election of 1918 was the first when all adult men and almost all women got the vote... And instead of going to Westminster they came here. To build something new..."

"The proceedings that day were short, but the objectives were great. A *Declaration of Independence*, an *Appeal to the Nations of the World*, read in Irish, English and French in the hope that Ireland's cause would be seated at the post war peace conference. And the *Democratic Programme*, setting out a vision for what democracy and independence could mean in practice for the people of the country. The Democratic Programme was written by the then Leader of the Labour Party, Tom Johnson.

"But Johnson and his colleagues were not TDs in that first Dáil, because Labour had decided not to contest the 1918 Election, so as not to split the vote of the Independence Movement. That was a patriotic, selfless decision, putting country before party by a Labour Movement which was playing a central role in the events of the time. Labour was pivotal in the anti-conscription campaign which mobilised Irish people in the run-up to the election, including the organisation of a General Strike. And it was Labour which won the very first international recognition for Ireland's independence at the Socialist International in Berne in 1919, a few weeks after that meeting of the First Dáil" (*'90 years on, values of Democratic Programme never more relevant'*, <http://www.labour.ie/press/listing/1232450083257155.html>).

The one factor Gilmore didn't mention in his speech was that this movement was directed against the British rule that had been rejected by the Irish electorate. The British Imperial power refused to recognise the democratic Irish Dáil. It flooded the country with troops, instituted military rule, and set about suppressing the self-proclaimed state. In response to an appeal from the Dáil, thousands of people rallied to defend the new Republic in armed resistance to the military terror. Ireland's *Declaration of Independence* was thus made when the Irish political representatives—although enjoying the overwhelming support of the population in 26 Counties—were seeking to function underground in a country under foreign military occupation and rule.

In other words, to use Gilmore's own phrase, they were seeking to function as a state "*in advance of actual control of the territory in question*", the very condition he now claims precludes Ireland from supporting the UN recognising the Palestinian State!



## LABOUR & IRISH RECOGNITION

The First Dáil made the securing of international recognition the major focus of its strategy. The *Message to the Free Nations of the World* issued by the Dáil at its very first meeting declared:

"The Nation of Ireland having proclaimed her national independence, calls through her elected representatives in Parliament assembled in the Irish Capital on January 21st, 1919, upon every free nation to support the Irish Republic by recognising Ireland's national status and her right to its vindication at the Peace Congress."

The "Peace Congress" was the "international community" of its time, the equivalent of today's UN. The underground Irish Cabinet appointed Griffith, de Valera and Plunkett to jointly direct Irish foreign affairs and particularly the campaign in Europe and the US to secure recognition of the Republic and its membership in the planned League of Nations. Sean T. O'Ceallaigh, the "accredited envoy of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic in Paris", set about lobbying national leaders at Versailles, and sought meetings with US President Wilson and French Premier Clemenceau, President of the Peace Conference.

Britain mounted a massive offensive to prevent recognition of Ireland, and made it clear to the US, France, Poland and others that British support for their claims at the Conference would depend on their rejection of the Irish demands. O'Ceallaigh reported that a meeting between Wilson and Irish officials "confirmed my views as to Wilson from the beginning. There is no doubt now that Wilson looked upon the Irish Question as a 'domestic' one for the British Empire" ('Report to Dublin', 15th June 1919, *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy*, vol.1, p.29). France and Poland, similarly keen to appease Britain, treated Ireland's claims likewise. But Wilson, in succumbing to British pressure, was acting against the American democracy as, on 23rd February 1919, the US Congress had passed by 261 to 41 votes a resolution calling on the Paris Conference to "favourably consider the claims of Ireland to self-determination." (Dorothy McArdle, *The Irish Republic*, 1951, p.280).

And what of Irish Labour's role in the Irish Recognition Campaign? As Gilmore himself stated, "it was Labour which won the very first international recognition for Ireland's independence at the Socialist International in Berne in 1919, a few weeks after that meeting of the First Dáil." The work of Labour was later honoured by De Valera himself, who stated in April 1919: "When we wanted the help of Labour

{at the Socialist International} in Berne, Labour gave it to us and got Ireland recognised as a distinct nation" (Arthur Mitchell, *Labour in Irish Politics 1890-1930*, 1974, p.112).

These statements do not do justice to the efforts of the Labour leaders. Even before the First Dáil convened, Sinn Féin had met them to discuss Labour's role in the recognition campaign, which they pursued vigorously over the next two years:

During the Berne meeting, O'Shannon proposed a resolution which demanded—

"free and absolute self-determination of the Irish people, and the recognition by the powers at the Peace Conference {at Paris} of the Republican declaration of Independence at Easter Week., confirmed by the people at the General Election"... The conference passed two resolutions referring to Ireland, one supporting self-determination and the other calling upon the peace conference "to make good this rightful claim of the Irish people"... Two months after the Berne meeting O'Shannon attended the international trade union conference in Amsterdam, where he again succeeded in obtaining recognition for Ireland as a separate nation ... " (Mitchell, *Labour*, p.111-2)

In addition:

"...Johnson and O'Shannon, as representatives of Ireland, were elected to the Permanent Commission which the {International Socialist} Congress established to implement its decisions. In addition to distributing Congress delegates printed reports and memoranda from the ILP & TUC, Johnson and O'Shannon jointly drafted a memorandum on the 'Irish Situation' for the Congress delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. This aroused considerable interest and was quoted extensively in continental newspapers.

"On their way back to Ireland... {they} stopped in Paris for four days to report on the Berne Congress to the Dáil Éireann mission then in the French capital preparing to present Ireland's case for independence to the Peace Conference.

"They visited the head office in Paris of the French trade union movement and explained the 'Irish situation' to influential French labour leaders. And they gave extended interviews to the important socialist dailies *Le Populaire* and *L'Humanité*" (Anthony Gaughan, *Thomas Johnson*, 1979, pp.160-1).

Throughout the War of Independence, the Labour leaders continued to work tirelessly to win US and British labour to support for the Irish Declaration of Independence. They brought labour delegations to Ireland to witness the realities of the British terrorist war and convinced the Scottish TUC conference

to vote in support Irish Independence. Following intense lobbying by the Irish labour leaders, even the British Parliamentary Labour Party called finally on 11th November 1920 for the withdrawal of British forces from Ireland and the establishment of a constituent assembly "to work out, without limitations, whatever constitution the Irish people desired" (Gaughan, *Johnson*, p.165).

## GILMORE'S MOMENT OF TRUTH

Just as at Versailles, when Britain unleashed a massive offensive to prevent recognition by the US or European states of Irish Independence, using all its tricks of political blackmail, today the US, acting in league with Israel, has launched a similar offensive against the PLO's very Irish campaign for recognition of the Palestinian State next September. And, just like Britain in 1919, the US is making it clear to UN member states that a vote in favour of Palestinian recognition will have political costs.

For the first time in the history of the Irish state, we now have a Zionist lobby in a powerful position in an Irish Cabinet, and it is obviously not shy about using its clout. To disguise his equivocation on the stance Ireland will take at the UN, when for the first time it may be aligned with the most reactionary forces of the world on a question of self-determination, Gilmore has resorted to inventing new principles of Irish foreign policy, e.g. that "It would be premature to declare such recognition now in advance of actual control of the territory in question, a condition to which we in Ireland attach great importance". This invented 'principle' flies in the face of the history of the First Dáil which he himself had recently so lucidly recalled, and in particular of the great role his predecessor Irish Labour leaders had played in support of the international campaign for recognition of the Irish State in 1919-20, "in advance of actual control of the territory in question".

Has Eamon Gilmore indicated that he is about to renege on that proud Irish labour heritage?

Philip O'Connor

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## On The 65<sup>B</sup> To Tallaght

*Collier's Encyclopaedia:*

"The Crown. The succession to the throne as regulated by the Act of Settlement of 1701. The sons of the sovereign succeed according to their seniority; where there are no sons, the daughters succeed in their order of seniority. A daughter who succeeds (as the present sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II, did) becomes queen regnant, and all the powers of the crown vest in her as fully and effectively as they would in a King. When a sovereign dies, his heir succeeds as sovereign immediately; there is no interregnum. Only Protestants may succeed to the throne. In law, the sovereign is head of the executive, an integral part of the Crown-in-Parliament, the commander in chief of the armed forces, and the temporal head of the Church of England..."

Where else would you find anything like this? By Act of Parliament the Queen is sectarian. This is their law. Royals can't marry a Papist. Or a Jew or Muslim. This, I believe, is unacceptable to the Irish people, Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter. Wolfe Tone, I hope you couldn't hear that British anthem. Queen, if you meant what you said, reform. Reform or abdicate. Move on. Get over it. Get a life.

The head of the British state should be welcomed when that State rids itself of all official religious bigotry; when it desists from armed interference in the affairs of other sovereign states; when it ceases acting as the surrogate of other Powers; when it takes its place amongst the nations of the world as an equal, not as a superior; when there's no more White Man's Burden.

Meanwhile the bigots shelter and take a spurious legitimacy from the British monarch as the symbol of their intolerance. Others suffer. We've seen it in the North. Now, it is most evident in Scotland. There, naked religious intolerance pervades society. There, the most Irish and inclusive of sporting institutions is isolated, under siege, while the Tricolour flutters overhead. Queen, it is time these dangerous anachronisms were shed.

The arrival in Ireland of the British Monarch gave rise to an outburst of national self-abasement. On TV the usual pundits—mostly academics and media heads—assured us that we were all a crowd of class-conscious snobs. Smug as a bug in a rug and dressed in elaborate, if ill-judged, finery, men and women—especially the women—luxuriated in their

verbose pomposity while delivering chastisement to us goggle-eyed proles. I've never seen any of these dominatrices in the flesh. Nor, I hastened to add, do I want to. They're never on the 65<sup>B</sup> to Tallaght. Or the Red Line. I don't think I know any snobs in Tallaght.

But, then, they may have been speaking of their own neighbours. I get slightly heady as I try to conjure up their exclusive places of residence. I'm a bit off-centre, I think. I thought they were an awful crowd of snobs. There's a word for it. But I can't use it. Thank God, they're never on the terraces at Dalry. Or amongst the punters at the dogs. Or with the *Racing Post* held up to their slitted eyes. I've never seen them in Grogan's, either. And I'm sure they'd never blow on their saucer of tay. Only Fianna Fáilers do that!

With the arrival of the Queen of England it was all "hands, holding hands". Dublin Castle took the biscuit. She stood there stoically. Shaking hands. Alfie Byrne wasn't in it. And everybody bowing and scraping. Such fashion. Such style. It was like Scattering Day at Puck Fair. Poor Mary Robinson was only on the bench. Upstaged by the other Mary. Nearly every Irish political woman is called Mary. I don't know why. There's an awful lot of Tiffanys around. And everyone's trying to convince us that we're British. We watch English soccer. Support English teams ("*Come on, Unihah!*"). Watch rugby and cricket. There must be something wrong with me. I do none of this stuff. Anyway, what's wrong with soporifics? Arthur copped on to this. Made a fortune out of it. Cheers!

Sycophantic, I say to myself. Should be Sickophantic. After Trinity College and the visit of Herself. A corralled group, like sheep in a pen, clapped and managed a cheer. Trinity was looking good. I passed through there myself once. In at Nassau Street and out at College Green. It is very imposing. The Long Hall (is that not a pub in George's Street?) was magnificent. Very tasty. Then the *Book of Kells*. A copy was produced. Some head-man explained things. His Highness interrupted. His Highness is nobody's fool. He's got an impish sense of humour. It's got him into trouble before. Iona, he said. Iona or Kells? The head-man was startled, but quickly recovered. The moment passed.

Then they appeared. The great and the good. All lined up. Professors hanging out of the chandeliers. Brain-boxes galore. Men and women of distinction. The arts and sciences. Even film-makers washed and scrubbed. Ongoing servility. In their new suits and dresses. Brown Thomas, it's said, was cleaned out. Some of the *gúnas*\* were delightful. There was an awful lot of fawning. Competing for attention. Shaking hands. Fair play to Herself. She took it in Her stride. An old trooper. Used to it. Going around the colonies. Accepting homage. This world is full of underlings. Anyway She knows they won't forget the pat on the head. Such is the way of the servile. "*Nice one, Paddy. Good girl, Bridie.*" All the while She is thinking, "*How absolutely awful*". I wouldn't blame Her, either.

Did I mention the gifts? She got a book in Croke Park. "*About Brendan. Dear Brendan. And Philip got a hurley-stick. Sticker they call it. And a shitter or shlutter or something. Then he starts grousing because we're not going to the Marble City. The old granite-head. And Mary! Did you ever? All those gúnas. And the hats. By somebody called Jackie Healy Rae. Yes I think that's it. They must have huge wardrobes in Uras Horribulus. Not forgetting Martin. Martin's a quare hawk, so he is. Oh God, am I beginning to speak like them?*"

As She departed the beautiful halls and rooms of Trinity, another sheep-like flock smiled, simpered, and managed polite hurrahs. She spoke with some. Smelling-salts were summoned. She accepted a posy of flowers from a giddy Dublin young-wan. This was the closest the proles got to Her. The she was gone. A *spéir bhean*\*\*.

It was all captured on TV. Some day, some of them may regret it. At Dublin Castle they'd been named, too. Just in case. As they arrived for presentation, their names were called out. A bit like Green Street Court-House. This gave immediate rise to gossip. "*Where's his wife?*" "*Is he widowed or what?*" "*Separated?*" "*Where's her husband?*" "*A picture tells a thousand tales!*" The scandal-sheets only awaited ink. Me! Jealous, they'll say. Never asked. But, I'm not bothered. Well, I did think She . . . ah, well, maybe She just forgot.

Ryan Tubridy. How he tried at the Guinness Hop Store. Trying to show Her

[\* gowns]

[\*\* woman from the skies or female spirit, apparition; the term is often used in *Aislings*]

Dublin, from the roof-top. Every time he pointed one way, She looked the other. Maybe She'd read Todd Andrews's book, *Dublin Made Me*.<sup>\*</sup> Ryan kept trying. What was it all about? Could it have been the smell of the hops? Sometimes, if the wind is right, you can smell them from the 54<sup>o</sup>. I know, sometimes I get a bit heady myself. The fellow pulling the pint would never do in Grogan's. He should know. A pint can have any of three collars: Curate's, Parish-Priest's or Bishop's. He put a Bishop's Collar on the pint he pulled. Where's he been? Bishops are not exactly flavour of the month. No wonder Herself declined. The Prince grimaced. He seems to grimace a lot. He's a proper Charlie, that same Prince, so he is.. No wonder so many dogs are called after him. He took the Michael out of the pint-puller. Did they brew Guinness from the Liffey waters? The puller nearly went apoplectic. Take a look at the Liffey waters and you'll know why. "*Pristine*", insisted the puller. "*Pristine waters from the hills.*" He'd saved the day. Pulled Guinness from the murky waters. No I shouldn't have said that. Afterwards, he gave the inside dope. How he'd pulled the Royal pint. Where he'd looked, when and why. He was good. I'll say that for him. But, no, I don't see him in Grogan's. "*Gob fluich agus bás in Éireann.*"<sup>\*\*</sup> "Down the hatch and may your mother never rear a jibber." I wonder what happened to the pint!

As this was going on, a group assembled on the East side of Talbot Street. They were less up-market. The 17th of May. The anniversary of the 1974 Dublin/Monaghan Bombings. This was the handiwork of Crown Forces and Irish Loyalist paramilitaries. There were no VIPs visible at the commemoration. On TV, later, an old, jaded commentator acknowledged Crown involvement, but advocated moving on. Many ignore the truth. One friendly state bombed the citizens of another. Though full diplomatic relationships existed between both states. It's only here you'd see the likes of that. But the buffoons say "Get over it. Get a life. Move on." The next time it may be them. The same Queen, too, decorated the main bomber.

It's hard to forget The Castle. Enough grub to feed Mayo before 'The Famine'. Onwards they came. Some males bowed as they shook Her hand. The more adroit

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[\* Andrews was Ryan Tubridy's grandfather.]  
[\*\*A wet gob and a death in Ireland; or May we never be thirsty and may we die in the old sod]

clicked their heels, too. Some females curtsied. Before, I'd only seen it in the movies. They were like arthritics trying to genuflect, but no quite making it. Some didn't shake hands at all. I'd say they were Brits or Anglo-Irish. The knew the score. They knew they shouldn't come within smelling distance, unless invited. There's so much the natives don't know. You speak only if you're spoken to. You don't offer your hand unless one is offered to you first. You don't squeeze. You say "*Your Majesty*" first off. After that it's "*Ma'am*". Not "*missus*" like the fella in Croke Park. And you don't lay hands on Her. Not ever. It's the same with Himself. He's "*His Highness*". Afterwards, he's "*sir*". He makes the moves and you follow. A bit like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. You're Ginger Rogers.

The Stud Farms of Kildare looked good. I like the odd flutter. But the bipeds were getting in the way of the quadrupeds. It was all so civilised. Understated. The women were beautifully groomed. So were the horses. Some of them were a bit frisky. The horses, I mean. His Highness perked up a bit too. Herself was in Her element. I don't know how She keeps going. Eighty-five. And He's ninety-one. A TV commentator said She's a "*Quick Change Queen*". She changed twice a day, at least. Her clothes, that is. Her taste, they tell us, is impeccable. Two furlongs out and I'm calling the odds. Seven to four, Queenie: Fifteen to eight, Pressie. A dead-heat and you lose. No tax. P.S. There's no sign of Jedward, yet.

*Aras an Uachtarán* was elegant and imposing. Beautifully set. The gardens were sublime. The pot-holes in the nearby roads were all filled in. They're raging up in Cavan. Anything static was painted. Anything that moved was saluted. Irish and British politicians came together. *Apparatchiks* too. Diplomats and civil servants. And the new elite. All in their Sunday best. The women, ecstatic like a *Late, Late Show* audience, wearing expensive hats. Hoping the wind wouldn't blow and the neighbours would be raging. An enthralled woman, wearing a Digger's hat, was commentating on TV. A male historian was putting things in some perspective. The Army ceremonial was excellent, though a uniformed British officer did not keep in step with his Monarch. Afterwards, he was glad-handing all around, while his own hands were gloved. The Tricolour flew over all. A change from the days of yore.

On TV the city resembled Paris awaiting the Panzers. Strange, still, solemn, ghost-like. I

was waiting for a sniper's shot. A deserted film-set, I thought. Or Ballybunion in the Winter. There was a spatter of people in O'Connell Street. Most were passers-by. Some were Empire Loyalists, hankering for the old days. Done up for the day. Dollied and jollied. Speaking with pursed lips. Being gentrified. Northern accents penetrated. There were cloying Americans too. There were no Union Jacks being waved. Maybe we're not as subservient as we once were. I'm sure the ghosts of Pearse and Connolly looked down.

But, it seems, we're no longer a "*British Isle*". Now we belong to "*these islands*". She said so, Herself. We've had a troubled history. There's blame on both sides. The invader and the invaded. The Robber and the Robbed. Though She didn't put it quite like that. As for 'The Famine'. What Famine?

The President said we were open to "*new accommodations*". Interesting, I thought. Is it constitutional for a President to plan political initiatives? Maybe some expert could enlighten. I don't think President de Valera conducted things so. *An Bhunreacht*, Article 7 (1,2,3) seems relevant. Let the scholars adjudicate. Al this parleying. Should it not be for the elected politicians? When I vote for a Presidential candidate, I'm not voting for a political mover and shaker. That, I believe, is the prerogative of Government. The President embodied the will of the people. Removed from political battlefields. Aloof, dispassionate. *A Saineolaí*. A wise one. Open to everyone and overt in all. At the moment our President is winning easily, her way.

The Garden of Remembrance was witness to a rare event. In the distance were the muffled shouts of protest. The Garden looked impressive. The *Children Of Lir* sculpture shone out. The broken-sword motif I could do without. A soldier's sword is broken only in battle, or if he is being dishonourably discharged. The military ceremony was flawless. Herself? She did bow Her head, after placing the wreath. The British Anthem was played. *Amhrán na Bhfianai* rang out. Defiantly. It always sounds defiant. As the Queen of England departed, I thought one expolitician would grab her. She sailed on.

She bowed Her head, too, at the magnificent British Army War Memorial Gardens, built and maintained by the Irish taxpayers. It is, I feel, unmatched in its *genre*. Would that we had such a setting for those who set us free. Again, the Army did us proud. Once again, the British Army officer gauchely followed his Monarch. Bemedalled old codgers were everywhere. One building held the list of the

Irish dead. They'd gone to kill Germans and Turks for a variety of reasons and for none. All beautifully presented, now. How elaborately we've honoured those who fought in the conqueror's uniform. Now we've forgotten our own Moore Street, the last headquarters of the Government of the Republic in 1916, and now prey to the greed of some cash-fat developers. Ye Gods.

Curiously, clerical dress abounded at the British Army War Memorial Gardens, but I didn't note them, much, at our Garden of Remembrance. What's that all about? Is it good or bad? The hard-men of the UDA attended too. Short-haired, smart-suited. Squaddies to the tee. More familiar with the *Uras* than you or I, as cliché follows cliché: You can remember history, but you don't have to live it; the two islands are inextricably linked; we have a shared history. *Et cetera, et cetera*. My stomach's rumbling, again.

All the while, Crown Forces are firing away in Afghanistan. Libya too. They still occupy the Six Counties. (I'll be murdered for saying that.) Britain has no selfish strategic or economic interest there! You could have fooled me. A whole different glory for another day. Iraq's had its nose well bloodied, too. Everywhere the iron fist. Blood and guts all over Things made worse and worse. All for "*strategic*" interests. Usually black gold. Oil. Israel propped up. The Palestinians crushed into Gaza. But, they say, 'twould be worse were it a totalitarian regime that intruded. Would it? If you're dead, you're dead. Hard Cheese.

The concert in the National Concert Centre for Her Majesty was dazzling. All palsy and cosy. The "*Cúpla focal*"\* and all. Still no sign of Jedward. West Life, without the poppies, performed. They've got real rebelly. At the end Her Majesty up-staged them all, including the lady from Tesco's who's taken up singing and teaching history. Money's behind a lot of it. I'm hanging in. Waiting on the Derby. I've a pony at a hundred to eight about a nag called Bucks Palace. Hee, hee. Just joking.

Then, off to the sticks. Tipperary and the Rock of Cashel. Silhouetted against the skyline. An archeological treasure. The denizens were kept away, mostly. More choirs and harpists. Where are all those harpists, normally? Here in this misty Celtic place, the past hung heavily. She seemed captivated. He was going

[\* couple of words]

around, as ever, chatting-up, hands together behind his back, bending forward and more forward, to see the better and, yet, not falling, as he sought to satisfy His enormous inquisitiveness. He is good. But, She's the star.

Cork lay ahead. The Rebel County. Thirty thousand lined the streets. Rebels! They cheered as they never cheered before. The English market was the jewel. That's where the quality used to shop. Now it's hoi polloi and all. I don't know what the fascination is with grub. I thought they might have given her some Clonakilty Black Pudding wrapped in *The Echo*. "here you are, now, girl, boy."

The Union Jacks were out, being waved. Young people abounded. They haven't been told. A man predicted closer political relationships between "*the two islands*". We were, he said, drifting away from Europe. And still they cheered. I've won some badly needed cash. It all ended in a dead-heat. I retain all stakes. Queenie and Pressie couldn't be separated in a photo-finish.

UCC was a smaller version of Trinity. The people were more provincial. Trying too hard. An elderly man kept on talking and talking. A woman commentator kept telling us we're a "*British Isle*". It's down the red-lane for me, as I listen to the thunder. I'm in Grogan's. Curate's collars. I'd love to hear what's being said quietly. What? What's that? But She's gone. Gone home.

Come Saturday, I'm watching TV. The Beautiful Celtic have just won the Scottish Cup. It's going back to the dear, old Paradise. They'll be singing The Soldier's Song down the Gallowgate. No one will be asked his religion there. I go into town to have a few. Celebrations. I get the last bus home to Tallaght. The 65<sup>B</sup> in Dame Street. There's no Queen there, any more. I show my pass. I thank Charlie, again. I'm a bit unsteady. I'm walking up and down the bus-aisle. The driver—a nice guy—is worried. He comes up to me:

"Are you alright?" he asks, solicitously. "Splendid", I reply. "Never better", I lied.

"But, why are you walking up and down?" "I'm looking--- looking--- looking for snobs--- snobs."

"Snobs!" "Yeah, you know snobs--- snobs--- snobs!" "I begin to roar, "Snobs!"

"Well", says he, kindly, "I think you'd better sit down. You'll find no snobs on the 65<sup>B</sup> to Tallaght."

I sit, my balloon burst.

I get off at the village. The Square looms. I begin to stagger class-consciously home. I'm a bit maudlin. I reach the Dominicans'. I'm thinking of Parkhead and the Lost Tribe of Eireann. *I stop to get my bearings*. What a narrow prism--- prism--- prism our politicians view Hiberno-British Relationship --- ship --- ships through. Once---once upon a time we---we---we led---led---led the world---we looked at things unselfishly. We---we---we weren't money-mad or greedy. We save---save---saved civilisation. The chipper is closed. I make for my residence. I get there. This is real snob---land. I get my key into the lock, turn it and enter. I slowly mount the stairs. The elevator isn't working. I take off the shoes and fall into my canopied bed. The silk sheets envelop me. I begin to hum, out of tune: "*Queenie oi oh, who has the ball? Is she big or is she small?*" I drop off and snore. Luckily I can't hear the snoring, but I know I'll have an awful head in the morning.

When I waken, I turn on the TV. The music is brutal. Gawd, my poor cranium. Its Jedward! Talk about being stuck between a rock and a hard place. Jedward and the Act of Settlement. I reach for the bottle. It's on TV. One of the dominatrices has been made a Senator. The snobs of Ireland are in for it. I'm suck--- suck---sucking on the bottle. I realise I'm humming *Burlington Bertie*. I stop Pronto. I'm thinking hard. Maybe I should join the others and move---move on. But I know it's too late for me. Sure, I'm in the departure lounge, waiting for a delayed flight. Suddenly, I clutch my chest. Is that it? Has it come?

**John Morgan**  
[Lt. Col., retired]

## LIBYA

The dregs of presidents and prime ministers must know children die to kill the spirit of a nation they failed to inherit, their blooded patriotism sinister. Every house a command-and-control-centre. They kill civilians to save civilians? Labelled, the head of state reptilian, every vagabond raised to dissenter. The world watches but no one offers help. Gaddafi must go choruses Russia. Big powers together in an axis melt? Will they divide the world and usher in a permanent war-pregnancy that whelms humans into debris for the crusher?

**Wilson John Haire**  
22nd June 2011

# Shorts

from  
*the Long Fellow*

## LIES, DAMNED LIES AND...

The Long Fellow is grateful to "*John the Optimist*", a blogger on the [IrishEconomy.ie](http://IrishEconomy.ie) website, for his analysis of the Central Statistics Office first quarter statistics. It turns out that the statistics for the first quarter are less significant than the prior year revisions. Whereas Greece has been notorious for overstating its economic performance, Ireland has erred on the side of caution. All the recent revisions are in a favourable direction. Ireland's economy was at a peak in 2007, therefore the revisions in the last three years are particularly interesting.

The changes in real GDP in 2008, 2009 and 2010 are:

2008: previous estimate -3.5% , now revised to -3.0%

2009: previous estimate -7.6% , now revised to -7.0%

2010: previous estimate -1.0% , now revised to -0.4%

Therefore the cumulative change in real GDP between 2007 and 2010 was:

previous estimate -11.8% , now revised to -10.2%

The changes in the real GNP for the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 are even more dramatic:

2008: previous estimate -3.5% , now revised to -2.8%

2009: previous estimate -10.7% , now revised to -9.8%

2010: previous estimate -2.1% , now revised to +0.3%

Therefore the cumulative change in real GNP between 2007 and 2010:

previous estimate -15.6% , now revised to -12.1%

Davy Stockbrokers conclude:

"The revisions to nominal GDP mean that the government debt/GDP ratio in 2010 was 94.7% as opposed to 96% prior to today's national release."

The revision in the balance-of-payments on the current account figures was even more dramatic. The previous estimate of a deficit of 1,113bn euros in 2010, has now been transformed into a surplus of 761bn euros.

Exports are at an all time high: 3% above the pre recession peak.

*John the Optimist* points out that one of the main reasons for the contraction in national income has been the collapse in the building industry. From 2007 to 2010 construction output dropped by a massive 52%. It continued to fall in the first quarter of 2011 and now represents a minuscule 2.5% of national income. It is unlikely to fall any further and therefore this component of national income will no longer constitute a drag on economic growth.

All these revisions suggest that a cautious approach should be taken in relation to forecasts. If there is uncertainty as to what happened yesterday how confident can we be about the economic projections for tomorrow?

Also, it would be very understandable if Fianna Fáil felt a little aggrieved at all this belated good news!

## EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

Fianna Fáil might also feel a little hard done by following the publication of the employment figures. Just before the General Election the Quarterly National Household Survey showed a spike in the Unemployment figures. But in the first quarter of this year Unemployment fell by 21.9k to 296k. The suspicion is that Unemployment did not fall by this amount, but that the fourth quarter figures were not accurate. The fourth quarter QNHS figures diverged from the live register figures but in the first quarter of this year both sets of figures are back in line.

The Unemployment rate has been running at about 14% since last Summer.

Emigration has played a part in stabilising the figures, but not as big a part as many people might think. Very interestingly the Labour force has gone down by 32k in the last year. However, the non-Irish component has gone down by 35k. So the Irish component of the Labour force has actually increased by 3k.

In the last three years the Irish component of the Labour force has increased but the number of non-Irish working in the economy continues to fall sharply, and is now down to 360,000 from a peak of just under half a million. Non-Irish workers have seen sharp declines in employment in all industries, with employment in construction having fallen an astonishing 82%.

Employment in services industries (in aggregate) of Irish nationals is broadly unchanged since the start of the downturn. Many Irish workers seem to be taking up employment formerly done by non-Irish workers.

The idea of the economy imploding is very wide of the mark. There has been a massive adjustment following the bursting of the bubble in the building industry. But the productive capacity of the rest of the economy has remained intact.

## THE WAR ON DRUGS

As has been pointed out many times in this magazine the Irish economic crisis

cannot be divorced from the world economic crisis—or to be more precise the western economic crisis since China is booming. But perhaps the economic crisis is a symptom of a deeper malaise.

Karl Marx believed that manufacturing capitalism had the effect of socialising the working class and of making it conscious of itself as a class. But in recent decades manufacturing in the West has contracted and been replaced by service industries. Before the current crisis there was a belief that the West could live off the rest of the world. The isolated individual consumer was replacing the socialised productive worker.

The vanguard of this tendency believe that the individual should be allowed to maximise his pleasure. In the case of drug abuse, social policy should not attempt to wean addicts off drugs but merely to prevent them from causing harm to the rest of the population.

The advocates for legalisation claim:

- 1) the war on drugs has failed
- 2) drugs such as heroin and cocaine are not more harmful than alcohol
- 3) legalisation would take drugs out of the hands of criminals

But it could equally be said that the war on crime has failed. Murder, rape and theft continue to exist despite being illegal but does anyone seriously believe that these crimes would not increase if there were no legal sanction? Ireland has recent experience of the consequences of legalised drugs. The Head Shops were closed because they increased the overall market for drugs.

It is not realistic or even desirable to eliminate all drugs from society. All drugs are not the same and therefore it is reasonable that the law should treat them differently. So, for example, tea and coffee are freely available; Alcohol and cigarettes are controlled; other drugs are only available on prescription; and drugs such as cannabis, heroin and cocaine are illegal. There is nothing illogical, hypocritical or incoherent in treating different drugs differently.

As well as different drugs being intrinsically different; different drugs have a different history and different relationship to different cultures. So, although a liberal attitude to alcohol might be appropriate to Ireland in the twenty-first century, a Red Indian Chief in the 18th century might have very good grounds for opposing the white man's firewater!

Finally, the social damage of heroin and cocaine is caused by their consumption. The possibility that, following legalisation the suppliers might be more socially respectable, is of minimal social consequence. ●

## EU OR UK?

Support for closer association with the UK rather than the EU is growing among the chattering classes. The Queen's visit with Cameron and Hague in tow was a clear indication of the UK's desire to take full advantage of the current disenchantment with the EU.

"That relations with Britain are now so good is excellent. The two countries share many interests, from peace and stability in Northern Ireland to deep dependence on each other's economies. But recent developments may have caused perceptions of the relationship to move on to shaky foundations. One example is the claim made frequently during the Queen's visit that the relationship was now of two equals. This is wrong—the relationship between Ireland and Britain has never been, nor will it ever be, one of equals. Britain is a far more powerful country" (Dan O'Brien, *Irish Times*, June 4).

This is true and Economics Editor O'Brien goes on to compare it with the more realistic and worthwhile relationship with the EU:

"If they sour between a big and small country and a spat ensues, the former will come out on top more often than not. For this reason the priority for small countries is to have strong rules which bind everyone regardless of size. This is a better bet in the long run than depending on the goodwill of big countries—goodwill can evaporate quickly if the context changes. Though they are not mutually exclusive, multilateralism is more important in the long run than bilateralism for small countries. It is for that reason that involvement in the EU remains in Ireland's long-term strategic interests in theory. For all its flaws, the EU is by far the best comprehensive rules-based system ever devised by sovereign states" (ibid).

While this argument is right about the fickleness of Great Powers, there is a problem with it as regards Europe—it is an illusion. It is simply not true because there is no longer a rules-based system in the EU. It would only be true if all recent developments in the EU are totally ignored. When it comes to rules there is surely no rule more important than accepting the results of voting in a referendum. That is what democracy is supposed to be about and wars are allegedly being fought for this concept at the moment. But the EU has dismissed with contempt the results that it believes do not suit it within and outside the EU. And then the rules passed by the re-Referendums are totally ignored, as was done with Lisbon on the bailouts of Greece, Ireland and Portugal. This is what

might be called a double breaking of the rules.

There are also some accepted rules about going to war. A basic one is to prevent or respond to an attack and ensure maximum support. These rules are proclaimed often enough. Every country has a Defence Ministry these days—not a War Ministry as before. There is no military threat to Europe. But these rules have also been totally ignored in the war of aggression on Libya as it was in the wars in the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. So where is the rules based organization on a vital issue like going to war?

It is an illusion to think that any country could feel that such a nonexistent 'rules based' system can be trusted with its interests. Countries are on their own.

The EU's Big Powers have made it quite clear that their interests now rule and no other rules matter. O'Brien is living in a time warp as regards the EU. There was a time when the rules that seriously sought to equalize relations between national interests did operate. In fact it was the basic original rule and there was a unique instrument to operate that rule—the Commission. But then along came the assault by the UK on the Commission, seeing, quite rightly, the Commission as the key to the success of the EU project. Then along came Pat Cox and did the necessary undermining of the Commission by the most spurious allegations of corruption against it. And Ireland applauded the little Irishman punching above his weight, not noticing the real heavyweights behind him. The breaking of the moral authority of the Commission ended the possibility of a treating Member States as equals, a principle towards which the Commission was making real progress. The ending of this process is Cox's great achievement. Despite all the rhetoric about European unity, a globalised world, the 'international community', etc. the nations of this world are essentially on their own and have to make the best arrangements they can with their neighbours and others. This is now obvious to the proverbial dogs in the street.

Far from our political class seeing anything to criticize in this, Mr. Cox may be rewarded by being put forward as candidate for the Presidency of Ireland by the Government party. This would be the political equivalent of glorying in masochistic self-abuse. It would confirm that the current Irish political class does not have a brain in its collective head about the realities of the EU today.

**Jack Lane**

## The *Irish Times*' Solution To The Crisis!

The *Irish Times* editorialized on *Beyond The Greek Crisis* on 20th June:

"Another week, another EU summit, another battle over Greek default. And again the EU leaders, in crisis management mode, will struggle to agree, and probably will agree if latest reports from finance ministers are born out, a second bandage for the ailing Greek economy. But what about the long view?"

For the long view they intone Pat Cox, Joshka Fischer, van Rompey and Martin Wolf of the *Financial Times*.

We are told that: "*What is missing in what has drifted by default into an existential crisis for the euro zone is a long term unity of purpose to give the euro the solidity and authority which this one-winged bird of monetary union was not given at Maastricht—a political union.*"

But all we really get from the *Irish Times*'s luminaries is various ways of describing the current situation in the Eurozone and various ways of saying a political union is needed to solve it. They all agree that we need a political solution to solve an economic crisis. But then they also agree that there is an economic crisis because we have no political union even though everyone agrees we should have one. But how is it to be got?

The *Irish Times*' contribution is to conclude its ruminations as follows: "*Whether and how we want to get there are difficult, charged questions. But we should start the debate.*"

In other words they don't have a clue. Ireland has been debating the EU intensely for about a decade, since Nice I—more so than any other EU Member State—yet the *Irish Times* declares that it should now "*start the debate*"! What was Nice I, Nice II, Lisbon I and Lisbon II all about if not the future of the EU? Despite that we are no further on. This decade-long debate appears to have meant nothing to the *Irish Times*.

As for the "*one-winged bird*", are economics and politics two wings of the same bird? I suggest not. To follow the analogy, we need to figure out what is in another, much more important part, of the bird's anatomy—its brain. This is the organ which gives direction to the wings and the other organs—and what is the EU equivalent in this analogy? All analogies are inadequate but this *Irish Times* analogy is a particularly faulty one because it leaves the EU without a brain. It does not seem to realise that it leaves out the most important organ of all.

Politics and economics policies are two

qualitatively different and opposite aspects of life and the simple fact is that the EU no longer has a coherent political brain. Which means it does not know where it is going, which means and all sorts of crises follow as sure as day follows night. At the moment it's an economic crisis, but others will emerge in every area—political institutions, foreign affairs, wars, etc.

It is not a case that the EU "has drifted by default into an existential crisis". Things like this don't just happen—that's just the way it appears to the pompous nincompoops in the *Irish Times*. The EU was quite deliberately driven into such a crises by the assaults on it that began with Thatcher and that have continued ever since. The result is that the European project was broken up, is broken up and acknowledging that fact is the first step to coming to terms with the current situation. If not, all else is mind-numbing waffle.

JL

## Elections

Northern Ireland electors had to vote often, if not early, this year. There were three ballots—the all-UK Alternative Vote referendum, along with the Stormont Assembly, and the Local Council elections. The turnout, 53.59%, was very low by local standards, but varied wildly from the low 40s to the high 60s. Wags around Belfast are saying that the residents of the City, Milltown and other cemeteries are getting downright apathetic!

Nevertheless, both Sinn Fein and the DUP continued to make progress at the expense of the SDLP and the UUP respectively. The Alliance Party did reasonably well, while the TUV's Jim Allister scraped into the Stormont Assembly "to be a thorn in the flesh of the DUP Sinn Fein cabal".

Dawn Purvis, the former PUP leader now standing as an Independent, failed to be elected in East Belfast, getting 1,702 votes. Professor Henry Patterson (School of Criminology, Politics and Social Policy at University of Ulster) had a rather trivial letter in the *Irish News* (27.5.11) challenging Brian Feeney for saying that "by not voting for Dawn Purvis working-class unionists were like working-class Americans who voted Conservative because they put the reactionary cultural politics propagated by the US-right before their class interests". Professor Patterson's punch line was: "Does this mean that the Catholic working-class which supports Sinn Fein also votes against its class interests?"

The result on the referendum for the Alternative Vote proposal was 43.68% Yes and 56.32% No. This rejection of the AV system contrasts with the overwhelming overall UK result of 32.10% Yes and 67.9% No. This can somewhat explained

by the fact that both Labour and the Tories supported the No vote in Great Britain, while Sinn Fein and the Alliance Party supported a Yes vote, with the DUP being a bit all over the place. Also in the North people are used to forms of proportional representation. Indeed it was predicted by many that there would have been a Yes vote there.

I will give details of the winners in the Assembly elections and the Party results for the local elections.

### ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

#### East Antrim

Roy Beggs UUP:	3,012 (10.4%)
Stewart Dickson ALL:	2,889 (10%)
David Hilditch DUP:	3,288 (11.3%)
Oliver McMullan SF:	2,369 (8.2%)
Alastair Ross DUP:	1,608 (5.5%)
Sammy Wilson DUP:	7,181 (24.8%)

#### East Belfast

Judith Cochrane All:	4,329 (13.4%)
Michael Copeland UUP:	2,194 (6.8%)
Sammy Douglas DUP:	2,668 (8.3%)
Chris Little All:	4,183 (12.9%)
Robin Newton DUP:	2,436 (7.5%)
Peter Robinson DUP:	9,141 (28.3%)

#### East Londonderry

Gregory Campbell DUP:	6,319 (18.2%)
John Dallat SDLP:	2,967 (8.5%)
David McClarty IND:	3,003 (8.6%)
Adrian McQuillan DUP:	2,633 (7.6%)
Cathal Ó hÓisín SF:	4,681 (13.5%)
George Robinson DUP:	3,855 (11.1%)

#### Fermanagh & South Tyrone

Tom Elliot UUP:	6,896 (14.4%)
Phil Flanagan SF:	5,082 (10.6%)
Arlene Foster DUP:	6,876 (14.3%)
Michelle Gildernew SF:	9,110 (10.1%)
Sean Lynch SF:	5,146 (10.7%)

#### Foyle (Derry)

Martina Anderson SF:	6,950 (17.9%)
Mark H Durkan SDLP:	4,970 (12.8%)
Colum Eastwood SDLP:	2,967 (7.6%)
William Hay DUP:	7,154 (18.4%)
Raymond McCartney SF:	3,638 (9.4%)
Pat Ramsey SDLP:	3,138 (8.1%)

#### Lagan Valley

Jonathan Craig DUP:	4,263 (12.0%)
Paul Givan DUP:	4,352 (12.3%)
Brenda Hale DUP:	2,910 (8.2%)
Trevor Lunn All:	4,389 (12.4%)
Basil McCrea UUP:	5,771 (16.3%)
Edwin Poots DUP:	7,329 (20.7%)

#### Mid Ulster

Ian McCrea DUP:	7,127 (16.7%)
Patsy McGlone, SDLP:	5,065 (11.9)
Martin McGuinness SF:	8,957 (21%)
Francie Molloy SF:	4,263 (10.0%)
Michelle O'Neill SF:	5,178 (12.1%)
Sandra Overend UUP:	4,409 (10.3%)

#### Newry & Armagh

Cathal Boylan SF:	6,614 (14.2%)
Dominic Bradley SDLP:	7,123 (15.3%)
Mickey Brady SF:	3,254 (7.0%)
William Irwin DUP:	6,101 (13.1%)
Danny Kennedy UUP:	8,718 (18.7%)
Conor Murphy SF:	9,127 (19.6%)

#### North Antrim

Jim Allister TUV:	4,061 (10.1%)
Paul Frew DUP:	6,581 (16.3%)
David McIlveen DUP:	3,275 (8.1%)
Dathaí McKay SF:	6,152 (15.3%)
Mervyn Storey DUP:	6,083 (15.1%)
Robin Swann UUP:	2,518 (6.2%)

#### North Belfast

Paula Bradley DUP:	3,488 (10.4%)
William Humphrey DUP:	3,724 (11.1%)
Gerry Kelly SF:	6,674 (19.9%)
Alban Maginness SDLP:	4,025 (12%)
Nelson McCausland DUP:	5,200 (15.5%)
Carál Ní Chuilín SF:	2,999 (9.0%)

#### North Down

Steven Agnew GREEN:	2,207 (7.9%)
Leslie Cree UUP:	1,585 (5.6%)
Gordon Dunne DUP:	3,741 (13.3%)
Alex Easton DUP:	5,175 (18.4%)
Stephen Farry ALL:	3,131 (11.1%)
Peter Weir DUP:	3,496 (12.4%)

#### South Antrim

Trevor Clarke DUP:	4,607 (14.3%)
David Ford All:	4,554 (14.2%)
Paul Girvan DUP:	4,844 (15.1%)
Danny Kinahan UUP:	3,445 (10.7%)
Pam Lewis DUP:	2,866 (8.9%)
Mitchel McLaughlin SF:	4,662 (14.5%)

#### South Belfast

Anna Lo ALL:	6,390 (19.8%)
Alex Maskey SF:	4,038 (12.5%)
Conall McDevitt SDLP:	3,191 (9.9%)
Alasdair McDonnell SDLP:	4,527 (14.0%)
Michael McGimpsey UUP:	2,988 (9.2%)
Jimmy Spratt DUP:	4,045 (12.5%)

#### South Down

Willie Clarke SF:	3,882 (9.3%)
John McCallister UUP:	4,409 (10.6%)
Karen McKeivitt SDLP:	3,758 (9.0%)
Margaret Ritchie SDLP:	8,506 (20.4%)
Caitriona Ruane SF:	5,955 (14.3%)
Jim Wells DUP:	5,200 (12.5%)

#### Strangford

Jonathan Bell DUP:	4,265 (14.4%)
Simon Hamilton DUP:	3,456 (11.6%)
Kieran McCarthy ALL:	4,284 (14.4%)
Michelle McAlveen DUP:	4,573 (15.4%)
David Narry UUP:	2,773 (9.3%)
Mike Nesbitt UUP:	3,273 (11.0%)

#### Upper Bann

Sydney Anderson DUP:	5,854 (13.8%)
Joanne Dobson UUP:	3,348 (7.9%)
Sam Gardiner UUP:	3,676 (8.7%)
Dolores Kelly SDLP:	4,846 (11.4%)
Stephen Moutray DUP:	5,645 (13.3%)
John O'Dowd SF:	6,649 (15.7%)

#### West Belfast

Alex Attwood SDLP:	3,765 (10.9%)
Paul Maskey SF:	5,343 (15.4%)
Fra McCann SF:	4,481 (12.9%)
Jennifer McCann SF:	5,239 (15.1%)
Sue Ramsey SF:	4,116 (11.9%)
Pat Sheehan SF:	3,723 (10.7%)

#### West Tyrone

Michaela Boyle SF:	5,053 (12.9%)
Thomas Buchanan DUP:	5,027 (12.8%)
Joe Byrne SDLP:	3,353 (8.5%)
Pat Doherty SF:	5,659 (14.4%)
Ross Hussey UUP:	4,072 (10.4%)
Barry McElduff SF:	5,992 (15.2%)



Sinn Fein topped the poll in 8 constituencies—Fermanagh & South Tyrone, Mid Ulster, Newry & Armagh, North Belfast, South Antrim, Upper Bann, West Belfast, West Tyrone.

#### CHANGES IN PARTY FORTUNES

Democratic Unionist Party	198,436	30.0%	-0.1%	38 seats	+2
Sinn Fein	178,224	26.9%	+0.8%	29 seats	+1
Social Democratic & Labour Party	94,286	14.2%	-1.00%	14 seats	-2
Ulster Unionist Party	87,531	13.2%	-1.7%	16 seats	-2
Alliance Party	50,875	7.7%	+2.50%	8 seats	+1
Traditional Unionist Voice	16,480	2.5%	--	1 seat	+1
Green Party	6,031	0.9%	-0.80%	1 seats	--
People Before Profit Alliance	5,438	0.8%	+0.7%		
UK Independence Party	4,152	0.6%	+0.4%		
David McClarty (E Londonderry)	3,003	0.5%			
Alan McFarland (N Down)	1,879	0.3%			
Alan Chambers (N Down)	1,765	0.3%			
Dawn Purvis (E Belfast)	1,702	0.3%			
Progressive Unionist Party	1,493	0.2%	-0.3%		-1
Paul McFadden (Foyle)	1,280	0.2%			
British National Party	1,252	0.2%			
Raymond McCord (N Belfast)	1,176	0.2%	--		
Workers Party	1,155	0.2%	0%		
Paddy McGowan (W Tyrone)	1,145	0.2%			
Eugene McMenamin (W Tyrone)	1,096	0.2%			
Pat Cox (Fermanagh S Tyrone)	997	0.2%			
Hugh McCloy (Mid Ulster)	933	0.1%			
Socialist Party	819	0.1%	0%		
Gary McCann (Mid Ulster)	241	0.04%			
Brian Pelan (W Belfast)	122	0.02%			
James Malone (Newry and Armagh)	90	0.01%			
Terry Doherty (Foyle)	60	0.01%			
Stephen Stewart (E Belfast)	46	0.01%			
Procapitalism	29	0.004%	+0.001%		

#### ELLIOT OUTBURST

UUP leader, Tom Elliot, got a bit hysterical at the count. He shouted out that the Sinn Fein supporters were the scum of Sinn Fein flying a foreign flag. He claimed that he was provoked by rowdiness and flag waving. Reporters there said there was some rowdiness and flag waving, but that these came after Mr. Elliot's outburst. He has now backtracked after he was condemned by the family of recently killed PSNI Constable Ronan Kerr. Actually, he became maddened by being roundly beaten by Sinn Féin's Michelle Gildernew—9,110 votes to Elliot's 6,319.

Gerry Kelly, who topped the poll for Sinn Féin in North Belfast, described Elliot's remarks as "*deliberately insulting*" and "*not very leaderly*". He said he agreed with Mr. Elliot's concern for victims—"*But what he has to remember, and I presume he would agree, is that victims go right across the board. He is an ex-UDR man, as I understand it, and he is quite proud of that—that's up to him.*" Mr. Kelly added that the UDR, the British Army, the RUC and Loyalists were all involved in collusion which resulted in the deaths of many.

The Alliance Party Leader, David Ford, said that the comments "*could act as the political obituary of Tom Elliot. They were despicable comments that should be treated with the contempt they deserve.*" The only prominent Unionist to support

Mr. Elliot was his neighbour and former UDR member, Ken McGuinness.

#### THE NEW EXECUTIVE:

*Health*, Edwin Poots DUP;  
*Finance*, Sammy Wilson DUP;  
*Junior Finance*, Jonathan Bell DUP,  
*First Minister*, Peter Robinson DUP;  
*Deputy First Minister*, Martin McGuinness SF;  
*Junior First Minister*, Martina Anderson SF (replacing Gerry Kelly);  
*Social Development*, Nelson McCausland DUP;  
*Enterprise*, Arlene Foster DUP;  
*Agriculture*, Michelle O'Neill SF;  
*Culture*, Caral Ní Chuilín SF;  
*Regional Development*, Danny Kennedy UUP;  
*Justice*, David Ford ALL;  
*Employment & Learning*, Stephen Farry ALL;  
*Environment*, Alex Attwood SDLP;  
*Education*, John O'Dowd SF.

Catriona Ruane SF and Michael McGimpsey UUP have been forced to return to the back benches.

There seems to be civil war in the SDLP between South Belfast MP, Alasdair McDonnell and his Party Leader Margaret Ritchie. McDonnell sees himself as a kind of king-maker in the Party and a few years ago forced out his neighbour Carmel Hanna. This time the row is focussed by Ritchie's appointment of her man Alex Attwood to the Executive in the face of open and vocal opposition from McDonnell in favour of his man, Patsy McGlone.

Polls by local newspapers showed that many Sinn Féin voters gave their second or third preference votes to the DUP, and

in some cases were encouraged to do so by canvassers. It's no longer just a case of support for Sinn Féin but a distaste for the SDLP. Margaret "Poppy" Ritchie's days of leadership look numbered (as do those of the UUP's Tom Elliot). The only problem may be finding someone to take up either poisoned chalice!

#### COUNCIL RESULTS BY PARTY

**Antrim:** DUP 5; UUP 5; SF 4; SDLP 3; ALL 2. **Ballymena:** DUP 12; UUP 4; SF 2; SDLP 2; TUV 2; ALL 1; IND 1. **Ballymoney:** DUP 8; SF 3; UUP 2; TUV 1; SDLP 1; IND 1. **Belfast:** SF 16, DUP 15, SDLP 8, ALL 6, UUP 3, PUP 2; IND 1. **Carrickfergus:** DUP 8, UUP 4, ALL 3, IND 2. **Castlereagh:** DUP 11; ALL 6; UUP 3, SDLP 2, GREEN 1. **Larne:** DUP 4; UUP 3; ALL 3; SF 1; TUV 1; SDLP 1; IND 2. **Lisburn:** DUP 14; UUP 5; SF 5; SDLP 3; ALL 3. **Moyle:** SF 3; UUP 3; SDLP 2; DUP 2; TUV 1; ex-SF 1; IND 3. (Moyle, which includes the Glens of Antrim, is twinned with Gaza) **Newtownabbey:** DUP 12; ALL 5; UUP 5; SF 2; SDLP 1. **Armagh:** SF 6; UUP 6; SDLP 5; DUP 4; IND U. 1. **Craigavon:** DUP 9; SF 8; UUP 6; SDLP 2; ALL 1. **Ards:** DUP 11; UUP 6; ALL 4; SDLP 1; IND 1. **Banbridge:** UUP 7; DUP 5; SF 2; SDLP 2; ALL 1. **Down:** SDLP 9; SF 5; DUP 3; UUP 3; Green 1; ALL 1; IND 1. **Newry & Mourne:** SF 14; SDLP 9; UUP 3; DUP 1; UKIP 1; ex-SF 1; IND 1. **North Down:** DUP 11; ALL 6; UUP 4; Green 1; ex-Green 1; IND 2. **Fermanagh:** SF 9; UUP 6; DUP 4; SDLP 3; ex-SF 1. **Coleraine:** DUP 9; UUP 3; SDLP 3; ALL 2; SF 1; ex-UUP 1; IND 1. **Derry City:** SDLP 14; SF 10; DUP 5; UUP 1. **Limavady:** SF 6; SDLP 3; DUP 2; UUP 2; TUV 1. **Magherafelt:** SF 9; DUP 3; UUP 2; SDLP 2. **Cookstown:** SF 6; SDLP 4; DUP 3; UUP 3. **Dungannon:** SF 8; DUP 6; UUP 4; SDLP 3; ex-SF 1. **Omagh:** SF 10; DUP 3; UUP 3; SDLP 3; ex-SDLP 1; IND 1. **Strabane:** SF 8; DUP 4; UUP 1; SDLP 1; ex-SDLP 1; IND 1.

582 seats were contested: there were losses for the DUP, UUP and SDLP. Sinn Fein topped the poll in Belfast, and has had its first Mayor elected. Gainers in general were SF and Alliance. Traditional Unionist Voice won some seats. Here are the Party totals:

DUP	175	ALL	44
SF	138	TUV	6
UUP	99	GREEN	3
SDLP	87	OTHERS	30

In a total of 8 constituencies the Alliance Party gave 25% to 40% of transfers to the SDLP. The transfers were similar, though different the other way. For instance the Balmoral Ward the SDLP and the UUP

secured 30% of Alliance transfers and in Laganbank the SDLP got 30% of Alliance transfers, and Belfast's Oldpark, the SDLP secured a Council seat by getting 38% of Alliance transfers. In case anyone forgets it, the Alliance Party was a breakaway from the Ulster Unionist Party in 1970. It acquired the odd Catholic like Seán Neeson. But these days it has close links with current and ex-members of the UVF—especially in East Belfast.

#### SEANAD "ELECTIONS"

The final results of the Seanad election were announced on 29th April. Fine Gael took 18 seats; Fianna Fail won 14 (with the help of transfers from Sinn Féin); Labour took 9, SF 3 (with transfers from FF); Others got 5 seats.

The Taoiseach gets to appoint 11 members to the Seanad, but this time he ceded 4 of these to Labour. Kenny's selections were: **Martin McAleese**, the President's husband who is a dentist. **Fiach O'Conghail**, Director of the Abbey Theatre. **Eamon Coughlan**, former Olympic athlete, and Director of the Crumlin Children's Medical and Research Foundation. **Jim Darcy**, a teacher and Fine Gael Councillor in Louth. **Aideen Haydon**, solicitor and Chairwoman of the Threshold housing agency. She failed to be elected by the Industry and Commercial panel. **Lorraine Higgins**, barrister. She also failed to be elected by the same panel. She was rejected as a Labour candidate to the Dail and failed as an independent. **Mary Ann O'Brien**, a businesswoman and founder of the Jack and Jill Foundation for children with brain problems.

Gilmore's appointees were: Mary Moran, teacher, former senior Camogie player and now President of the Camogie Association. Dr. Katherine Zapone, Irish Human Rights Group, especially campaigning for lesbian marriage. Lorraine Higgins, barrister and member of the Junior Chamber of Commerce. Failed Labour Dail candidate. Mary Moran, teacher in Dundalk and on the board of St. Mary's Special School in Drumcar. Also a failed Dail Labour candidate.

The other members of the Seanad are nominated by County Councillors to one of 5 panels: Administrative, Agricultural, Cultural and Educational, Industrial and Commercial, and Labour. Votes are by Councillors, outgoing senators and Dail members. Three each are elected by graduates of Trinity College Dublin, and the National University of Ireland, (i.e. all the others). Unionist Jeffrey Dudgeon stood on the Trinity College panel (having attending Magee College, Derry, which was formerly a part of TCD). He failed to be elected, winning 684 First Preferences.

#### OTHER

Paul Maskey, son of Alex, has been chosen by Sinn Féin to contest Gerry Adams' old Westminster seat for West Belfast.

**Conor Lynch**

#### A reply to Gerald Murphy

## Knockraha In The War Of Independence

In the June 2011 issue of the *Irish Political Review*, Mr. Gerald Murphy refutes my assertion in the April issue that he demonised Martin Corry in his book *The Year of the Disappearances*. If calling Corry "*the brigade executioner*", which is totally false is not demonising, then I don't know what is. In the last sentence of his letter, he states it is important to distinguish between what he wrote and what I think he wrote. However, what concerns me is what he actually wrote. In the bottom of page 23 in his book he says it is clear that Corry was Hegarty's chief executioner. He repeats that again on page 25 (that Corry was executioner) and again in his recent letter he says Martin Corry was chief executioner of the Brigade.

That is not true. Martin Corry had no role in the Brigade and to depict him as the 'Pierrepoint' of the Volunteers is false. If he had such a role, he would have been the first to say so. My information from other members of the Company, many of whom in later years were his political opponents, said that he had no such position. Gerald Murphy bases this allegation on an alleged throw-away remarks of Mick Leahy to Ernie O'Malley.

What is worth understanding here is that, as the War of Independence and Civil War came to an end, many of those, particularly those who were full-time involved, had no jobs. Many later unfortunately had to emigrate but some of those high-up in the movement hoped to get into politics. As such they almost felt they had a right to be elected. There was a dog-fight to get nominations to stand as a TD among former IRA members in the East Cork constituency. Martin Corry got to the Dail, up-staging many who were much higher than him in the hierarchy of the IRA. This naturally caused resentment and it coloured their opinion of Corry for the rest of their lives. In his detailed written account to the Bureau of Military History, Mick Leahy makes no account of Martin Corry being an executioner.

In his book *The Year of the Disappearances*, Gerald Murphy quotes a lot from the notebooks of Ernie O'Malley, housed in UCD. However, these notes could not be considered authentic sources of history, for the writer taking the notes would possibly have to use his own words to refresh his memory. As such it is only the writer who could interpret his own notes and, as Ernie O'Malley never wrote a book or an article based on these notes, they are of dubious historical value. But, even if Mick Leahy had said that Corry was the chief executioner, then he was wrong.

Gerald Murphy in his letter said that many of those involved in the running of Sing-Sing were traumatised for the rest of their lives from their experience. I never met any so-affected and I interviewed most of them. As one Volunteer commented, "*it was not a hurling match we were involved in*". Their general attitude was they were soldiers of the Irish Republic having taken an oath of obedience to Dail Eireann, they were merely carrying out their duties as soldiers obeying their superiors.

At the unveiling of the plaque at Sing-Sing by the Knockraha History Society, Mr Murphy writes in his book on page 26 that prayers were said for those buried in the bogs. They were remembered and prayed for. It was he said a sad and moving spectacle, perhaps a closure of a kind. This was obviously written to give the impression that there was a collective guilt among the community in Knockraha to what happened in our area during the War of Independence and that the prayers were trying to purge it. What actually happened was that as Chairman I invited the Parish Priest along to bless the plaque, as we had done for all other plaques erected in the parish. This is what happened and there was no mention of those buried in the bogs.

Of the bones dug up in the area in the mid-60s, to which Mr. Murphy says in his letter that there was a cover-up and suggested in his book that Martin Corry could be behind it. When those bones were found, it was investigated by the Garda Síochána in Watergrasshill and when they were satisfied that the bones were from the War of Independence they had no other interest in it—that was a police and not a political decision.

Finally there is obviously someone in Knockraha feeding false information to Gerald Murphy because he says that, since the book was published, he has been told about several incidents about skeletons turning up in the fields in the area and in one instance in a quarry. In each case the bones he said were quietly buried. Before he wrote such a statement, if he had contacted any member of the Knockraha History Society they would have told him that this was false information. No such skeletons were ever found and if they had it would be a crime not to contact the local Garda and to bury them quietly.

**James Fitzgerald**

*Chairman Knockraha History Society*  
June 2011

## Some Items From July 1919

[The "Irish Bulletin" (7th July 1919—11th Dec. 1921) was the official organ of Dáil Eireann during the 1919—1921 period. Lawrence Ginnell, then Director of Publicity for the Dáil, first started it in mid-1919 as a "summary of acts of aggression" committed by the forces of the Crown. This news-sheet came out fortnightly, later, weekly. We reprint below the first summaries published, those for July 1919, as well an example of one of the many reports on what was happening throughout the country during that month. The items are in the format in which they were originally published and we hope to publish a monthly selection from the Bulletin.]

**THE FOLLOWING ARE ACTS OF AGGRESSION COMMITTED IN IRELAND  
BY THE MILITARY AND POLICE OF THE USURPING ENGLISH GOVERNMENT,  
AS REPORTED IN DAILY PRESS DURING JULY 1919.**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Arrests.</i>	<i>Raids</i>	<i>Sentences</i>	<i>Months Assaults</i>	<i>Armed Assaults</i>	<i>Suppressions &amp; Proclamations</i>	<i>Court- martial</i>	<i>Total Exclusive of Imprisonment</i>
<b>July</b>								
7th	-	About 500	-	-	-	1	-	Approx. 501
8th	11	-	-	-	2	12	-	25
9th	1	3	-	-	1	-	2	7
10th	7	2	7	-	-	2	-	18
11th	-	4	4	1	21	-	-	5
12th	1	2	1	-	1	-	-	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>561</b>
<b>July</b>								
14	7	-	-	-	-	1	9	17
15	7	1	-	-	-	1	-	10
16	1	-	2	3	-	-	-	3
17	-	1	6	-	-	1	1	6
19	1	3	1	9	-	-	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>July</b>								
21	3	9	3	30	-	-	1	43
22	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	4
23	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	4
24	1	4	3	1	6	2	20	34
25	2	1	6	-	-	1	1	10
26	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>July</b>								
28	7	-	1	-	-	4	1	11
29	1	-	1	1	3	-	-	6
30	-	-	1	3	1	2	-	7
31	2	-	-	-	-	1	6	9
<b>Aug.</b>								
2	-	5	-	-	-	8	-	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>46</b>

### MONDAY, 21st JULY, 1919.

#### Armed Assaults:

A meeting was held in Beresford Place, Dublin, on Saturday night, and was attended by about 300 people. An ex-soldier addressed the crowd, which was good-humoured and orderly. When the meeting was dispersing a large body of police, armed with revolvers and batons, appeared on the scene. The assembly which by this time was considerably thinned, immediately broke up. Seeing this, the police broke rank and drew their batons, and advanced on the double on the remnant of the crowd.

After the charge, in which the police used their batons freely and indiscriminately, half a dozen people were seen at one

time lying on the roadway.

While a crowd who had been singing Irish songs outside the old G.P.O., in Dublin on Saturday night, were dispersing, police appeared on the scene and proceeded to clear the road. Two other charges were made on isolated groups of people immediately after.

While proceeding down Fleet Street, Dublin, about Midnight on Saturday, three young lads were charged by a number of police, and one of them was so severely injured that he had to be taken in an ambulance to Jervis Street Hospital.

On Saturday night ("Peace Night") baton charges by police also took place in Grafton Street, Henry Street, Dame Street, O'Connell Street, and College Street,

Dublin. Sixteen persons were treated in Jervis Street Hospital during the night, mostly for scalp wounds.

In Cork on Saturday night the police made several baton charges, principally in Patrick Street, and the adjoining thoroughfares. In Parliament Street, a crowd stoned police, who retaliated by firing a volley at the people. No casualties are reported.

Serious disturbances took place in Limerick, owing to disputes between British soldiers and civilians. Armed police made baton charges on the crowds. Several civilians were treated for scalp wounds. About a hundred British military were ordered out to reinforce the police but the crowds had already dispersed. •

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### FRANCE

Holidaying in France is always a pleasure even if this time, for the first two days, it rained and then out came the sun and off we went on our touring around. We always base ourselves in some small little place where only the French live and holiday and this year we went to Camaret-sur-mer just south of Brest. We took our usual quota of books but this year himself wanted more of a hiking holiday after finishing the El Camino walk to Santiago in early May sailing there and back. So the first day we trooped up to Pointe de Penhir to where there was a WW2 gunnery post built into the rocks over the bay of Camaret by the Germans. As we approached the place we were amazed to see quite a few French veterans walking with sticks and some tottering together and assisted by the Bon Secours nuns. The gunnery had been turned into an exhibition place but had kept its original size. We bent our heads and hunched along and almost in the dark paid a young lady €4 each.

Then we went down to the base of the actual gunnery and with heavy hearts looked at the living past. Fastened around the wall was a huge American flag which startled us. Then came a French one, then an UK one and I said where is the Soviet Russian one? After some *rumishing* around we saw a small little "red flag" put there almost as an afterthought. So still with the old politics—how Churchill would have relished it. As I came up to the last level I was looking at all the old photos of the heroic Resistance and de Gaulle with Churchill after the Germans were defeated. And there lastly was a poster with the words, "*Win the War and Buy American Bonds*", showing how commerce underpins so much of all wars. Looking out on the rocks and walking well away from the edge—one could see how well the Germans had taken this as one of their many gunnery positions along the coasts.

As we were walking over the Pointe towards the car-park (free) I bent down and took a little stone as a personal souvenir. I had just pocketed it when himself told me it was illegal to take anything from such places and knowing the French capacity for rapid hard responses only too well, I stopped walking and was trying to push it unconcernedly from my pocket when I saw the laughter on his face. Suffice it to say I kept it and remonstrated with him for nearly giving me 'a turn'.

We drove back to Camaret and across the sea there was a thick forest covering a hill and built into the hill were several French military bases with tons of coms.

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## It Is Time

sticking out from all angles. We stopped to take photos of them—again with some reservations—but they were almost so well camouflaged that I felt it would be nice to have them and so himself—the photographer in the family—stood with me under some bushes and we quickly did the business. We were driving away when we heard the sounds of a helicopter overhead but it was a false alarm and they pulled away to starboard. The town of Camaret itself seemed quite wealthy with some substantial houses which is unusual for that part of rural Brittany. It was only when we saw the bases that we realised that the military have quite an impact on the economy there and of course tourism.

And really it showed Irish pretensions as a tourist destination for what they really are. Besides numerous restaurants, cafes, etc, the most important thing was the free parking everywhere. Whilst at home in Cork it is impossible to park without being caught by the clampers. Sometimes one could wish that our politicians in Cork Council would wise up to the fact that this type of money-making is short-term as it hunts out all the people to the suburbs and naturally also the tourists. I have spoken with numerous people as have the Councillors and they all say they wouldn't come near Cork City because of the clampers. Why doesn't anybody listen? Cork is becoming a ghost town if it *is* not already so—but no sound policies from those in charge. Nowadays the South Mall is largely deserted and if the Port of Cork does really go down-water to Ringaskiddy—well that is it—our goose will be well and truly cooked.

Camaret was warm in its welcome and the people had as a whole no English but we got on famously without because I must admit we had but the most rudimentary French. For me mime is communication and they get you before you even finish. Camaret is famous for '*La tour Vauban*'. The great engineer Vauban's tower stands majestically over the inner harbour in the town and with that particular red stone is both aesthetically pleasing and was a great military fortification and so good was he at this project that in 1653 King Louis XIV appointed him to build similar towers of fortifications and in 1678 he was nominated Commissioner General of Fortifications. All in all there were over 130 such fortifications built during his lifetime. The British like to favour Brunel—born in 1806 as their great engineer but of course he was the son of a French engineer so was well acquainted with that type of engineering and father and son went on to be very successful in their many important projects.

Vauban is venerated all over France and there are many statues and public tributes to this great Frenchman and many commercial buildings bear his name including our hotel and also one in Brest.

Next to Vauban's Tower, there is almost beside it, the little fishermen's Church 'Notre Dame de Rocamadour' which is very beautiful and was built in 1183. What profoundly moved me was the history written on wall maps of the early Church and its association with maritime activities. Firstly there were extracts from the Bible which concentrated on the sea especially those associated with Jesus and then we come to St. Brendan the Navigator from Ireland whom they stated was born in Kerry. This towering maritime genius is notable in Ireland for his almost complete absence. To my knowledge there are no outstanding memorials to him and certainly ignorant people still question his journeys. When we were in Portugal, in Sagres right at the tip of the Algarve, there were so many shrines to their Prince Henry the Navigator and even a castle on the promontory which was alleged to be the site of his original navigation school. Imagine if we in Ireland were serious about our past and our own achievements—that we could not have something similar for our own great navigator. And really this type of tribute would draw the tourists because you should have seen the buses that were filling the courtyards in Camaret from France and Germany to acknowledge Vauban. But of course we have public statues from our colonial past foisted upon us by a military conquest and the only one that got the boot was Nelson in Dublin and that was not the work of a risen Irish State. We actually stated that it was a *criminal act*, such is our total *sleeveenism*.

I asked one Frenchman who was very taken with us as Irish people—why and please don't take this the wrong way they had no public statuary to—oh for example the Germans? I thought he was actually going to strike me such was his angry response. But what would he have made of our former Minister Michael Martin, Fianna Fail putting up a plaque to that bloody Drake near Crosshaven with the full naval and state panoply? And the creeping British Legionism with their aims for our pacification and what some might call ethnic cleansing during our own War of Independence? Spenser is our hero now and the Frenchman whose English was excellent after a stint in Ireland learning to be a chef just couldn't *grasp* what I was telling him. I fear he thought me to be a fool and who is to say that he was not right in his thinking. What are we? Oh we are great *plamasers* to be sure and great haters of our *own* past. What influences have been wrought to bring us to this stage in our enfeeblement? Was it for Sky Sport and the English soaps like 'Eastenders' that our patriots spilled their blood? Is that it? We kick everything we once held dear to the delight of the media and academia. We even get *special mention* for it. Brian Lenihan was cold in his Protestant graveyard when the Irish *Daily Mail* was sold

an interview with his aunt Mary O'Rourke titled *Brian's Last Days*. I shivered at such a commodification of illness and death—it was pure *voyeurism*. And yes there will be a by-election eventually and maybe O'Rourke was marking out Lenihan territory but he is not yet cold in his grave and what about his widow and children? And knock me down if O'Rourke didn't get encomiums for her 'bravery'.

After Camaret we drove up to Brest to see the famous Chateau, a sea fortification that was never taken in any war except by the Germans in WW2 of course. Brest is a naval city and unlike Camaret it was the first time that we began to see different ethnicities. When we drove up to the Chateau we were met by a gun-waving guard who was shouting something at us in his native language. We immediately recognised the threatening gestures and backed out as quickly as possible. Then we walked up and he stared sourly at us. I thought he would again stop us but he let us through. We paid €6 each and were given those gizmos that talk one through the exhibition and the whole fortification itself. We hiked up tiny stone stairways, walked around the battlements which was the place I was most interested in. From there it was easy to see the inner harbour in Brest where they have all their Atlantic fleet of nuclear submarines. There were masses of ships—the new small mobile type—but not a submarine in sight. So much for *'Das Boot'* fantasies. France is now the leading maritime power in Europe and even wider still. They have just completed a contract with the Russians for two big nuclear-fuelled ships. *'Warships'* magazine has on its June cover one of those new French Navy frigates, the 'Aquitaine', embarking on sea trials.

Plodding along and now mightily complaining at all the extensive walking we were doing, we came to an inside garden—with very few flowers because the main attraction was this tiny submarine in actual detail. I was utterly amazed as I had never seen anything like it. As I pressed my button on the walky-talky there was all its history. In the last two years of the war, 1944-45 Germany built 600 of these mini submarines which they called 'seal' in German and that is what they looked like exactly. As no photographs were allowed and there were no pictures of them on sale, I just couldn't believe that a beaten Germany could even design, not to mind produce, these new inventive subs. They could only have two men on board and were used mainly for reconnaissance and spying according to my gizmo. They also carried two torpedoes on either side of the hull for protection. When the war ended the French 'found' them on the beaches of all places—Dunkirk. They took them over and used them for themselves until 1958 and the French also commissioned more. It was such a beautiful object

and the courage of the submariners must have been amazing because if these were spotted they were dead. The Germans had them painted grey but when the French 'found' them and began using them they painted them black. I bet the French stole them as war booty and why couldn't they just admit it. I was leaping at the lie. But unfortunately I got lost in the Chateau and it was like a maze. I was beginning to hyperventilate as claustrophobia was clawing at my hammering chest and every time I thought I found the exit, it was only an entry into another part of the fortification. Yes—I admit I was swearing at this juncture and couldn't find himself either. Eventually we did meet and he got me out but not before I had written on the visitor's book what I thought of French duplicity. I got out into the courtyard and sat down and could see the man with the gun looking over carefully at me. And then something strange happened. The guard was talking to other guards inside an opening in the main wall and suddenly he leapt out and stood stock still and finally a big car came out of the naval academy, obviously an officer and the guard saluted and the car purred silently by with no acknowledgement from the well-dressed young man

inside. He was wearing a cashmere polo jumper and if ever there was an aristo—he was one. And really I can't explain why I was so amazed but I was because I thought of the motto of the Republic was so imbued in the society that that kind of Sandhurst behaviour was particular only to England. But one lives and learns and perhaps I now have a more rounded knowledge of the French as a people on the whole.

Before we left Brest we went down to the docks and the people there looked very rough and apparently of North African origin. They were strangely slouching against walls or just sitting on the detritus of the port—seemingly without work. They had tired hard faces and all were smoking. In fact I was astonished at how much all the French smoke, even ladies who were pregnant sat in the sun fagging away. Recently a snatch snap of an English TY actress who was pregnant was published by a baying press and she had to issue *an apology* to the readers for her lapse in judgement and then went on to claim she was receiving treatment for her addiction to fags. No Gallic indulgence permitted there.

Julianne Herlihy ©

## The 1981 Hunger Strike, The ANC, And Patrick Pearse

On Saturday June 18th, Sinn Féin organised a conference in London's Irish Centre, billed *1981 A Turning Pint in Irish History*. In the course of an afternoon they proceeded to demonstrate that this was nothing but the truth. There were a brace of MEPs, Sinn Féin's Bairbre de Brún and Francis (this is how it was spelt in publicity and by those who introduced him at the conference) Wurtz, of the French Communist Party. He attended Bobby Sands's funeral and had prior to that tried to raise the question of the H-Blocks Hunger Strike in the European Parliament. Other past or current public representatives included Councillors, TDs, and MPs (Jeremy Corbyn, Tony Benn and Kevin McNamara (billed as "Dr. McNamara"—he has an honorary one from Hull University—but he got the one he uses from Liverpool for a thesis on the 'Mac Bride Principles'). It was noted in the course of the day that personages as different as Fidel Castro and the Ayatollah Khomeini thought the Strike was justifiable and heroic.

The most interesting speaker was Brendan 'Bik' McFarlane, who lived through both the Hunger Strikes, and was, in the first place, PRO for the 1981 Strike. He was very surprised when Bobby Sands told him he was to be O/C (Officer Commanding) when he—Sands—inevitably fell into a coma. That was because the

then deputy O/C, who was a close friend of Sands, would almost certainly take him off the Strike (and thereby dissipate solidarity among those on actual Hunger Strike). He noted that nearly everybody "*on the out*" was opposed to the Hunger Strike, including the Army Council. Opposed were also the UK (and Irish) Governments, the Catholic Church (the Pope sent his Private Secretary to visit Long Kesh alias HMP (Her Majesty's Prison) The Maze. There was—naturally enough—an immense amount of pressure from the Strikers' families.

The Strike could in some ways, be deemed to have fizzled-out. Thatcher's Government did not give in to the Strikers' demands. But the demands were all met within weeks of the ending of the Strike. This may have had to do with the Bobby Sands win in the Fermanagh / South Tyrone By-Election near the end of his Strike. Certainly the Sinn Féin speakers were convinced that this was a great breakthrough. That is entirely accurate in regard to the sort of political party the (largely Northern) leadership—which had taken over SF at the turn of the 1970s / 80s—wanted to form. Prior to them, Sinn Féin, which had been re-absorbed into the Republican Movement in the early 1950s, was very decidedly as an auxiliary organisation. Adams and this cohort did not want

a Bolshevik-type party. Some prisoners, the 'Republican Communist' tendency were, on release given, rather brusquely, to understand that it wasn't on the *clár* [table]. The Movement needed a party, which would be an equal partner of the Army, and with considerable flexibility in its approach to the electorate and to the Governments it had to deal with. If it had become a communist party, nobody would have voted for it, and London, Dublin and in particular Washington DC, would not have been prepared to deal with it. (Brazil's Workers' Party has never had a majority in the Senate or House of Representatives, Lula is a very clever operator. And Sinn Féin had the example of the Workers' Party of Ireland and its 'failed revolution' to keep it on track.)

Most other speakers told us what they had done, politically, before, during and after the Strike. Some had been impelled into politics by the fact of the Strikes, particularly the 1981 one and Sands' determination to fight the London (and to an extent the Dublin) Government to a conclusion. Kevin McNamara had the thankless task of trying to put a gloss on the fact that the Labour Government had withdrawn "special" (effectively POW) status and on the stepping-up of maltreatment of the prisoners and of suspects on the Castlereagh conveyor-belt. He did not quite succeed, but presumably he was there because Labour wants to conciliate Sinn Féin.

Sinn Féin now runs Northern Ireland, and, in effect, leads the opposition in Dáil Éireann, the Irish Labour Party having decided, once again that it should be Fine Gael's fall guy. (The Stickies who nobbled Labour about twenty years ago have proved as politically myopic as the previous leadership.) This has been entirely a result of SF's own vigour—much of it supplied by IRA Volunteers. The prisoners built up a huge library mostly politically and historically-oriented, with no doubt the odd military handbook to keep the brain exercised.

Jeremy Corbyn introduced one of the sessions, and Tony Benn speaking at the end of the event was mercifully short-winded. The other interesting speaker was Ronnie Kasrils of the ANC. He was imprisoned himself but spent much of his career outside of South Africa, much of it in the 'front line' States to South Africa's north. The ANC followed the Hunger Strikes with a great deal of interest. But he implied that they had been reading Irish Republican material well before that. Connolly might have been their main interest, but Kasrils quoted Pearse, his 'notorious' speech at the graveside of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa. The one that chills the blood of every Irish revisionist, and ought to chill the blood of the rest of us—but largely doesn't—"out of the graves of patriot men and women spring living nations".

Seán McGouran

[David Adams, the *Irish Times* columnist, comes from a strain of Ulster Loyalist paramilitarism that had some coherence and a semblance of political purpose in the mid-1970s, but has since gone into drastic decline in every sense, helping to reduce the Protestant working class to a shambles in the process. It frittered away the position of strength from which it started, and in its disarray all it knows to do is whinge about the Irish nationalism that it despised in the good old days.

On June 2nd Adams's column was entitled *Obama's Waffle Feeds Irish Taste For Fantasy*. It includes this sentence:

"There has always been something rather pathetic about Ireland marketing itself as a casualty of colonialism and competing for victimhood status with former British colonies in the developing world. When, in fact, as an integral part of the UK, Ireland was at least as much coloniser as colonised, given the role it played in helping establish and maintain the British Empire."

This is an approach launched by Conor Cruise O'Brien hagiographer, Donald Akenson, and taken up to some extent by President Mary Robinson and others. Irish participation in the British Imperial conquests was Irish Imperialism. The Irish participated in the main as cannonfodder, after Irish society had been broken by a long series of English conquests—Elizabethan, Cromwellian, and Williamite, extending over a century and a half, and a further century of systematic destruction by means of the Penal Laws. Fragments of this broken society were then scooped into the British Army for the war on France. Then, with the enforced starvation of the 1840s, there was a mass movement to the USA by those who could scrape together the fare. In America these broken Irish took part in the normal activities of the state, which the Ulster Scots had played a considerable part in establishing: genocide, conquest, colonisation, slavery. There was some Ulster Scots protest against slavery, but none that we know of against the multiple genocide on which American civilisation was based.

Akenson, taking what was essentially a racist view of social affairs, described what these fragments of the broken Irish did in the service of the English state as being Irish imperialist activities. We disagreed. The broken Irish, their political authorities having been swept away by Elizabeth, Cromwell and William, and their traditions broken by the Penal Laws, became blank instruments of the British and American States and absorbed their values. Adams just follows Akenson.

The *Irish Times* exerts a strict censorship on what can be said in its letter pages. But it operates a website which is supposedly open to public comment on the paper. The letter reproduced below is now circulating on the Internet, with the explanation that it was posted on the *Irish Times* website, but was quickly removed by the *Irish Times* moderators.

We had noticed David Adams's ramblings but taken no heed of them. But, now that the top people have made it clear that he is a protected species even on their public website, we will have to take him a bit more seriously. By their censorship they have made him their voice.

The censored letter appears below.]

## Censorship!

### Irish Times censors my response to ex UDA man David Adams

Former leading loyalist and regular Irish Times columnist David Adams told us today that, rather than being anti colonial freedom fighters, the Irish in fact were colonisers acting in full concert with the United Kingdom government.

I am not making this up.

The article entitled—"Obama's waffle feeds Irish taste for fantasy", can be read here: <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/opinion/2011/0602/1224298259177.html?via=mr> but the key quote made by this former prominent UDA member based in Lisburn, Co. Antrim says:

"...as an integral part of the UK, Ireland was at least as much coloniser as colonised, given the role it played in helping establish and maintain the British Empire."

(NB—Lisburn was the area from which loyalist killer Michael Stone usually operated, very often receiving his information from British agent Brian Nelson. The UDA commander in Lisburn John McMichael was also working for the "security forces".)

I then, understandably, felt the urge to respond to this astounding rubbish and duly submitted the comment below to the comments section in the article's online version.

Readers will not be surprised to learn that the moderators in our "Paper of Record" removed this offence to their pro colonial sensibilities, but we do now have the internet and blog forums and the story of collusion between loyalist paramilitaries and the British state will be told one way or another.

Readers of Cic Saor now number in their many thousands and I would urge you all to defy this censorship by posting this blog onwards to other comrades and friends.

What the *Irish Times* censored:

"I welcome Mr. Adams' attempt at searing journalistic honesty but he should take a long hard look at the consequences before he goes further down that road—not least where accuracy is concerned.

For the purposes of his own argument, he lumps the native Irish in with the colonial power, when in fact he is well aware that those same natives continually sought to throw off the imperial yoke.

This has been recognised in India, South Africa and elsewhere.

What David Adams conveniently forgets to mention, however, is that he himself fought the anti colonial Irish by his senior membership of the Ulster Defence Association.

Of course, we now know that the UDA was working hand in hand with covert elements of Britain's "security forces" to effect the murder of those same irredentist Irish he now claims never existed.

To my knowledge, Mr Adams has never used his platform in the Irish Times to tell us exactly how this murderous collusion actually worked but now, with this latest article, and its clear signalling of a new found utter candour, I look forward to an equally brutal frankness that will lay bare the truth about what the UDA actually did."

**Paul Larkin**

Baile Átha Cliath 2/06/2011

## Naval Warfare

### Part Twelve

In the decades following the Declaration of Paris a *Maritime League for the Retention of Maritime Rights* was established with Thomas Bowles as Honorary Secretary. Its main objective was to raise public consciousness of the "secret surrender" made in the signing the Declaration of Paris with a view to Britain extricating itself from it.

In one of its publications H.A Butler-Johnston put forward its main argument that the *Declaration* lessened the power of the major maritime state in the world, Great Britain, whose main power was on the seas, rather than the land, to carry on war to its fullest potential:

"This was the secret of England's influence on the Continent—an influence out of all proportion to her military strength or the numbers of her population. By this she reached the secret springs of action of every Cabinet in Europe... The Declaration of Paris abolishes war at sea, and leaves the arbitrament of war to the decision of big battalions—a comfortable prospect for the great military empires, but a doleful outlook for maritime Powers, and especially for England" (*Handbook of Maritime Rights Considered and the Declaration of Paris*, pp104-5)".

Those who sought to extricate England from the *Declaration* were concerned that any state at war with Britain would place the whole of its sea-going commerce under the neutral flag—which by one Article was declared to be a sufficient protection to that commerce against capture.

It potentially reduced, therefore, the power of Britain in war by limiting the amount of injury it was capable of inflicting

on an enemy through attacking his sea-borne commerce. And, as such, it removed the competitive edge that Britain had through the use of sea power which had by virtue of geography and which she sustained through expertise built up over centuries, over other nations.

It was also argued that it largely destroyed the utility of blockade because this lay in the fact that it prevented the enemy from trading and from receiving supplies through the blockaded ports. So the "irresistible pressure" of the Royal Navy was lost since this was so much greater in blockading strength than any other nation, and, as a consequence, greater was the loss of power in comparison with other nations.

Before the *Declaration of Paris*, an Order in Council would have declared certain ports or coasts blockaded, and all vessels found on the high seas bound for those ports or coasts were held to have broken the blockade, and were seized. According to the *Declaration of Paris* a blockade, in order to be valid, had to be effective; that is, it must be effected by means of a blockading squadron off the particular blockaded coast or harbour, and must be effective enough to constitute a real danger to the vessels attempting to enter the ports that were the subject of the blockade. This new rule put an end to 'paper blockades' and 'ocean blockades', that is, blockades ordered in Council and effected by ships in the open sea. It considerably limited the power of blockading at all times, and put an end to it in the Winter altogether in those seas, such as in the Baltic and Black Seas, where no blockading squadron could maintain themselves during that season.

The *Declaration*, it was argued, also relieved a potential enemy of Britain from the necessity of defending his commerce (since it was protected by the neutral flag) with his warships, and saved him the necessity of sending his fleet to sea at all. In a war with a state superior in naval power, like Britain, it would enable a land-power to keep its fleet in port, conscious that with the neutral flag doing its work there would be little but disaster to be looked for in a naval conflict with Britain. The greater the disparity of strength, the greater would be the inducement to the weaker sea-power to avoid conflict on the seas with England. And by so much was the navy of Great Britain superior to that of any other nation, so much the more certainly would it lack all opportunity of destroying the naval forces of its enemy.

Opponents of the *Declaration* also argued that it would deprive the officers and men of the Royal Navy of all chance of prize-money and booty, and thus not only remove a great incentive to activity among them, but also greatly diminish the inducements by which the naval reserves of men might be replenished and the manning of the navy be renewed in the future.

British writers also expressed the fear that, in a war situation, in order to gain the full protection for English commerce itself, the country might be forced to transfer its own trade to neutral carriers—and thereafter lose it. This would deter greatly the use of naval warfare by England since it would mean losses of trade to neutrals rather than gains from them, as in the past. And it would put pressure on Britain to end wars quickly by giving to the neutrals a direct interest in the prolongation of a conflict—which very greatly increased their own profits in the carrying-trade.

The important thing was, however, to extricate England from it.

David Urquhart had noted in 1870s the ambiguous position of the *Declaration* in England:

"the Declaration has never been ratified, but notwithstanding a sort of tacit and indolent acceptance has been given to it; it is considered authoritative and binding; no one in power has repudiated it, or even questioned it, while it has been received by the outside public with that apathy which is usually given to matters of the most trifling importance" (*Naval Power Suppressed by the Maritime States*, p77).

Toward the end of Tommy Bowles's 1900 book he argued that it was not enough for those opposed to the *Declaration of Paris* to consider simply ignoring Britain's signature to it and waiting for a war to render it meaningless. Bowles saw such a course as dishonourable:

"It may perhaps occur to some that it would suffice for Great Britain to let the Declaration be where it stands on its own inherent baselessness, and simply to disregard it whenever war may arise. That, however, would be a course immoral, unjust, dangerous, and only worthy of a Power devoid of faith. By this Declaration Great Britain is equitably and in honour bound, unless and until it is formally repudiated... Conceive a British Cabinet, on the eve of a European war, taking account of its means of offence and defence, and considering how it could add to them. It would be at the outset brought face to face with the fact that while England cannot put armies in the field to vie with those of the Continent, neither can she now so use her Navy as to exercise any material coercion thereby upon a Continental Power." (p174)

But dishonour proved to be the better part of valour!



The *Declaration of Paris* was never formally repudiated by England and yet the Royal Navy was still able to blockade Germany into starvation between 1914 and 1919!

At the height of the starvation blockade on Germany in 1919 a book by Sir Francis Taylor Piggott examined the legal and constitutional aspects of the *Declaration of Paris*, made a half century before. Piggott wrote extensively on the 'law of the seas' during the Great War and although challenging it, obviously took the *Declaration* in earnest as a continued basis for maritime law. But he gives some insight into how England managed to manoeuvre round what it signed up to all those years before:

"Criticism is applicable to the... principle that 'neutral goods, with the exception of contraband of war, are not liable to capture under enemy's flag.' An enemy's ship caught running blockade is condemned because she is enemy property. Neutral goods on board are condemned because they are on board a ship running blockade. It was not intended to give to the enemy flag the privilege of 'covering' neutral goods in such circumstances; the principle is, therefore, inaccurately stated.

"The main defect of the statement... however, is that the question, 'What is contraband of war?' is left in the air.

"The settlement of a list of contraband goods was of course impossible at the closing meetings of a long Conference. The idea of a list—or rather three lists—of 'absolute contraband', 'conditional contraband', and 'free' or non-contraband goods, prevailed till the present war. It was presumably intended to preserve this classification in 1856...

"From the point of view of other nations it was a dangerous omission; for it left open, and therefore England free to insist on, the opposite principle that a belligerent has a right to proclaim his own list of contraband, and to add to it as necessity arises, a necessity of which he is, and must be, the sole judge" (*The Declaration of Paris 1856*, p184).

Perhaps Piggott was letting the cat out of the bag when it was too late for Europe, in drawing attention to the defining of "*contraband*" as a loophole that England would use to get round the Declaration of Paris.

Captain Russell Grenfell of the Royal Navy also commented on this aspect in his book *Sea Power*. Grenfell describes a situation where Providence intervened to save England from its politicians, as Providence does:

"Most amazing of all... are the endeavours that British Ministers have made from time to time to blunt the weapon on which, as they themselves have recorded in the Statute Book, the safety and welfare of the country chiefly depend... Fortunately, the Declaration of Paris did not define contraband, thus leaving us a loophole through which we could avoid the worst consequences of our own stupidity.

Incredibly enough, we later on proposed to stop up even this aperture. In 1910, only four years before the outbreak of the war in which the economic blockade of Germany was to play so crushing a part, we smilingly put our signature, amid beatific expressions of international goodwill, to the Declaration of London, by which certain classes of goods were to be considered as non-contraband in any circumstances. How little we realized what we were doing can be judged from the fact that these non-contraband classes included such things as rubber, metallic ores, and cotton, all three of them of great importance in the manufacture of munitions and war-like equipment. By a providential stroke, the House of Lords refused to ratify the Declaration. Even then, the Government failed to appreciate the folly from which it

had been so narrowly saved; for when the war broke out in 1914, it declared that it intended to be bound by the terms of the declaration. It was not long, however, before it was realized what manacles the Government had itself fastened round the Navy's wrists by this egregious announcement.

"Fortunately, the enemy came to the rescue with a wanton disregard for international law, which enabled us to invoke the principle of reprisals, by means of which one article after another was put on the contraband list, until by the end of the war it is said that only ostrich feathers remained free" (*Sea Power*, pp161-2).

We will hear more from the interesting Captain Grenfell later.

Pat Walsh

## Better To See Clearly Than Not

In a *Frontline* programme on RTÉ Television in April they were discussing the 'men and women question' in the Republic today. John Waters, an invited participant, said that the reason why males figure in the rising suicide rate much more than females is that young men were being given to believe that as men they had a lesser social value than women; that there was no publicly valued role for manliness. When asked what gave them this idea, Waters answered 'The culture'.

It was an odd answer, and he was not asked to explain what he meant by it. A culture is a combination of customs, ideas and social behaviour that has been developed by a people or a group over a period of time. By 'the culture' did he mean Irish culture generally or the cultures of the particular places where the young men lived—Clonakilty, Castlerea, Sligo, Clontarf, Dalkey, Wexford and so on? To any alert person who lives in Ireland today, it was obvious that he meant neither, but something else.

He would have come slightly nearer to what he meant, while remaining imprecise and still misusing 'culture', if he had said 'the prevalent culture'. He would have been almost precise if he had said 'the doctrine about women and men that is taught by the Dublin mass media and widely accepted and implemented'. To attain full accordance with the reality in question, he would have needed to insert after 'taught', 'by the Irish liberal Correctorate using the national mass media, much as, before it, the Irish Catholic Church, when it was the state-endorsed public teaching authority, used its pulpits and school catechisms'. Granted, however, such a mouthful, however dead-on, would have been out of place in the superficial chat of a television programme with studio audience.

The point I want to make is, first, that John Waters, being an alert man who knows how things are in the Republic today, gave a fudged, meaningless answer to the question he had been asked. Perhaps as a weekly columnist in *The Irish Times* and the *Mail on Sunday* he did so out of prudence. But as an alert man who knows how things are, and is a public commentator, he owed it to his tv audience to be generous with his knowledge. Second, by not saying what he knew, he collaborated, albeit in a small way, with the policy of concealment of the real state of affairs that has been practised for the past half-century, both by the local powers that shape life in our Republic and by the powers that shape the West generally.

Concealment of the real situation and course of events by the powers-that-be has of course, been frequent in history. It has occurred particularly when radical or revolutionary change is under way. A classical instance was the policy of 'restoration of the Republic' proclaimed by Julius Caesar's nephew Octavian and his team; they were in fact reshaping the Roman State to make its structure fit the fact that it had become an Empire. During and beyond their introduction of one-man rule, 'Senate and People of Rome' continued to be the state's declared rulers.

Always when such concealment occurs, it is done by promulgating an official description of what is occurring which is false but superficially plausible. In face of that, the citizen has three possibilities. He can believe it, go along with it, and adjust his mind and life accordingly. He can perceive that what is occurring is not what he is being told it is, but make do with that, leaving it to future historians to discover and tell the truth about it.

Or else, perceiving that the official description is not in accord with the facts of the matter, he can try to discover for

himself what is really the case, and pass on his findings to others. He can do this either with the intention of subverting or opposing what is under way, or simply because he believes that it is better to live seeing rather than not seeing.

For several years past I have been following that last course with the latter of those two aims in view; the simply seeing aim. The result of my efforts is on my website [www.desmondfennell.com](http://www.desmondfennell.com) in the form of an essay called 'The Staggered End of Western Civilisation'. Since it is indeed better to live seeing rather than not seeing, and best of all to share a reasonably true view of the times with others, I am wondering whether we might, within the confines of the readers of the *Irish Political Review*, do this.

I mean that we might forge together a community of shared true vision of the past half-century or so, particularly with regard to Ireland. Given that I have done some serious work on that half-century, I will propose the bones of what I have found, while inviting readers to comment, correct, or, most important, to fill gaps where my ability or expertise does not reach. Once arrived at a more or less true view of how things are, and have come to be as they are, in the West generally and in Ireland, we could then proceed with our monthly discussions about all sorts of matters in the light of that.

\*

The essential basis of a true view, it seems to me, is to recognise that the spread of the Marxist-Leninist system of values and rules (its do's, don'ts and do-as-you-likes) from Russia to the other countries of eastern Europe had a counterpart in the West. That counterpart was the spread from the 1960s onwards of the new American system of left-liberal values and rules to the countries of Western Europe, Ireland included, and to the lawmakers of the European Community in Brussels.

Both Marxist-Leninism and left liberalism were argued theories of the good human life in society which rejected the values-and-rules system of the thousand-year-old European civilisation. They saw that inherited system as oppressive, unjust, and deluded by supernaturalism. Their respective rules systems differed from it radically and required considerable reorganisation, not only of minds and language, but of society and social relations. The object in both cases was to bring about a liberated, just and happy human condition.

These two post-European systems of thinking, speaking and behaving had to be taught to the populations of the Soviet and American satellites respectively, and in particular to their lawmakers, schoolteachers and judges. For this purpose, in each satellite the traditional state-licensed public teaching authority, which was usually the clergy of some Christian denomination, must be replaced by a new one.

In the Communist East, drawing on the model of the Soviet Union, this replacement was done openly, formally and abruptly. In

each satellite, the leading doctrinal role of the Communist Party was constitutionally formalised. Communist ideologues, organised as the Communist Party, were embedded in the mass media, the education system and professional bodies; and these saw to it that those entities preached and reflected the new public orthodoxy.

In the mass media, that is, the most powerful pedagogical instrument, ideological pluralism was overnight replaced in an operation which the Nazis called *Gleichschaltung*—a bringing into line. Dissidents were labelled 'reactionaries' or 'rightists' with those words being given an evil connotation. The words 'Communist' and 'socialist' were made to mean 'good'. Persistent dissidents were exiled to remote places, imprisoned, or expelled abroad. In the multi-party parliaments of what were now called 'people's democracies', the Communist Party functioned as the commanding authority.

\*

In the West the takeover was done differently. The American left liberals had emerged as an ideological force during the Roosevelt New Deal years. They were the secularist left wing of that classical liberalism which Daniel O'Connell had adopted from the British Nonconformists and which remained the basic political ideology of Catholic Ireland to the 1980s.

These new-style American liberals, who called themselves simply 'liberals', had signalled their rejection of Western civilisation in August 1945, when they joined in the official American justification of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the 1960s and early '70s they were able to bring their programme to centre stage and to get legislative backing from the American State. State and business saw financial advantage in the new liberal set of do's, don'ts and do-as-you-likes. It would nourish the economics that came to be called 'consumerism'.

New norms of virtuous thought, speech and behaviour were imposed by law on individuals and families, and on educators and employers. Previously, with the tacit backing of the State, the Protestant clergy had functioned as America's public teaching authority. Now, tacitly, the liberal teachers of correct behaviour came to occupy that role. Henceforth, regardless of which political party was in government, this informal collective—the 'liberal Correctorate'—would retain its pre-eminent teaching function.

In its primary vehicle, the mass media, the pedagogy would depend financially on, and share space with, the exhortations of business to consume. All of this tacitly, because it was necessary to maintain the liberal myth that the citizens were individuals who thought independently, and who expressed themselves freely, as they individually saw fit.

Effective American nudging extended

this liberal indoctrination to the West European satellites and the European Community. The purpose was to increase the West's overall money yield and to counteract, with a display of 'permissiveness' and prosperity, the Marxist-Leninist indoctrination of the East. The centre of radiation was the 'swinging London' of the 60s. In each West European state, successively, elements of the mass media spearheaded the new rules; a national correctorate took shape; the media as a whole conformed; and the rulers, in varying degrees, gave legal force to the new teachings and placed correctors at key points in the state administration.

From the late 1960s onwards, in North America and Western Europe, the national liberal correctorates functioned much as the national Communist parties in the Soviet satellites, except in one respect. The leading doctrinal role of the liberal correctorates was exercised, with tacit State approval, *extra-constitutionally*, as a tacit matter of fact. By using the streamlined mass media to manipulate public opinion so as to sway the decisions of Governments, political parties and other institutions, they secured a conformity sufficient for purpose.

To converts or fellow-travellers the media allocated public honour; to dissident groups and individuals, both in Parliaments and in civil society, disapproval and hounding. Effective silencing by exclusion from the public discourse dealt with dissident writings and speeches. The words 'conservative', 'right' or 'right-wing', used with connotations of lurking menace, were often sufficient to do the job. No dissident was put in jail.

In the English-speaking countries, helped by the positive non-political meaning of 'liberal', that word in its political and ideological sense was made a synonym of 'good'. Effective for the attraction of intellectuals and other adherents of fashion was the liberals' promotion of their system as 'modernity'. A convention a couple of centuries old had made that word mean not merely the latest thing in vogue in the West's power centres, but also, on that account, the best hitherto known to man.

Frequently in the 1960s, and to a degree in the 1970s, serious talk of 'revolution' had occurred in the political discourse of western radicals. Gradually, as a tacit signal that in the West, as in the East, a definitive revolution had taken place, that word passed out of politics into commercial advertising, where it served in the promotion of new soap powders and face creams.

In Europe the national correctorates worked in collaboration with the liberal party in the central administration of the European Community. These bureaucrats ensured that their stream of regulations about health and safety, preserving the environment, and equalities of all kinds, conformed to liberal principles. The national correctorates lauded such measures and

insisted on their meticulous implementation in the Member-States.

\*

The new liberalism, reaching Dublin from 'swinging London', had first surfaced, tentatively, in *The Irish Times*. By the end of the 1960s, the new television station was, also tentatively, showing it had got the message. As elsewhere in Western Europe, the *Gleichschaltung* of the mass media—the erosion of the old pluralism of *Press*, *Independent*, *Times* and Radio Éireann—took time. From the 70s it was under way in the Dublin papers, and the nudging aside of the Catholic clergy had begun.

By the 80s the *Times* was preaching almost the full "liberal agenda", as it called it, and RTÉ was not far behind. The disappearance of the three *Press* papers in the '90s, and the increasing intrusion of British television and English papers, simplified the bringing into line. It was perhaps in that decade that the plural term 'the media' began to be used—mirroring the reality—as a singular noun.

To intrude a personal note. In the 1980s and early '90s I was lecturing on English writing and literature to the Journalism students in the College of Commerce in Rathmines, Dublin. Trying my best to encourage in those young persons independence of mind, and a quality of writing that, even if journalistic, would be personally shaped, I was saddened by the knowledge that the profession they were entering would make my efforts in vain. Their apprenticeship would require them to learn, and thereafter to write, the approved moralistic lingo of the Correctorate. I felt, in other words, much as I would have felt if I had been teaching young Journalism students in Ceausescu's Bucharest or in East Berlin.

The *Gleichschaltung* of the Irish political class went in step with that of the media. The disappearance of any significant ideological divergence among the parties made them the Irish equivalent of the political class in a Communist country. By the 90s the liberal Correctorate had *de facto* replaced the Catholic Church as the moral mentor of the nation's legislation. It had become *de facto* the Republic's state-endorsed public teaching authority.

By the time the new millennium arrived, any County Councillor or public scribbler throughout the length and breadth of the Republic had to watch what he said or wrote lest some journalist report him for a verbal incorrectness. Hearing of it, the Correctorate might decide to make the national media seethe with outrage and the offender might well end up in court.

Two pronounced features of left liberalism in Ireland are worth noting. By the 1960s American liberalism had become an elitist ideology drawing its typical adherents from College graduates. Believing that the new post-European rules of thinking, behaving and speaking which they had

adopted amounted to liberation, enlightenment and modernity, liberals regarded 'most people', still clinging to the old ways, with disdain. In Ireland this mindset marked the new liberalism from the start.

Disproportionately, it attracted those Irish, living mainly in Dublin, whom inherited mental colonisation had made eager to escape from the Irish throng and to feel a cut above it. Wealthy South Dublin, spoonfed by *The Irish Times*, became the bastion of the new Irish liberalism. Comically, if it weren't sad, Ascendancy tones occasionally marked the liberals' pronouncements. An imaginary territory called "*rural Ireland*", a related dark land thought of as Catholic, GAA, Christian Brothers Ireland, became their bugbears. Notoriously a daily RTÉ tv programme of the 1980s which dealt with recent events in the provinces was nicknamed by the liberal boys and girls who made it "Redneck Roundup"—the direct American influence obvious.

The distaste for Irish nationalism that has marked Irish liberalism made it a promoter of anti-national historical revisionism. In part this was an aspect of its alienation from the inherited Ireland, in part a service owed to its liberal colleagues at the heart of the united-Europe enterprise. By definition the united-Europe enterprise was opposed to nationalism. The left-liberal occupation of Brussels ensured that, at least in the smaller European countries and Germany, this veto would be applied.

\*

What, taken as a whole, does this liberal-dominated West amount to? The informal and concealed nature of its operation, and its relatively humane treatment of dissidents, have brought into circulation the notion that it is a "*soft totalitarianism*". For the far from radical Italian writer Claudio Magris in 1997 it was a "*soft and colloidal [sticky, gluey] totalitarianism capable of inducing the masses to believe that they want what their rulers consider appropriate*". It is totalitarian in more respects than that: to a much greater degree than Marxist-Leninism, left liberalism dictates how individual citizens must think, feel, behave and speak.

But a totalitarian system requires a ruling power, either person or oligarchy or institution, and here seeing things clearly becomes problematic. To say 'America' evades the problem; what or who really rules America? And it is America in conjunction with the rest that I am talking about. Answering that question presents the self-same problem that confronted and defeated the French politologist Alexis de Tocqueville in 1840 when, in his book *Democracy In America*, he ventured prophetically into our times.

Having observed America's classical-liberal democracy in action, and recorded his impressions, de Tocqueville tried to prophesy its future. How to name or describe the power that would ultimately rule it baffled him. He did not entertain, even in passing, that it might be a Parliament, or an indirectly

elected Government, or both of those combined with a judiciary. That this ultimate ruling power would be of "*an entirely new kind*" he was convinced. Absolute, yes, but not a "*tyranny*" or a "*despotism*", or any of the words with similar meaning which had traditionally been used. It would be "*absolute*" but also "*mild*". After wrestling with the problem he side-stepped it in this manner:

"The first thing that strikes the observation is an innumerable multitude of men all equal and alike, incessantly trying to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives. Above this race of men there stands an immense and tutelary power... That power is absolute, minute, regular, provident and mild. It would be like the authority of a parent, if, like that authority, its object was to prepare men for manhood; but it seeks on the contrary to keep them in perpetual childhood. It is well content that the people should have a good time, provided they think of nothing but having a good time. For their happiness such a government willingly labours, but it chooses to be the sole agent and the only arbiter of that happiness: it provides for their security, foresees and supplies their necessities, facilitates their pleasures, manages their principal concerns...

"Thus it every day renders the exercise of the free agency of man less useful and less frequent...and gradually robs a man of all the uses of himself. The principle of equality has prepared men for these things; it has pre-disposed men to endure them, and oftentimes to look on them as benefits.

"After having thus successfully taken each member of the community into its powerful grasp, and fashioned them at will, the supreme power then extends its arm over the whole community. It covers the surface of society with a network of small complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate to rise above the crowd. The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting... Such a power... does not tyrannise, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes and stupefies a people...."

Concluding de Tocqueville writes: "*I have always thought that servitude of the regular, quiet and gentle kind that I have just described might be combined more easily than is commonly believed with some of the outward forms of freedom...*"

Considering where we have arrived today, this remarkable prophecy of the liberal-democratic future from 170 years ago gives food for thought. Was de Tocqueville foreseeing what we call 'superpower'? Could he have guessed, without saying it, that his vision was situated after Western civilisation, as an uprooted West groped forward with nothing to guide it but a collection of new rules-to-live-by put together by amateurs to bring about Utopia?

Desmond Fennell

Does  
It  
Up

Stack  
?

#### GOVERNANCE

Transport Minister Leo Varadkar has shown the way State-owned corporations should be governed. It is regrettable that the Board of Directors of Dublin Airport Authority defied the Minister up to the point at which he, as shareholder on behalf of the tax-payers of Ireland, had to threaten the Board that they would be removed or not be re-appointed unless they cut the bonus of €106,000 of Mr. Declan Collier—the DAA chief. He had already received €612,500 last year which is quite outrageous in itself—this was a rise of over 7% in his 2009 pay. How dare the Directors give Declan Collier a rise of 7.8% out of our money? One of the reasons why is that the Directors are paid salaries and expenses out of the DAA and it is Declan Collier who is in charge of DAA. The Directors were more afraid of DAA than they were of the Minister until the Minister showed he could play hard-ball as good as anyone. All of the Ministers should show that they can and will bite anyone who defies the taxpayers.

Brendan Howlin has said his hands are tied and he cannot make the current bosses to take a cut in salary. This is untrue and is such total nonsense. Where did he get this idea? Yes, probably from the Public Service advisors. They would tell him that—wouldn't they? There is no reason why a public servant should be treated any differently from any other employee. If there is a legal difference, then it is urgent that the law be changed immediately. But I am not aware of such a difference. It is quite easy to demonstrate for example, that the Financial Regulator behaved incompetently in the years before September 2008. Financial institutions were not regulated properly. Was the regulator dismissed? Was he what? He resigned and was given a parting gift out of our money of over €600,000! He should have been ignominiously fired and his pension should have been forfeited as well as his golden handshake.

Time after time the Department of Finance has given out wildly incorrect figures to the Dail and to the press. There has been gross incompetence and the persons in charge should have been fired. Now is the time for this Government to seize and take up the real power to rule which for so long Fianna Fail Governments have allowed to reside with senior public

servants. The public service has served its own interests to the detriment of Ireland. It is no coincidence that everything touched by the public service is a putrid mess—Health services, infrastructure, planning, education, employment, tourism, agriculture, fishing, oil and minerals and more are all badly run, corrupt and inefficient. What Minister Varadkar should do with his appointee Directors is to get the Cabinet to draw up a standard contract for Directors and for Chairpersons to state-owned and semi-state owned companies and provide that all Chairpersons receive the same pay and that all Directors receive the same pay and that, more important, the pay will be paid by the appointing Government Department, likewise all legitimate expenses be paid by the Department. He should also pass an Act giving the respective Department power to claim and be paid the total sum of such pay and expenses annually by the Company to which the Chairperson and Directors are appointed. This control will ensue that the Directors know who is in charge and will ensure the Directors' independence from the Chief Executive of the Semi-State company.

Also there should be a standard contract for the Auditors which would appoint an auditing company for three years—to ensure security of tenure—and providing that at the end of the three years that Auditing Company would not again be eligible for appointment for say, the next ten years. This might ensure the independence of the Auditors. Sounds a bit boring? It does because doing the right thing is always less exciting than the cut and thrust of blood red capitalism in action. Fiddles and talk of fiddles make for good spectator sport but much more costly than doing the right thing. Surely we all have had enough of raw fiddling capitalism for a lifetime. Or until, we all forget the consequences anyway!

#### IMF/EU

The Social Welfare and Pensions Bill 2011 provides *"to increase the State pension age in line with the Government's National Pensions Framework as set out in the EU/IMF Programme of Financial Support for Ireland"*. Section 6 discontinues the State Pension (Transition) for new claimants with effect from 1st January 2014 and Section 7 provides for an increase in the age of qualification for State Pension from 66 to 67 years from 2028. So now we are seeing who is running Ireland and how our sovereignty was signed away. What does not stack up at all in our supposed economic union is the varying pension ages all over Europe. At present in Greece, a person qualifies for

pension at age 59. Also there is throughout the EU a huge difference in working hours and in minimum pay and in rates of pensions and benefits. There is massive unfairness in all of these differences especially considering the Germans work the longest hours and don't get their pensions until much later in life.

#### FGM

The Criminal Justice (Female Genital Mutilation) Bill 2011 has been passed by Seanad Eireann. But why did the Bill ignore the male genital mutilation which is apparently still widespread? What agendas are being ignored by this Bill? Incidentally the exceptions (*"... A person is not guilty of any offence ..."*) take up most of the print in the Bill.

#### COMPUTERS

A philosopher could successfully argue that computers and the use of computers can lead to great evil. Human beings seem to have a great weakness for computers as is exemplified by the widespread use of, for example 'Facebook'. However the really evil aspects of rampant computerisation is in subjecting us all to what hackers can do to industrial systems and to nuclear facilities. The electricity grid in most countries is now computerised not because it was necessary but because it was convenient or 'more efficient'. Anything with a microchip can be a target. It is easy for an attacking hacker to get into the electricity grid. There is a substation in most streets and they are not high security installations. A hacker does not even have to physically break in because the hacker can use the telephone which is what the technicians use to control the substations. The results of an intrusion could be devastating. A whole country could be brought down and, with the thoughtless spread of international interconnectors, several States could be totally paralysed. Think of everything depending on electricity all gone. What do you do? Where do you begin to put it right again?

At a smaller level but still very serious are the navigation systems of planes, trains and ships which these days are controlled by microchips. They are wide open to hackers. So why do we use them? Mostly because they are handy and the chips do things that would be a lot more trouble doing the old way. But the old way was and is much safer. We should not be using microchips for anything dangerous but we all do it or it is done for us. Since 2005 all cars have diagnostic microchips which could be harnessed by a hacker to control the car—to stop it, to reverse it, to steer it. What can we do? We have to buy a car but maybe if we do not absolutely need a car we should not have one. Or buy a pre-1995 car. We are all hostages to fortune now.

Michael Stack. ©

## Contradictory Opinions On European Foreign Policy Among European Trade Unions

A meeting on 25th May of the EESC External Relations Section of the European Economic and Social Committee, of which I am a member, endorsed two opinions which, in my view, could not be more contradictory in terms of making a positive contribution to the debate on developing a responsible EU foreign policy.

"*The EU's role and relationship with Central Asia and the contribution of civil society*" was a model of how such a positive contribution should be constructed. Its *rapporteur*, Jonathan Peel, had very responsibly crafted the draft opinion to include the following realities that needed to be taken on board:

"...There is no real sense of regional affinity among the five Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan), unlike Europe. The Committee urges the Commission and other EU Institutions to continue to work for a much deeper sense of regional identity and integration, encouraging each state to work more closely with its neighbours, to diminish ethnic and border problems as well as open the way for greater and more sustainable economic and social development... Closely connected with promoting greater civil society involvement is the wider issue of Human Rights. This is a key area where Europe can and is effectively offering assistance as the countries of Central Asia continue their independent course. However, the actual focuses of attention must be a matter of negotiation and cultural sensitivity"...

"It is essential to realise that effectively these are new states still largely in formation. Though independent and fully recognised, they are a result of the disintegration of the USSR. There was no significant national liberation movement in any of them. In each, the previous soviet political elite took over as the new independent elite. However, this shared background remains a positive factor in encouraging regional cohesion, which is poor and far from the extent found across Europe, a concept that the EU is starting to foster here. Further, they are operating within boundaries not of their own choosing, nor based on natural borders. They were defined by outsiders, formed into constituent republics of the USSR, in turn bringing ethnic tensions, most recently seen in Kyrgyzstan where the minority Uzbek community came under pressure"...

"Having been under Russian domination for over a century there remains very strong Russian influence in the area. Russian is the common language, economic ties remain strong and Russia believes that this area naturally falls within its sphere of influence. Kazakhstan entered a Customs Union with Russia (and Belarus) in 2010 and others showed some interest... China is also heavily involved developmentally, finding formal expression through its membership of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (which also involves Russia and Iran)... Religious fervour is currently kept firmly in check by each Central Asian State, but is growing... Turkey also enjoys strong influence in the area, not least as all but the Tajiks are Turkic

people with interconnected languages. Turkey was heavily involved soon after the break-up of the Soviet Union but, after initial setbacks, is again increasing its voice...

"So all these questions how far the EU needs to be involved, noting that there is no EU Member State colonial legacy here. Europe's needs should be looked at long-term, and with wider EU relationships fully factored in. The EU is already conducting major negotiations with both Russia and China, with whom the EU enjoys a Strategic Partnership. Accession talks are under way with Turkey, even if progress is extremely slow. The impression nevertheless remains that EU links with the Central Asian states are dealt with totally independently to these other countries. This does not make sense. Development of EU links with Central Asia needs to be closely and mutually informed with EU involvement with Russia, China and Turkey; equally our relations with Central Asia should not be developed in a way that would jeopardise our strategic relations with any of these key partners..."

This draft opinion was so balanced, level-headed and responsible, and expressed with so coherent a logic, that anybody with a different vested-interest agenda dared not question it. So, somewhat untypically, it was adopted unanimously, without even one abstention. In passing, it even had something sensible to say in respect of other parts of the world:

"Recent events in North Africa are a reminder both of the importance of building active civil society participation and of the urgency in dealing with these underlying issues in a positive way. The Committee wishes to develop strong and effective contact and good working relationships with civil society in Central Asia. Boycotts or imposing very strict conditions based on progress are not a realistic option..."

### DANGEROUS DEBATE

In contrast with the unanimity on Central Asia, the draft opinion entitled "*The new foreign and security policy of the EU and the role of civil society*", whose *rapporteur* was Carmelo Cedrone, opened up deep divisions. An opening paragraph appeared promising: "*A greater joint endeavour on the part of Member States in the area of foreign policy would also help to curb the trend towards an intergovernmental approach and prevent isolated measures being taken by individual countries, as has happened recently.*" With total inconsistency, however, the draft proceeded to give its blessing to the solo runs of two specific Member States, proclaiming that they served as a role model: "*As regards security, the EU should give priority to its neighbourhood, mounting operations to stabilise crisis areas and peace-keeping initiatives. The cooperation agreement between France and the United Kingdom (November 2010) is relevant here.*"

But relevant to what? Under the heading of "*still unresolved conflicts or areas of tension*", the draft gratuitously named Iran, but studiously avoided mentioning Bahrain, before continuing: "*The whole of North Africa is aflame with revolts against authoritarian regimes, whose outcomes are difficult to predict*". It then proceeded to argue that the EU "*must act more swiftly and without delay, better than it did in cases such as ... the intervention in the Mediterranean (Libya, for example)*". This, to my mind, was effectively championing Anglo-

## LOW PAY continued

- Reduction of JLC and/or REA rates
- Reduction or abolition of extra pay for working unsocial hours such as on Sunday.
- Allow employers to claim 'an inability to pay'.
- Reduction in overtime rates.
- Removal of protection for young workers under 18.
- Removal of annual increases for years of service
- Removal of recognition of craft grades
- Reduction of the number of Employment Regulation Orders and end coverage of working conditions such as sick pay.
- Allowing employers not to keep proper employment records, which would make it easier to evade the law.

**Dail Eireann** calls on the government as a whole to abandon these measures

And calls on the Labour Party deputies to vote against any such measures in accordance with the principle of solidarity with the lower paid and the best traditions of Larkin and Connolly.

French military activity aimed at regime change, which was in clear violation of any UN mandate. In the debate that took place on this draft opinion, some speakers sang its praises, while some others expressed reservations about a number of formulations. I myself, however, was the very first speaker to argue for outright rejection but, being the last to be called, I was also the only one.

"*There is no such entity as the whole of North Africa*", I argued. What was being referred to as "*the Arab Spring*" might be capable of effecting democratic revolutions in Nation States with a well developed sense of national identity, such as Egypt and Tunisia. But the situation was very different in Libya. What was taking place in that country was tribal warfare. The draft opinion was a very dangerous one, as it was associating the EESC with the Anglo-French military intervention in a Libyan civil war. The war to effect regime change in Iraq had brought chaos to Iraqi society. And the war being waged by British and French imperialism to bring about regime change in Libya would result in an even more catastrophic chaos. I therefore called for the draft opinion to be voted down, as it sought to bring about EU support for that war and render the EU responsible for bringing such chaos to North Africa through the disintegration of Libyan society.

In his reply, the *rapporteur* stated that he was glad that I had described the draft opinion as "*dangerous*", as that meant it was clarifying something. Such a response only underscored my charge of "*dangerous*", and must have alarmed other members of the EESC External Relations Section. For, having been the sole speaker to call for a No vote, it was not all that unlikely that I might also have been the only such voter. To my surprise, however, I was joined by 19 other No voters. The 38 Yes voters did, of course, carry the day for that opinion. Nonetheless, it is worth considering that if the 20 members who abstained had taken their reservations that step further, such a dangerous opinion would in fact have been defeated. So, very mixed results from that meeting of 25 May.

**Manus O'Riordan**

Member for Ireland, EESC Workers' Group  
EESC report for SIPTU [Ireland] *Liberty Online*



## Will Labour Back Low Pay?

### Press Release

Seamus Healy has proposed a Dáil private members motion calling on the Government to abandon plans to reduce the incomes of low-paid workers covered by Employment Regulation Orders (EROs) following determination by Joint Labour Committees (JLCs).

The income reductions proposed by Minister Bruton (FG) would affect shop assistants, employees of cleaning companies, hotel and restaurant workers and building workers among others, totalling over 200,000 employees. Seamus Healy is joined in proposing the motion by his four colleagues in the United Left Alliance.

The motion also calls on Labour Party Deputies to show solidarity with the low-paid in the best traditions of Larkin and Connolly.

According to the OECD, Ireland suffers from some of the highest levels of low pay. Over 21% of full time employees are "low-paid, compared to a Eurozone average of 14.7%" and EU Commission data shows that labour costs (include wages and employers' contributions) in the Food & Accommodation sector in Ireland are 6% below the EU-15 average.

Any reductions in these rates will drive more households and children into poverty

Very many people covered by JLC/EROs and REAs are vulnerable people such as immigrants and young people and those working in small employments not amenable to trade unionisation

The majority of workers covered by the JLC/EROs and REAs system are women and any reduction in remuneration in this sector will widen the gender income gap contrary to national and EU policy.

Seamus Healy said "I welcome the statement of the National Women's Council opposing the measures proposed by Minister Bruton".

Private Members Motion on Policy on Joint Labour Committees, Employment Regulation Orders and Registered Employment Agreements:

Dáil Éireann notes:

1) That the Duffy/Walsh Report to the Minister for Enterprise, Employment and Innovation concludes inter alia : "We have concluded that lowering the basic JLC rates to the level of the minimum wage rate is unlikely to have a substantial effect on employment", and "we conclude that it is not accurate to suggest that the body of primary employment rights legislation currently in force adequately covers matters dealt with by EROs and REAs."

2) That According to the OECD, Ireland suffers from some of the highest levels of low pay. Over 21% of full-time employees are "low-paid, compared to a Eurozone average of 14.7%" and EU Commission data shows that labour costs (include wages and employers' contributions) in the Food & Accommodation sector in Ireland are 6% below the EU-15 average.

3) That very many people covered by JLC/EROs and REAs are vulnerable people such as immigrants and young people and those working in small emp-

loyments not amenable to trade unionisation

4) That the majority of workers covered by the JLC/EROs and REAs system are women and that any reduction in remuneration in this sector will widen the gender income gap contrary to national and EU policy

5) That due to the serious and disproportionate reduction in male employment, female workers form a higher proportion of primary bread winners and that reduction in female earnings would have a major impact on household and child poverty contrary to national and EU policy.

6) That reduction in the remuneration of already lowly paid employees will result in a reduction in revenue to the state through PAYE and VAT and will lead to an increase in claims for Family Income Supplement payments.

7) That any reduction in remuneration to employees covered by JLCs and REAs will transfer income from the lowly paid to employers and/or investors including some large multi-national companies

8) That any reduction in remuneration to affected employees who spend their entire income in Ireland will reduce demand in the economy and accelerate the elimination of jobs caused by the policies of the previous government and the support by the current government for the measures contained in Budget 2011

9) That it is this reduction in demand in the economy that is destroying jobs not JLC/ERO rates.

10) That any provision for derogation from JLC/ERO and REA rates of remuneration in individual employments is likely to lead to a collapse of the system as a whole and the reduction of already low wages generally, further reduction in demand and increased job elimination in the economy as a whole.

Dáil Éireann deplores any proposal of Minister Bruton to enact any of the following measures:

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