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Her Nibs Visits

So the war between the UK and the Republic of Ireland has been concluded and put away by the ceremonial visit of Her Nibs to the Garden of Remembrance. The British have finally conceded defeat in that matter.

At least that is what we were told repeatedly and authoritatively during the visit by Her Nibs. Fintan O'Toole of the official newspaper of the State told us so on Radio Eireann. And he said, if she had only come earlier, things would have been settled earlier.

If there were any truth in all of this, it would be a case of Britain snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. But of course there isn't any truth in it.

The purpose of the visit by Her Nibs was to consolidate the great displacement of Irish political culture by British influence that has been accomplished during the past generation, and particularly since Mary Robinson made the mission of her Presidency to bring over Her Nibs and refused a second term when she did not think it would happen quickly enough.

What war was it that the visit symbolised the end of? The war between Britain and Ireland fought in Northern Ireland in which the fighting was brought to an end by the Good Friday Armistice of 1998, it seems.

So the Provos must have been acting on the authority of the Dublin Governments, pursuant to Articles 2 & 3 of the Constitution!!

We must confess to a profound misunderstanding of the history of the past forty years. We were misled by appearances into thinking that Dublin Governments sided with Britain in that war. The Provos were harrassed and imprisoned by Dublin Governments during that war, and wild allegations were made about them. And, when Britain eventually made peace with the Provos, and made a tacit admission of blame for the war by opening the prisons, Dublin found it very hard to do likewise. It gave way inch by inch, dragging its heels resentfully, having more than once accused the British of being soft on terrorism.

Now that the war in the North is over, is the Republic claiming the credit for it on the ground of Articles 2 & 3, which were given an outing on RTE during Her Nibs's visit?

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Whodunit?

Now that the election dust and hot air has settled, the realities of the 'bailout' and the background to it are being dealt with more realistically. Former Finance Minister Brian Lenihan has given, in his interviews with Dan O'Brien, the most credible account of the way Ireland was treated by the European Central Bank so far. Details may be disputed, but the basic facts are not. It is clear that the ECB made the running, that it forced a 'bailout' on Ireland.

Lenihan had to negotiate with a 'troika' made up of the EU Presidency, the Commission and the International Monetary Fund, but the ECB was clearly in charge. The media have therefore found another culprit to blame for Ireland's difficulties in the ECB, and there has been the inevitable frenzy against this latest cause of all of our problems. But, at the same time, I detect a certain 'blame fatigue'. Maybe we ourselves had something to do with the problems we have?

The most obvious question is *why this 'troika'*? Lisbon was all about streamlining the EU and all its mechanisms, yet here we have three separate bodies dealing with this issue. Moreover, one, the IMF, is

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Bin Laden Welcomes The Arab Spring

In the aftermath of 9/11, it was common for Western politicians to declare that Al-Qaeda was out to "*destroy our way of life*" in the West (whatever that is) and therefore had to be combated by any and every means. "*They hate our freedom*", President George Bush famously said.

This Bush aphorism came to mind when I read that Al-Qaeda had released a message by Osama bin Laden posthumously, in which he praised the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia and urged Muslims to take advantage of a "*rare historic opportunity*"

to rise up (Daily Telegraph, 19 May).

"There is a serious crossroads before you", he said, "and a great and rare historic opportunity to rise with the Ummah (Muslim world) and to free yourselves from servitude to the desires of the rulers, man-made law, and Western dominance".

Apparently, they don't hate our freedom after all.

The notion that Al-Qaeda is out to "*destroy our way of life*" is rarely repeated by Western politicians these days as a

means of working up popular support for the ongoing "*war on terror*". It is just too absurd to believe that a small group of people, however determined, are capable of making a significant impact on how we live in the West.

However, it is almost unknown for a Western politician to give the real reason why Al-Qaeda is at war with the West and has been for many years. One might have thought that bin Laden's execution would have prompted some discussion about this in the media, but if there has been any I haven't come across it.

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Irish LP Response To Draft PPS 23 and PPS 24

Press Release (page 31)

Due to pressure of space, we have held over several items, including a skit on the Queen's visit by Lt. Col. Morgan (retired)

If not, it is hard to make sense of much that as said in mid-May.

Eamon Dunphy came out as a great enthusiast for Her Nibs and what she stands for. We recall that Dunphy was a venomous opponent of the peace process when it was got going by Gerry Adams, representing Sinn Fein, and John Hume, not representing the SDLP. Dunphy conducted a propaganda campaign against Hume. Of course, he jumped on the bandwagon when it got rolling.

The war was fought in the North, being made possible and necessary by the mischievous mode of government that Britain set up in its Six County region. It was made possible and necessary by that mode of government. It was fought by the community which suffered from that mode of government. It was settled by negotiations between leaders of that community and Britain when Britain came to understand that it could neither win the war nor dissolve it by political chicanery. The only Dublin leader who played a significant part in bringing about a settlement

seems to have been the disgraced Charles Haughey, acting behind the scenes, who was the only Taoiseach with some sense of what Northern Ireland was. And then Albert Reynolds was the only Taoiseach who could tend to the end game without dragging up old resentments.

We note that Her Nibs did not visit the region where the war was fought, and where a radical re-structuring was undertaken when it was understood that otherwise the war would continue. She did not visit her own back-yard. Dublin was protected from her. West Belfast didn't have to bother its head about her.

The Queen Of England Descends Amongst Us

Before giving some notes on the recent visit, it would be apt to quote James Connolly on the previous visit of a British Monarch to the South of Ireland in 1911:

"Fellow Workers

"As you are aware from reading the daily and weekly newspapers, we are about to be

blessed with a visit from King George V.

"Knowing from previous experience of royal visits, as well as from the coronation orgies of the past few weeks, that the occasion will be utilised to make propaganda on behalf of royalty and aristocracy against the oncoming forces of democracy and national freedom, we desire to place before you some few reasons why you should unanimously refuse to countenance this visit, or to recognise it by your presence at its attendant processions or demonstrations ...

"The future of the working class requires that all political and social positions should be open to all men and women...

"Let the capitalist and landlord class flock to exalt him; he is theirs... a people mentally poisoned by the adulation of royalty can never attain to that spirit of self-reliant democracy necessary for the attainment of social freedom..." {Connolly's article can be read in full on the *An Phoblacht* website}.

The *Irish News* (18th March) reported that the Queen of England had landed at Casement aerodrome. This was the last time I saw it referred to as such—it suddenly reverted to its old name, Baldonnel Aerodrome—even further on in the same issue of the *Irish News*. Soon we'll be told that she was visiting West Britain. And why not? Those most eager for the visit, e.g. Enda Kenny, John Bruton, the late Garrett FitzGerald, Eoghan Harris, Ruth Dudley-Edwards, Kevin Myers, and the rest would have us back there, or even in the United Kingdom, in a thrice. And the British, especially through their current Ambassador, would have us. Though it may be called the Council of the Isles so beloved of the Scottish National Party's Alex Salmond. This visit was political above all else—with Cameron, Hague and their merry men included.

I asked some friends in Dublin what the reaction was as the visit approached. Indifference to favourable, I was told, except for the media which was downright orgasmic. It was almost as though David Beckham and Victoria, Elton John, Paul McCartney, Kate Moss, Katie Price, and Ant and Dec were all coming at the same time. (Except in their case no amount of barriers, guards or soldiers could have kept the celebrity gawpers away.

On the great day Dublin was shut down, "sanitised zones", as the Guards called them. Even the central Rotunda hospital was cut off. I walked around the city the next day—the Thursday—when she was supposed to be in Kildare looking at the gee gees. The barriers were going up again—on the quays, around Trinity, along Nassau Street and part of Westland Row. Liffey Street and Jervis Street were cut off. And these were the only areas I had any business to be in. Trains were stopped

between Pearse Station and Connolly Station. Maybe the authorities believe in reincarnation!

Language was changing from *oh gosh!* to *b....* and *c....* The crowds, that the papers said the previous day were being held back by barriers but who "*wanted*" to get close to the Queen, were really poor souls who were being prevented from getting to and from work or home. The Guards were pleased, of course, some of them on double bubble. The visit is supposed to have cost €30m (my eye). That doesn't cover days off work or late for work; people not shopping; taxis at a standstill; or the bemused tourists. (They'd take you alright—via Limerick and Wexford!) The passengers on a Limerick to Dublin train were corralled at Heuston Station for an hour. An acquaintance of mine, a professional photographer, decided to take a few pictures. He was hit on the shoulders with a baton. When he protested, the Guards noticed his Northern accent, and beat the living daylight out of him.

The Northern papers went ecstatic about the whole thing—the *Irish News* much more so than the Protestant papers. They made a lot of the "*small number*" of demonstrators. It was a relatively small group but not that small. Then it was reinforced by a lot of local lads who began to set fire to anything convenient.

The Queen was indeed photographed with smiling supporters. A carefully selected group of students from Trinity College—if indeed they were students. (We all remember Tony Blair on his walkabouts among "supporters" who were selected and paid for these occasions! George Bush use to do the same.) And then there was an equally selected body of men, some with medals who, in the past, had gone around the world killing people for England. They were joined at the Islandbridge cenotaph by a group of large gentlemen from Loyalist Belfast.

At the Cenotaph a Corkman, former Royal Marine, Billy Murphy aged 71, said: "*It's fantastic that the Queen's here—we can all now live in peace and go forward from here. We've (sic) still got servicemen dying overseas so it was good for her to come here and pay her respects.*" What a twisted mind! Billy Murphy was born in 1940 and would have been too young to have served in WW2 or in Korea. So he must be a "*veteran*" of the colonial slaughters that took place in places like Kenya and Malaya.

SDLP MLA Alex Attwood whose grand uncle was killed in WWI said: "*I am proudly Irish and proudly nationalist*

At this time of royal weddings and visits, readers may enjoy this extract from
George Bernard Shaw's *The Apple Cart*

Royal Ritual

"*Pamphilius*. What was your father?

Semphronius {startled} Eh?

P. What was your father?

S. My father?

P. Yes. What was he?

S. A Ritualist.

P. I don't mean his religion. I mean his profession. And his politics.

S. He was a Ritualist by profession, a Ritualist in politics, a Ritualist in religion: a raging emotional Die Hard Ritualist right down to his boots.

P. Do you mean that he was a parson?

S. Not at all. He was a sort of spectacular artist. He got up pageants and Lord Mayors' Shows and military tattoos and big public ceremonies and things like that. He arranged the last two coronations. That was how I got my job here in the palace. All our royal people knew him quite well; he was behind the scenes with them.

P. Behind the scenes and yet believed they were all real!

S. Yes. Believed in them with all his soul.

P. Although he manufactured them himself!

S. Certainly. Do you suppose a baker cannot believe sincerely in the sacrifice of the Mass or in holy communion because he has baked the consecrated wafer himself?

P. I never thought of that.

S. My father might have made millions in the theatres and film studios. But he refused to touch them because the things they represented hadn't really happened. He didn't mind doing the christening of Queen Elizabeth in Shakespear's Henry the Eighth because that had really happened. It was a celebration of royalty. But not anything romantic; not though they offered him thousands.

P. Did you ever ask him what he really thought about it all? But of course you didn't: one can't ask one's father anything about himself.

S. My dear Pam: my father never thought. He didn't know what thought meant. Very few people do, you know. He had vision: actual bodily vision, I mean; and he had an oddly limited sort of imagination. What I mean is that he couldn't imagine anything he didn't see; but he could imagine that what he did see was divine and jolly and omniscient and omnipotent and eternal and everything that is impossible if only it looked splendid enough, and the organ was solemn enough, or the military brands brassy enough.

P. You mean that he had to get everything from outside.

S. Exactly. He'd never have felt anything if he hadn't had parents to feel about in his childhood, and a wife and babies to feel about when he grew up. He'd never have known anything if he hadn't been taught at school. He couldn't amuse himself: he had to pay oceans of money to other people to amuse him with all sorts of ghastly sports and pleasures that would have driven me into a monastery to escape from them. You see it was all ritual: he went to the Riviera every winter just as he went to church..."

but I recognise the other influences through the likes of my great uncle Alex" (News Letter 19th May). In other words going off to kill German men who had never done him any harm.

Ex-Sticky leader, Eamon Gilmore, who greeted Her Majesty at Casement/Baldonnell, said the visit marked "*a fresh start in relations between Ireland and Britain. We are looking towards a stronger relationship in the future that will benefit trade, tourism and business.*"

The campaigning group, *Justice for the Forgotten*, laid a wreath at the Talbot Street Memorial to the 34 people killed by the British in Dublin and Monaghan, 37 years to the day the Queen arrived. The Mayor of Dublin and Gerry Adams attended the event. First there was a memorial Mass at the Pro-Cathedral. They protested

about the timing of the Queen's visit. They, along with the Southern Government, are demanding that the British release all documents relating to the bombing. William Hague, British Foreign Secretary, who was also in Dublin, refused, citing "*legal constraints*".

That bombing was carried out by loyalists with affiliations to the British Army's Ulster Defence Regiment (now part of Royal Irish Regiment). It was sanctioned by military headquarters in Lisburn. An earlier bombing in Dublin was carried out by regular British soldiers. A full account of the Dublin Monaghan event, including the Southern dimension, is in preparation for publication. The Southern Government already has these details and is as guilty as the British Government in covering them up.

Justice for the Forgotten also asked for

an apology from the Queen. None whatsoever was given.

In Dublin Castle the English Queen said that we had turbulent histories but we should "to bow to it but not be bound by it". "To all who have suffered as a consequence of our troubled past I extend my sincere thoughts and sympathy. With the benefit of historical hindsight we can all see things which we wish had been done differently, or not at all." I'm sure those men facing the firing squads or the hangmen's ropes didn't require "the benefit of historical hindsight"! And that is being deliberately misinterpreted in the media as some kind of apology!

Eirigí called the presence of UDA leaders at the cenotaph "outrageous". But the whole thing was outrageous. Why pick on them? Many of them were just a part of the British dirty war—especially after the British had arranged the assassination of the UDA's earlier, and more political, leaders, like Tommy Herron. In any case, the present UDA leaders, like Jackie McDonald, are doing far more to bring the sides together than the trouble-makers from Britain's MI5 or extremist Unionists in the UUP.

The *Irish News* editorial on 19th May was headed *Royal Visit A Peace Maker*. It referred to the "mistakes" of the past. The word "mistakes" was repeated in another article. Omagh could be seen as a mistake. It is highly unlikely that the RIRA planned a massacre—especially in a mostly republican town. But the British had infiltrated them. But the Great Hunger, the massacres at Dundalk, Wexford and Croke Park, the Royal Navy shelling of Dublin, the burning of Cork and 26 other towns were no mistakes. Bloody Sunday in Derry and the massacre in Ballymurphy were not mistakes. But by calling them *mistakes*, the *Irish News* and the growing resurgence of Redmondism can "move on".

Arch-revisionists—like Eoghan Harris, Kevin Myers (who was born and grew up in Britain), and Ruth Dudley-Edwards—threw serious wobbles at not being invited to any of the Queen's do's. But all is now well and I understand that last minute invitations were issued, Mind you, Mary McAleese does not forget real or perceived slights. She no doubt remembers that Mr. Harris described her as "a political time-bomb" when she first ran for office. I'm not saying he was wrong, but even he should know that all this "forgiving and forgetting" is for the birdies.

Conor Lynch

REPORT

The following letter appeared in the *Irish Times* on 2nd May. It confirms what others also noted: that the event was deliberately botched, with no advance information about what time it would be held being released until the day itself.

'Outrage' at 1916 commemoration

As a grandson of Volunteer John Stokes, Boland's Mills Garrison, Easter 1916, I wish to express my outrage at what was purported to be a commemoration by the State of the issuing of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic and of the women and men who fought to establish that Republic.

Press reports indicate that 3,000 people attended. Many of these were tourists and foreign nationals. No surprise that the attendance by Irish citizens was so low. An inquiry to Military HQ 10 days previously elicited the information that there would be a military parade on Easter Sunday in O'Connell Street but that no other information was available. A focused search of the Government's websites drew a blank, as did the various websites of national and local tourism bodies and a broad internet search.

Perhaps it was as well that so few citizens attended. The GPO and the area reserved for "dignitaries" was cordoned off to exclude the citizens as far as the Abbey Street junction.

The one area available to citizens required them to submit to body-frisking and bag searches. The entire line on the Clery's side was constructed of two-metre high screens of opaque black material. A prime viewing area from Abbey Street to the GPO was marked for "Defence Forces guests". It was completely empty of people for the duration of the ceremony.

The sound system provided was utterly inadequate to the occasion, rendering all of the ceremony at the GPO inaudible to most citizens present, but of course perfect for that other class of citizens—the "dignitaries".

The Army, Navy and Air Corps were embarrassingly badly drilled, with far too many unable to keep step to the drumbeat. The musical director of the military band evidently thought it appropriate to give instrumental renditions of music hall ditties such as Step It Out Mary on what should have been a respectful and sombre occasion.

Excluding the citizens, privileging a self-styled "elite", and delivering a cack-handed ceremonial, handed a gratuitous insult to the men and women of 1916, to the Proclamation, to the Irish Republic itself and to the citizens of this country.

One hour later a small group of citizens

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGURA

England asserts herself
over her satellites,
Wales, Scotland, and with stealth,
that manufactured acolyte,
that sliver Northern Ireland,
that on occasions
pierces her side,
caused by the politics of quicksand.

England asserts herself
over her Muslims,
and other ethnic scalps,
while at Westminster Abbey
there is polite asylum
for those with power and wealth
to play the game of war.
Dressed in uniform the royal caddies.

England asserts herself,
making sure,
Germany remembers
its 1918 dismembering,
recalling the defeat of the Boers on the veldt,
claiming victory for the WW2 encumber
through second-hand history off-the-shelf,
though rescued out of the Soviet embers.

England asserts herself
through the Irish Times,
(a would-be bride, blue as delft)
noting that on Figura's uniform shines
the Harp of Ireland.
(used by the mercenary Irish Guards)
With this sleight-of-hand
the paper delights in its old canards.

Now England, in the guise of a monarch,
seeks Ireland as her bridegroom.
The matchmakers at Leinster House
appoint her beau, a eunuch,
thinking he still has his heirloom,
but he lost it in that '16 joust.
It can only swell in pride, England's womb,
as it fights a war dedicated to a peace-park.

Wilson John Haire

16th May, 2011

under the banner of Republic Day held a sincere, inclusive, dignified and meaningful commemoration at the National Monument at 16 Moore Street. The contrast between both ceremonies could not have been more marked.

It is obvious that this Government, like the last, has fully embraced the "Banana Republic"—but the citizens have not. The correct thing for the Government to do is to issue an apology and to withdraw from holding any further commemorations of 1916. We the citizens can do a far better job. We, at least, subscribe to the principle enshrined in the Proclamation that the Republic is the property of its citizens.

Tom Stokes

Citizens' Initiative for Republic Day

Sing Sing

Official Brigade Prison Of The Cork No. 1 Brigade

In his letter published in the most recent edition of the *Irish Political Review* [April 2011, Ed.], James Fitzgerald makes some very important points which have been overlooked in the melee of controversy which followed the publication of my book *The Year Of Disappearances*. He is quite correct to state that Martin Corry was merely the captain of the Knockraha company of the IRA. As such, he was a minor figure in the conflict in Cork. He is also correct to state that the Company had a special status in the Brigade as it operated two bomb factories and rang [sic] Sing Sing, the 'official Brigade prison', as Martin Corry called it in his IRA pension application form. And he is correct to say that Ned Moloney, the 'Governor of Sing Sing' was directly answerable to Sean O'Hegarty on the operation of the prison. Indeed, it is clear from Connie Neenan's accounts that Mike Canavan, the local company lieutenant was probably the most important liaison between the Knockraha Company and the battalions in Cork city. Sing Sing was run by the Brigade and the fate of prisoners was decided by Brigade officers, not by Martin Corry. None of this is contradicted in my work. Many of those involved in the running of Sing Sing, ordinary everyday Volunteers, were traumatized by their experiences of executions at night in the Rea and lived with nightmares for the rest of their lives. Unlike them, Corry does not appear to have been so affected.

Yet James Fitzgerald claims that I tried to demonize Martin Corry in my book. Corry, however, is a minor figure in the book as he was in the conflict itself. In fact, I was extremely restrained in my portrayal of Corry, considering the archival material I had at my disposal. It is true that no survivor of the Company left an account with the Bureau of Military History so you could say that no account in the BMH said that Martin Corry shot anyone. However, it is not true to say that Knockraha is not mentioned in the BMH submissions. Sean Healy in his submission referred to Knockraha as the 'unknown destination' from which people did not return. If I had wanted to demonize Martin Corry, I would have reported how Corry himself gloated to Ernie O'Malley about the patriotic activities of 'Corry's Mauser', or how Mick Leahy described the treatment of prisoners by the men who operated Sing Sing. If I

referred to Corry as the Chief Executioner of the Brigade then that was what Mick Leahy, his own commanding officer, called him. If I wanted to demonize Corry I would have reported what Sean Culhane thought of him and I could have quoted any number of outrageous comments he made himself in the Dail and County Council chambers. Far from demonizing Corry, I downplayed the more lurid of the material relating to him because he was well down in the chain of command and because decisions as to who to execute were taken elsewhere.

The other reason for not dwelling on Corry's role and that of the Knockraha Company is that James Fitzgerald himself had already written in detail about it. His book is one of the best pieces of local history written about the War of Independence—largely because he went to the trouble of interviewing survivors from both sides of the political divide to produce a book which is a true account of what took place. The daring and bravery of these men is not in question nor is the ingenuity of those who ran the bomb factories. I think the book should be required reading for anyone interested in the period.

Jim Fitzgerald further claims that I say in my book that Corry was involved in ethnic cleansing. I said no such thing. The only reference to ethnic cleansing in my book is my belief that the departure of Protestants from parts of Cork city could not be regarded as ethnic cleansing if only because they were largely replaced by other Protestants. And I would agree with James Fitzgerald's assessment of Corry as being non-sectarian. There is no evidence that Corry was sectarian, nor do I claim that he was in my book. The only instance of Corry being involved in the execution of Protestants was the killing of Edward Parsons when he stated that other YMCA members were executed on foot of information extracts from Parsons. It is clear from that account—Jim Fitzgerald's own—that Corry had very little idea what the YMCA was, let alone that he had any personal animosity against Protestants. In fact, years later, he was in the best of terms with Brooke Brazier, his Protestant Fine Gael TD electoral rival. And Corry got on perfectly well with his Protestant neighbours. But then, I never said that he did not.

James Fitzgerald also states that 'we

had no prayer session' at the unveiling of the plaque to Sing Sing for those who were buried in the bogs. This is a matter of semantics. The priest who officiated at the unveiling asked us to remember in our prayers all the participants in the conflict locally, including the victims. My memory is that a decade of the Rosary was said for the souls of all those involved. I have checked with several others who were there that evening and they agree with this version of events. It may not have been a prayer session as such, but prayers were said and the victims were included in the prayers. Indeed, to do otherwise would have been profoundly unchristian.

James Fitzgerald seems to be under the impression that he is the only one to have left an account of the operation of Sing Sing. He is not. The accounts of Mick Leahy, Sean Culhane, Edmond Desmond and others are all in the Ernie O'Malley notebooks in UCC, if Mr. Fitzgerald is interested in looking them up. I also spoke to many others in the Knockraha area—several of my own relatives were members of the Company, so I'm not exactly an outsider in this regard—though I was not aware of Sing Sing myself until 1994. As James Fitzgerald stated, a Mrs. Prendergast raised questions about the human remains found by Tim Driscoll on his land in the early 1960s. When she inquired about the matter she found that there was no record of the find in Watergrasshill Garda station. James Fitzgerald states that she did this in 2001 but I was told about the original episode in 1992. Her inquiries had nothing to do with the cover-up, which took place in the early 1960s. Whether Corry quashed it or not is largely beside the point. Since my book came out I have been told about several instances of skeletons turning up in fields in the area—and in one instance in a quarry. In each case, the bones were quietly reburied.

It is inevitable that the media will focus on the more lurid details of an underground cavern in a graveyard from which prisoners were taken at night for execution. As far as I am concerned Sing Sing was merely the starting point for the process of inquiry that resulted in *The Year Of Disappearances*. I cannot be held responsible for what others write on the subject. I was reluctant to get into this as Jim Fitzgerald is a decent upright man and is portrayed as such in my book. However, for the record, it is important to distinguish between what I wrote and what he thinks I wrote.

Gerard Murphy

The Moriarty Tribunal, Volume 2

Part 2,

In last month's *Irish Political Review* the first volume of the second part of the Moriarty Report was reviewed. This largely dealt with alleged payments made by Denis O'Brien to Michael Lowry. O'Brien has always denied that he gave even one red cent to Lowry. Last month it was concluded that the evidence adduced by Moriarty against O'Brien was weak to the point of non existence.

In the second volume of his Report Moriarty examined the possible favours which Lowry gave in return for the alleged payments. This reviewer can only conclude that, if O'Brien paid even one red cent, he was grossly overcharged.

BACKGROUND

Before discussing the findings of the Moriarty Report it is worth reviewing the reason for the awarding of a second mobile phone licence. The decision was prompted by an EU Directive requiring competition in the mobile phone market.

The Fianna Fáil/Labour Coalition had proposed an access fee of £3 million for the successful applicant, plus an open-ended annual royalty, which the State owned telecommunications company Eir-cell would also pay. Following the collapse of the Reynolds-led Government at the end of 1994 Michael Lowry was appointed Minister for Transport, Enterprise and Communications. The launch of the competition for the licence was in March 1995 with changed Terms of Reference. The open-ended annual royalty was dropped. Instead, the up-front access fee was to be open-ended with a minimum fee of £5 million. This financial criterion was ranked fourth among a list of other criteria relating to the roll-out of the service.

The competition, as launched in March 1995, was described as a hybrid: it had, on the one hand, elements of an auction where the highest bidder won; and, on the other hand, a beauty contest where the "best" plan was awarded the licence.

All applicants were obliged to pay a non-refundable fee of £5k. The closing date for applications was originally 23rd June 1995 and a decision on the award was planned for the end of October that year.

However, in June the EU Commission lodged an objection to the criteria for the competition. It objected to the open-ended licence fee element. This was on the grounds that it would have restricted

competition with the existing State monopoly. My impression is that the Government could have retained the open-ended or "auction" element of the competition if it had confined it to an annual royalty fee (as envisaged by the previous Fianna Fáil-led Government) while also imposing such a fee on Eir-cell. Nevertheless, the Government agreed to put a cap on the access fee at £15 million. In my view this completely changed the nature of the competition. If, as turned out to be the case, all the applicants were prepared to pay the maximum amount of £15 million for the licence, the "auction" element would cease to have any importance in distinguishing the applicants. The competition would, in effect, have been transformed from being a "hybrid" to a beauty contest pure and simple.

As a result of the changed criteria, the closing date for applications was deferred until 5th August 1995. Accordingly, a decision on the award of the licence was put back a month to the end of November.

The Department's approach to the competition was, first of all, to appoint a consultant to design a tender document. The tender document or "*Request for Proposals*" (RFP) was designed by KPMG Consultants. This document formed the basis for the launch of the competition. The Department also decided that outside consultants would be appointed for the evaluation process. Unusually, the consultants who were appointed to help evaluate the applications were not the same consultants who designed the RFP document. A Danish firm, Andersen Management International (AMI), was appointed for the evaluation process.

The Department set up a Project Team, consisting of civil servants from the various divisions of the Department of Transport, Enterprise and Communications, as well as personnel from the Department of Finance. This Project Team was to work closely with AMI with a view to making a recommendation for consideration by Government.

The evolution of the process from a hybrid auction/beauty contest to a "beauty contest" was fraught with danger. Since the criteria for success would be largely qualitative rather than quantitative any result would be open to question. Also, the beauty contest form ensured, in my view, that the licence was even more lucrative than would otherwise be the case. In a game of such high stakes any

doubt surrounding the result would inevitably be exploited by the losing applicant.

THE TASK OF MORIARTY

Before delving into the minutiae of the Report it is worth taking a step back in order to obtain some perspective. The licence was awarded to Esat Digifone. The legal contracts were signed in May 1996. It is generally agreed that Esat successfully competed against the State-owned Eir-cell by building an alternative network. The owners of Esat did what they said they would do. Moriarty has been enquiring into a process whose outcome has been satisfactory. If the process was flawed, it is by no means clear that there were any damaging consequences. By any reasonable measure the time and expense involved in this inquiry has been out of all proportion to the "problem" which it seeks to ameliorate.

At the beginning of Volume Two of his Report consisting of 1,700 pages, Moriarty claims that it is not the role of the Tribunal to adjudicate on the "*fairness, objectivity or legality of the award*". Nor is its role to decide on whether Esat Digifone "*should or should not have been the winner*". Its only role was to decide on whether Lowry conferred a benefit.

This in my view is a little disingenuous. Firstly, according to media reports, Moriarty's provisional finding declared that the licence was awarded "*illegally*". So it would be more accurate to say that, having failed to sustain a charge of illegality, he decided it was not his role to pronounce on the legality of the award.

Secondly, in my opinion, the Report goes way beyond assessing whether Lowry conferred a benefit. It examines critically technical aspects of the Report over which Lowry could not have had any influence. Moriarty even employed a consultant, Peter Bacon, to second-guess the recommendations of AMI. The Report is, in effect, a re-running of the licence competition.

CONCLUSIONS

Rather than give a blow by blow account of the 1700 pages I propose to start at the end of the Report with the *Conclusions* and then return to the body of the Report to assess if the *Conclusions* are warranted by the evidence.

Moriarty begins the Conclusion section of the Report with the following criticisms of the process:

- 1) The quantitative limb of the evaluation process was excluded
- 2) An irregular application of weightings
- 3) Deficiency of financial weightings

- 4) Erosion of Project Group as decision maker
- 5) Consultants provide no guarantee—budgetary problems.
- 6) Emergence of problems in licensing process not dealt with.

TECHNICAL CRITICISMS

The first three points are technical criticisms of AMI, the consultants employed to assist in the evaluation process. Moriarty, with the help of his own consultant Peter Bacon, is second-guessing the professional judgements of AMI. In my view this goes beyond the scope of the Tribunal's Terms of Reference, which was to examine improper influence exerted by Michael Lowry.

Even if these three criticisms were within the Terms of Reference, it is by no means certain that they are valid criticisms. Michael Andersen of AMI made a number of points in defence of his methodology. The quantitative limb of the evaluation became almost irrelevant following the intervention of the EU. As indicated above, the competition had been transformed from a hybrid auction/beauty contest to a beauty contest pure and simple. For example if, as in the case of an auction, the winning candidate had bid an enormous amount of money to obtain the licence, there might be a serious question over the financial viability of the project. However, with a cap put on the licence fee, financial criteria become less important since the winner of the project was much more likely to recoup the initial investment.

Regarding point 2 above Andersen argued that the RFP document, which AMI did not design, was vague. As a consequence it does not seem unreasonable for AMI to change the weightings of the various evaluation criteria to take account of the content of the applications.

Point 3 on the deficiency of the financial weighting is a constant theme throughout the Report. Denis O'Brien's Communicorp (later Esat Holdings) was considered a weak element in the Esat Digifone consortium. However, Esat's partner, Telenor, was a very profitable and well-financed company. Esat Digifone's main competitor Persona had also a weak financial link. However, it was always likely that all the elements of the winning consortium would have no difficulty in obtaining finance. It was the view of AMI and the Department's project team that "*bankability*" was more relevant than the existing financial position of consortium members.

Peter Bacon in his Report for the Tribunal disagrees with the concept of "*bankability*". He says: "*bankability was not a remedy for insolvency*". But there

was little doubt that the winners would be embarking on a profitable enterprise. So the banks would not be throwing good money after bad.

There is no suggestion by Moriarty anywhere in his long Report that AMI came under any influence from Michael Lowry. However, in Chapter 51 he says that Peter Bacon "*continued to hold the view that Mr Andersen was manipulated*". There is not a shred of evidence adduced to support this bald statement. There is not even speculation as to how Anderson was manipulated or by whom. The statement is just left hanging there with no visible means of support.

Despite the speculation of Bacon, the above three criticisms are technical matters. The reader can choose between two experts. On the one hand there is the opinion of Peter Bacon who is something of a jack of all trades. As well as advising on telecommunications competitions, he has consulted on NAMA and many years ago also turned his hand to property price inflation (his conclusion, as far as I remember, was that the market would solve this problem by encouraging greater supply). On the other hand there is Michael Andersen and AMI which specialise in telecommunications competitions and have consulted on such competitions in over 100 countries.

In my opinion Andersen is a more credible expert, but Moriarty disagrees. Indeed, he is quite protective of Bacon. In response to criticism from Denis O'Brien's lawyers, Moriarty says: "*aspersions sought to be cast on the professionalism, objectivity and standing of Mr Bacon were unwarranted, ill-judged and wholly unsustainable*".

On the other hand here is Moriarty's rather pompous view of Andersen:

"...the tribunal is left with a clear impression that the weight, reliability and extent of accurate recollection apparent from Mr Andersen's evidence fell so appreciably below what might have been expected as to amount to very little assistance to the Tribunal on those matters that were of major consequence. Indeed, the assurance conveyed by his solicitors, as late as 20th October, 2010, that he would attend, 'to give evidence to assist the Tribunal with its enquiries on the 26th October, next' must, in all the circumstances, be viewed as verging on the incongruous".

I will return to the issue of Michael Andersen's credibility. At this point it should be stressed that, while Bacon disagrees with Andersen, he does not say that Esat Digifone should not have won. All he is saying is that it is "*impossible to say who won*".

OTHER CRITICISMS

The 'erosion of the Project Group as decision maker' has also nothing to do with Michael Lowry. Moriarty claims that there were flaws in the operation of the Project Group. There was no "*constitution*" for this group, nor were there standing orders. Minutes of the group's meetings were confined to decisions that had been made (the members of the group may not have considered themselves to be archivists). Also, different members had different levels of influence. Apparently, the most influential members were the Chairman of the Group, Martin Brennan (who was in charge of the development division of the Telecommunications division) and his deputy, Fintan Towey.

Moriarty makes the point that employing consultants is no guarantee of a correct decision. He also refers to the budgetary problems of AMI. The original contract put a cap on fees to AMI at about 300k. AMI demanded that this ceiling be lifted since the workload had increased as a result of the changes in the terms of the reference of the competition following the EU intervention. A compromise was reached in which AMI received an extra amount on condition that it complied with strict reporting deadlines. Again, it is difficult to see the relevance of all this. None of these problems can be attributed to Lowry. However, it would be understandable if this made shocking reading for Moriarty. Here was a world of financial constraints and strict deadlines, a world that appears to be unknown to this Tribunal.

Moriarty identifies problems following the selection of Esat Digifone in October 1995 and before signing of the contracts in May 1996. Among the problems were: the financial weakness of O'Brien's part of the consortium (Communicorp, later Esat Holdings); and the change of ownership. I have already dealt with the issue of the financial weakness of Communicorp. I will deal with the issue of the change of ownership in greater detail later in this article. But it should be said that it appears that Esat Digifone is damned if it does and damned if it doesn't. The attempts by O'Brien to involve Dermot Desmond in the Consortium were precisely to address the perception of financial weakness. The reasoning of Moriarty would not be out of place in Joseph Heller's famous novel *Catch 22*. The only way Esat Digifone could address its perceived financial weakness was to change its ownership structure; but changing its ownership structure, in Moriarty's opinion, is forbidden.

Once a recommendation had been made, Michael Lowry and the Depart-

ment's project team wanted the decision to be implemented. They did not want to undermine their decision after October 1995 by continuing to pick holes in it. The focus of the Department was to negotiate a legally-binding contract with a view to the timely rolling out of the alternative mobile phone network. Moriarty, on the other hand, thinks that the recommendation should really have been a discussion document and any problems that emerged during the period of negotiation should have prompted the Department and Government to revisit its decision to award the licence to Esat Digifone. In my opinion, it is difficult to see how any decision could be made on a timely basis if the Moriarty approach was adopted.

LOWRY'S INFLUENCE

As will be gathered by the reader, a large part of the conclusions and indeed the body of the Report relate to matters, which have nothing to do with the influence of Michael Lowry. This leads me to the conclusion that Moriarty, for whatever reason, wishes to re-run the competition rather than confine his enquiry to an examination of any improper influence exerted by Michael Lowry.

On the question of influence exerted by Lowry, Moriarty appears to believe that all influence exerted by Lowry is necessarily "*improper*". Indeed, he also thinks that Lowry should have made himself impervious to being influenced.

When the project team was set up there was a set of protocols issued for the members of the team, which also applied to AMI. Members should not meet applicants socially. All meetings with applicants should be on a formal basis. At formal meetings there should always be more than one member of the project team present. These seem to be sensible, but should the same protocols be applied to the Minister? Moriarty believes they should have. However, this is a very moot point. Apart from the practicalities of preventing access to Irish politicians, in my view there is a strong case for democratic supervision (through the Minister) of the work of the Civil Service.

Of course, nobody could justify Ministerial intervention to the disadvantage of the State. However, there is absolutely no evidence that Lowry's influence was of this kind. So how does Moriarty say Lowry did influence the process?

GOSSIP

The influence ranges from the trivial to the slightly less trivial. In descending order of triviality, Moriarty says Lowry shared a rumour with his Fine Gael colleagues

that, if the second-ranked applicant, Persona, had won, it would have been a big nest egg for a Fianna Fail politician. The relevant politician was Albert Reynolds. Moriarty assures us that there was no foundation to this gossip. There is no evidence that such gossip reached the ears of AMI or the project team. The body of the Report also mentions that Lowry believed that Denis O'Brien was a Fianna Fáiler, possibly because one of Esat Digifone's consultants was the well-known FF personality P.J. Mara.

This is not the only piece of gossip in the Report. Although, the following incident does not make it to the conclusion of the Report, Moriarty cannot resist mentioning a conversation, which occurred at the Aintree racing festival in April 1995. Apparently, the financier Dermot Desmond said to the Chairman of the Persona Group, Tony Boyle, that he would not be involved in the Esat consortium. According to Boyle, Desmond also said that he knew who Denis O'Brien would use to "*get at*" Lowry. Desmond denies that this conversation ever took place. There was another member of the Persona group at Aintree. This was Michael McGinley (father of the golfer Paul). McGinley remembers Boyle telling him that Desmond would not be involved with Esat Digifone, but doesn't recall the bit about O'Brien knowing who to use to get at Lowry. Moriarty thinks that Boyle's version is correct on the grounds that, if Boyle was lying, he would have made a more damning allegation. Of course, Moriarty is not one to gossip, but he thought he would mention it nevertheless.

INFLUENCE ON PROJECT TEAM

In my view the "*influence*" which Lowry exerted over the project team was trivial. Lowry made a phone call in early September 1995 to Martin Brennan, the Chairman of the project team. When the receptionist could not access Brennan, the Minister was put through to his deputy, Fintan Towey. Towey says that Lowry asked him about the progress of the competition and in particular whether the result was a foregone conclusion. The reason for the phone call was that Lowry had heard that Persona would win the competition because of fears that one of its members, Motorola, would pull out of Ireland resulting in a loss of thousands of jobs. Towey assured him that the result was not a foregone conclusion and a decision had not been made. Towey was under the impression that Lowry was asking the question on behalf of another applicant in the competition, but Lowry's

evidence was that he was responding to rumours that he had heard from his programme manager. Needless to say, Moriarty finds Towey's impression more credible. Indeed, for reasons that are unclear, he finds Lowry's version "*wholly improbable*".

Lowry's "*influence*" over the project team was also reflected in his ability to obtain information from it. Moriarty says this "*coincided*" with a deviation in the evaluation criteria as well as the erosion of the project group. It is fortunate that Moriarty uses the verb "*coincide*" rather than "*cause*", since the idea that the mere act of seeking information would have any influence on the evaluation criteria or the functioning of the project team is too ridiculous to even consider.

It is noteworthy that Moriarty does not claim that Lowry ever expressed any preference to the project team before a recommendation was made.

APPLICATION OF GUILLOTINE

Once a recommendation was made Lowry was anxious that a final decision be made as soon as possible. It should be said that Lowry had no influence over the timetable over which the recommendation for Esat Digifone was made (the end of October). His influence was over the political response to the recommendation. The original plan was that the Government would deliberate over the recommendation over a period of a month. What happened was that the decision was made a very short time after the recommendation.

In the Conclusion section of the Report Moriarty says that nobody could explain why the process needed to be accelerated. But in the body of the Report it is stated that four different people independently advised Lowry to make a quick announcement. Lowry's Press Officer, Joe Jennings, advised an announcement be made immediately after the next Cabinet meeting to avoid unauthorised leaks. Martin Brennan, the Chairman of the project group and Michael Andersen of AMI also advised a quick announcement for similar reasons. John Loughrey the Secretary General of the Department advised Michael Lowry of the decision on 25th October 1995.

Loughrey said in evidence that he was under the impression that this was the first time that Lowry had been appraised of the decision. He advised Lowry that the approval of the Party Leaders and the Minister for Finance should be sought that day to avoid the potential for interference and lobbying. Moriarty considers all of this irrelevant. Indeed, he believes that the Secretary General's evidence was

without "*foundation in reality*". According to Moriarty, Lowry had made his decision as far back as 3rd October 1995 and other advice agreeing with him was therefore fortuitous.

Lowry followed Loughrey's advice (or as Moriarty might prefer: decided independently on a course of action, which by chance happened to coincide with all the advice he had received). He met the Taoiseach John Bruton later that day. Bruton's diary record of the meeting indicates that Lowry said that "*Albert had promised it to Motorola*" (i.e. the Persona Consortium). According to Bruton, Lowry also said that, if the Government did not follow the recommendation, it would be subject to a legal challenge as was the case in Italy. Moriarty says this was inaccurate. Lowry said in evidence that he meant the Belgian Government. Moriarty does not say if the substitution of the country Belgium for Italy would have made the statement accurate or not. Lowry also indicated that the Minister for Finance Ruairi Quinn had a brother, Lochlann Quinn, involved in the third-placed consortium and therefore should not be involved in discussions of the winner.

The decision to grant Esat Digifone exclusive negotiations rights for the award of the Licence was ratified by a Cabinet Committee (not a full cabinet meeting) consisting of the Minister for Finance, Lowry and the party leaders of the coalition parties (Bruton, Spring and de Rossa). Lowry, on that evening, made a public announcement of the decision that had been made.

It seems to me that, apart from the piece of groundless, political gossip concerning Albert Reynolds, Lowry's comments to Bruton were reasonable. But that is not how Moriarty sees it. In the body of the Report he says:

"In securing what was de facto Government approval, otherwise than through the route of bringing a recommendation to Cabinet on foot of an Aide Memoire, or a Memorandum for Government, or even by deferring the matter to the scheduled Cabinet meeting the following day, all of the procedures which had so carefully been put in place by Mr. Bruton and his colleagues, when the Rainbow Coalition entered Government were rendered of no application to the GSM decision."

In the conclusion section of the Report he says:

"but even more reprehensibly he {i.e. Lowry—JM} sought to overreach his own party leader, the Taoiseach Mr. John Bruton TD, by intimating that the government should have no discretion in the matter."

If Lowry was "*reprehensible*", John Bruton was complicit or at least acquiescent in the reprehensible action. In this Conclusion section Moriarty goes on to say Civil Servants—

"found themselves at an irregular and improper intersection of business and politics in the persons of Mr. Michael Lowry and Denis O'Brien, of which they had no knowledge at any time."

They were influenced by the devious duo even though they didn't know they were?!

Moriarty adds that Lowry's actions were a "*cynical and venal abuse of office*".

There is certainly an arguable case that the Government should not have acted as a rubber stamp for the recommendations of the Civil Service or outside consultants. But to hold the contrary view is hardly "*reprehensible*". The Government, or to be more precise the leaders of the Government Parties as well as the Minister for Finance, were presented with a highly technical Report which was giving a clear recommendation. There was no obvious reason of State for rejection of this recommendation.

It is interesting that Moriarty appears to believe that the process leading up to the recommendation should be completely sealed off from political influence and yet, after the recommendation, there should be total discretion on behalf of Government. However, in my opinion Moriarty was yet again going beyond his Terms of Reference. It was not the function of the Tribunal to pronounce on how the Government conducted itself. The Tribunal's concern should have been only the actions of Michael Lowry. Was it reasonable for the Minister to truncate the time for political consideration of the recommendation? Given the advice that was available to him it is difficult to impute any sinister motive for his action.

LOWRY'S "FAVOURS" TO O'BRIEN

Moriarty gives two examples of favours given by Lowry to O'Brien. The first is quite trivial. In April 1995 Lowry recommended that O'Brien approach France Telecom with a view to making an application with this company. April 1995 was after the competition was launched but before the applications had been submitted. In my opinion it was reasonable for a Minister to encourage applications. Lowry had apparently heard that France Telecom had met Department officials in connection with the licence competition.

Moriarty falls short of saying that Lowry's behaviour was improper, but does

say it was "*indiscreet*". It's interesting that the French State (through its Embassy officials) could take an active role in the competition, but the Irish State was obliged to be supine.

In the event the proposed deal with O'Brien and France Telecom never happened because O'Brien felt that France Telecom was not serious, but the long business lunches in Paris were very good!

The second favour bestowed on O'Brien was information given by Lowry in a pub conversation after the All Ireland Final on 17th September 1995. This is dealt with in Chapter 27, which begins in a sneering style in which the word "*happened*" is repeatedly used in a sarcastic manner as in O'Brien just "*happened*" to meet Lowry on that day.

It appears that, for whatever reason, O'Brien sought out Lowry after the match. They made contact in Hartigans but this pub was too noisy and they decided to repair to Houricans. As clandestine conspiracies go, this was probably not the most sophisticated.

O'Brien and Lowry have always denied that that Licence was discussed. O'Brien in an interview with Pat Kenny said that he discussed matters relating to his fixed line business because the Licence was considered a taboo subject. Moriarty, on the other hand, considers the idea that the licence was not discussed "*bereft of credibility*".

There is some corroborating evidence to support Moriarty. Per Simonsen, a senior Telenor Executive, told the Tribunal that O'Brien had been told by Lowry that Esat Digifone needed to have Dermot Desmond on board. But Simonsen also said that he didn't take what O'Brien said seriously. At the time O'Brien was pushing for Dermot Desmond to invest in the consortium. Unlike other potential investors, Desmond was prepared to put money up front before the awarding of the licence. Even more important from O'Brien's perspective, Desmond was going to underwrite O'Brien's share of the consortium. So, if O'Brien could not access finance from other sources, Desmond was prepared to step in.

The Telenor Executives must have been amused at O'Brien's *chutzpah*. Even though O'Brien would have been the main beneficiary of Desmond's participation, he wanted Desmond's increased share of Esat Digifone to be at the expense of Telenor!

Even though Telenor didn't take O'Brien seriously in this instance Moriarty, for once, does. But in my opinion the idea that Lowry would advise O'Brien to encourage

Desmond to invest in Digifone is—to use a Moriarty phrase—“*bereft of credibility*”. Lowry had no known connection with Desmond. Indeed the associations with Desmond would have been in the opposite direction. Desmond was associated with Charlie Haughey and the *Irish Financial Services Centre*.

But let us assume that O'Brien and Lowry's memory is faulty or that they were lying. While it is almost impossible to imagine that Lowry could have advised O'Brien to ensure that Desmond would invest in Esat Digifone, it is just about possible that he would have said that Esat Digifone's weak point was the financial fragility of the O'Brien element of the consortium.

What would have been the value of this piece of information? It is very noticeable that Moriarty produces evidence to support one theory he holds, but ignores the same evidence if it does not support another theory he has. For example, in Chapter 48 of the Report he says that the Programme Manager for Dick Spring, Greg Sparks, was “*surprised*” in October 1995 that Esat Digifone was awarded the Licence. The reason why he was surprised was that he “*knew*” of the financial frailty of the O'Brien element of the Esat Digifone consortium. In this Chapter the reader is invited to conclude that Esat Digifone should not have been awarded the licence because Sparks, a Chartered Accountant who had no direct involvement in the licence competition, “*knew*” that there was a weak financial link in the Esat Digifone consortium. And, of course, the Bookies' favourite was the Persona Group.

If Lowry had told O'Brien in that pub on All Ireland day that Esat Digifone's weak point was the financial frailty of O'Brien's company, he would have been telling him no more than what the “*dogs in the streets*” or “*informed*” sources would have told him. The information that Lowry communicated would most definitely not have been “*inside knowledge*”, since we now know that AMI and the Project Group had come to the conclusion that the “*beauty contest*” nature of the competition had rendered the financial aspect less important than was widely perceived at the time. Lowry's information therefore would have been less than helpful.

Another example of Moriarty's one-sided examination of the evidence is the conclusion that he draws from contacts that Lowry had made with other applicants in the competition. Moriarty says that Lowry told Anthony O'Reilly of Independent Newspapers at a business function that his consortium had not done well. He

also says that Lowry met Tony Boyle, the Chairman of the Persona Group, at Fitz Patrick's Hotel, Killiney on 16th August 1995. Boyle was allowed make a sales pitch directly to Lowry. Although Lowry was accompanied by a Fine Gael colleague, this person remained at the bar while Boyle and Lowry discussed the licence competition at a separate table.

Moriarty concludes that, if Lowry was quite prepared to discuss the licence competition with Boyle and O'Reilly, what possible constraint would have prevented him from discussing the licence with O'Brien in Houricans on 17th September 1995?

It is difficult to fault Moriarty's logic on this. But there is another obvious conclusion that can be drawn from Lowry's behaviour, which does not seem to have occurred to Moriarty. If Lowry was “*indiscreet*” or “*imprudent*”, his indiscretion and imprudence was not confined to the Esat Digifone application; it was relatively even-handed between the various applicants.

There was one big problem with the meeting at Houricans which, notwithstanding Lowry's habitual indiscretion, suggests that it is possible that the Licence was not discussed. A few days before that meeting the oral hearings of the applicants had been completed. The Project Group had indicated that they would not accept any more submissions from applicants. So, unlike with the Boyle meeting of a month before, if Lowry had revealed anything of interest to O'Brien it would have been of limited value.

How does Moriarty overcome this hurdle? The answer is that he makes, in my opinion, a big leap of faith. Here is what he says:

“The Tribunal likewise considers it unworthy of belief that Mr Lowry did not give some comfort to Mr O'Brien on the consequences of notifying that information {i.e. Dermot Desmond's involvement in the Esat Digifone consortium—JM} to the Department notwithstanding the competition rules which prohibited the submission of further information after the conclusion of oral presentations.”

There is absolutely no evidence to support this theory. Again we see how Moriarty examines the evidence in a one-sided manner. He says that, at the end of the Esat Digifone oral submission, Denis O'Brien asked if the project group would accept more submissions. Moriarty tells us this to establish that O'Brien was fully aware that, if he did make a submission, he would be breaking the rules. However, the fact that O'Brien asked the question also indicates that it was always his

intention to make a submission in some form.

To be legalistic about it, Esat Digifone did not make a submission to the Project Group after the closing date of submissions. IIU, a company owned by Dermot Desmond, sent a document to the Project Group's designated fax. The document indicated that it would underwrite O'Brien's share of the consortium as well as the balance of shares not owned by either O'Brien's company or Telenor. Esat Digifone was advised by William Fry solicitors. It is obvious that there was considerable thought put into the content of the document as well as the source (IIU rather than Esat Digifone). It is inconceivable that all of this was dreamed up at an impromptu meeting between Denis O'Brien and Michael Lowry at Hourican's pub.

Nevertheless, Moriarty has no hesitation in stating that the IIU submission was a breach of the competition rules. Also, in the Conclusion section of his Report, he says that the meeting in Hourican's was a “*profoundly reprehensible occasion*” (“reprehensible” seems to be Moriarty's favourite word).

So, how did the Project group respond to the IIU submission? There were only two members who had sight of the document. These were Martin Brennan and Fintan Towey. This must have presented a dilemma for them. On the one hand the submission was in breach of the spirit if not the letter of the rules. On the other hand the information materially affected the strength of the Esat Digifone bid. Brennan decided that the document would not be shown or mentioned to either AMI or the remaining members of the Project Group. There is absolutely no evidence that Michael Lowry was even aware of the document at the time. Moriarty thinks that Lowry may have been aware of the document months after October 1995. The “*evidence*” is an unscripted Dáil statement which does not even mention Dermot Desmond or IIU. But even Moriarty could find no evidence to indicate that Lowry did anything about the submission (e.g. attempting to ensure that it would be circulated).

CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

The most disturbing aspect of the Tribunal's Report relates to the change of ownership of Esat Digifone. But the “*disturbing aspect*” does not relate to the “*reprehensible*” behaviour of Denis O'Brien, Dermot Desmond or Michael Lowry; it relates to the conduct of the Tribunal itself.

In Esat Digifone's original submission it was proposed that O'Brien's company (Communicorp) would own 40%, Telenor would own 40% and the balance would be financed by AIB, Bank of Ireland, Standard Life among others. The problem was that these latter institutions were not financing any of the costs of the application and there was no binding commitment to raise finance in the event of Esat Digifone winning the competition. A venture capital company called Advent, which owned 34% of Communicorp, also indicated that it would invest in Esat Digifone, but this was not a legally-binding commitment.

O'Brien felt that this was a weakness in the bid. He also may have felt that his own position within the Esat Digifone consortium was vulnerable. It was for these reasons that he sought the involvement of Dermot Desmond. It is unnecessary to go into all the twists and turns of the ownership structure of Esat Digifone. At one stage the plan was to divide the cake in the ratio 37.5%, 37.5% with the remaining 25% to Desmond. At another stage O'Brien was pushing for 50% ownership. Just before the signing of the legal contract in May 1996, Michael Lowry and the Department insisted that the ownership structure should revert to a 40%, 40%, 20% ratio. This was in line with the original application, except that the original application gave the impression that the 20% not owned by Communicorp and Telenor would be widely dispersed.

It is difficult to see how this "change" of ownership could have affected the validity of the award. Nevertheless, the Department through a letter from Fintan Towey felt it necessary to refer the matter to the Attorney General's Office. The Attorney General's Office, of course, had its own legal expertise, but decided to seek external legal advice.

In a letter of 9th May 1996 Richard Nesbitt SC expressed the following opinion:

"If one analyses why the Minister is concerned about the ownership of shares in the licensee the only legitimate concern he can have is that if there is a change of ownership the service that has to be provided will in some way be compromised. Rather the licensee has been awarded the licence because its plans and proposals were the most meritorious and it provided a funding plan which looked feasible. There is no reason why any of these matters have to be compromised because of a change of ownership."

Moriarty chose to interpret this advice as being "forward looking". In other words, all it meant was that in the future the consortium would be entitled to change

the structure of its ownership providing the service would not be compromised. But it did not mean that the ownership changes that had already been implemented were legally valid. At this stage common sense goes out the window.

The facts of the matter are that the two principals in the Esat Digifone consortium had precisely the same percentage shareholding on the signing of the contract in May 1996 as they had proposed in the closing date for applications on 5th August 1995.

Even more damning from the Tribunal's point of view is that the Tribunal lawyers were told in October 2002 that the advice was not just forward-looking but also applied to ownership changes since the application. And yet Moriarty was still picking on the 'ownership bone' almost 8 years later in 2010.

This is a shocking reflection on the professionalism and objectivity of the Tribunal. Chapter 57 is a rambling incoherent attempt to defend the indefensible.

Justice Moriarty finishes the Chapter with a quite disgraceful criticism of the advice by Civil Servants to Alan Dukes in response to a parliamentary question from Bobby Molloy.

MICHAEL ANDERSEN

One of the big weaknesses of the Report is that it fails to suggest that any improper influence was exerted on Michael Andersen or AMI. And yet AMI recommended that Esat Digifone should be awarded the licence. The best (or should that be worst?) that Moriarty can do is to suggest that Andersen was untrustworthy and incompetent. Andersen did not want to appear before the Tribunal without an indemnity because he perceived that the Tribunal was hostile to him. The State refused to grant him this indemnity.

When he eventually appeared before the Tribunal, the manner in which he was questioned showed that his original suspicions were well founded. The Tribunal called him in response to a letter from Denis O'Brien's solicitors. He was originally due to appear in July 2010 but this was postponed until later. In the meantime Moriarty discovered that O'Brien had given Andersen the indemnity that he had required.

Moriarty is shocked at this. The Tribunal could have interviewed Andersen in July without knowing about this "clandestine" indemnity! This is really pathetic. The letter to the Tribunal indicating that Andersen was available to give evidence came from O'Brien's solicitors!

The Tribunal lawyers, apparently, picked Andersen up on a minor inconsistency between a statement he made in 2002 and one made in 2010. In 2002 a statement from Andersen said that he didn't know why Lowry made a prompt announcement on 25th October 1995, shortly after the recommendation was made to give exclusive negotiating rights to Esat Digifone, but he agreed with Lowry's action. But in 2010 he said that Lowry had followed his strong advice to Martin Brennan. Moriarty concludes that because there is an inconsistency between the statement in 2002, in which Andersen does not know why Lowry made his prompt announcement, and the statement in 2010 in which he says that Lowry was following the advice that he (Andersen) gave to Martin Brennan, then Andersen's evidence is not credible. In my opinion Moriarty is really scraping the bottom of the barrel here. The statement of 2010 is merely making an assumption that Lowry followed advice from Brennan, which he (Andersen) had given. In the 2002 statement he had declined to make that assumption.

There is one more point about Andersen's evidence that is worthy of note. Andersen remarked that all the questions put to him by Tribunal Counsel related to Esat Digifone. None related to Persona. He would have liked matters relating to Persona put to him on a like-for-like basis.

CONCLUSION

The Moriarty Report has been a scandalous waste of time and money. It has had the effect of undermining confidence in the institutions of the State for no good purpose. The legal profession should never again be accorded such power by the State. It is time that the democratic representatives of the State reassert themselves.

NOTE:

There was an error in the article on the Moriarty Report in the May issue of the Irish Political Review. I stated that Fine Gael had received the \$50,000 dollars from David Austin. In fact, John Bruton initially refused the amount and Fine Gael only later accepted the money some time later under the impression that it was a personal contribution from David Austin. It could be said that this was an example of what Barry Moloney referred to as money from O'Brien being "stuck with an intermediary". However, the amount claimed by Moloney was 100,000 and not about £31,000 which was the Irish pound equivalent of \$50,000.

John Martin

Easter Commemorations

SINN FÉIN, WEST BELFAST

The largest Republican parade at Easter was in West Belfast. It received one short paragraph in the *Belfast Telegraph* which said that: "...hundreds of people lined the Falls Road as Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams led a parade..." There were thousands there. Gerry Adams was not. As well as the marchers and strollers, the pavements were lined six deep cheering the parade. Otherwise not a single Belfast Daily, or Southern national paper mentioned the parade at all. It was covered only by the *Andersonstown News*.

Much space—often half to three-quarters of a page were given over to Martin McGuinness in Derry and to parades by Eirigi, IRSP, RSF, and others.

The oration at Milltown cemetery was delivered by an extremely effective Pat Sheehan, Gerry Adams' successor at Stormont. Sheehan was one of the Long Kesh Hunger Strikers and would have been the next to die if the Strike had not been called off. He criticised other Republican groups but never called them "dissidents", nor was he abusive in any way. The same applies to most Sinn Féin speakers at other rallies.

A feature of this year's parades was what might be called the IRA peeping out of the closet. Officially IRA units and commands have been transformed into Sinn Féin Cumainn and Ceann Comhairlean. Only the Army Council still has official existence. Even Unionists don't bother any more commenting on this arrangement. Yet wreaths were laid at Milltown on behalf of the IRA GHQ and the IRA Belfast Brigade.

Sheehan said he had been a member of the IRA and there was only one IRA—and these other groups were not it. I suspect that all this had several reasons. There was a put down of the smaller groups. There was some reassurance to local communities which are plagued by anti-social behaviour. And there was a nod to the British who are more and more hostile to Republicans (and, indeed, to Unionists like the DUP who co-operate with Republicans). As mentioned last month, Cameron is still refusing to talk to Robinson or to McGuinness.

Several people commented that the parade would have been even bigger if the pubs and clubs hadn't been packed with people watching a Celtic versus Rangers match. Many of the clubs—especially the

GAA clubs—closed their doors to hide their embarrassment.

Pat Sheehan said: "*That ideal [for which the IRA fought] is a united and independent republic, and in spite of what cynics and naysayers may say, an Irish Republic is within our reach, a new Irish Republic, not the caricature that extremists [talk about] at the minute.*" This was a position taken up by Sinn Féin speakers elsewhere and is put monthly in *An Phoblacht*. This was pushing things more than a bit! Though there is a definite Sinn Féin policy to reach out to Protestants and their relationship with the DUP is almost unbelievable.

But there is still a great gap between the likes of Frank Card or Jimmy Steele or Rory Brady in the early days, and the daily experience of Volunteers during the war. The Protestants did not want a United Ireland and proved it with force—irrespective of how British policy chopped and changed. And they are still a long way from wanting unity. They hold the English and their Government in contempt. But the Royal and the Military attachments (past and present) should never be underestimated. That, and their awareness of how their ancestors came to be in Ireland. An awareness which strikes me as being greater among Protestants than among Catholics. (I might add the Decades of the Rosary on these occasions may strike Protestants as somewhat less than welcoming.) There's a good video of the actual march on Youtube.

I spoke to some of those who marched with the three Scottish bands who took part. They said that the bands were originally set up by the Ancient Order of Hibernians. But in 1915 they, along with most members, left the AOH on Republican grounds following a meeting in Glasgow. Joe Keenan confirms this and says that there was a similar breakaway in West Ulster, leaving the AOH as a support group, albeit a strong one, around Joe Devlin in West Belfast. I believe they retained a lot of influence in Derry.

REPUBLICAN SINN FÉIN

Earlier, Republican Sinn Féin held a small commemoration—about 30 people. But since the Continuity IRA are not on ceasefire, it is reasonable for most members not to turn out. The oration was given by a Dublin man and was more or less the same mantra I've listened to since I was in my pram. But, to be fair, it is also more or less the same organisation.

IRISH REPUBLICAN SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

The IRSP, as they are still called, had about 400 supporters and stood at respectful attention until the RSF had finished.

Their memorial is a very sad affair. Most of those listed were deemed "assassinated"—referring to the internal bloodletting rather than to the murderous attacks on them earlier by the Official IRA.

Their speaker was somewhat on the ball. The Belfast newspapers have recently been celebrating the German blitz on Belfast. I use the word "*celebrating*" advisedly. After all they celebrate the slaughter on the Somme all the time. The speaker, knowing that this was topical, said that there may not have been any blitz if more men had followed the likes of Jim Straney from the Falls and Billy Tumilson from East Belfast and joined the International Brigade in Spain.

EIRIGI

Next up was Eirigi. I was in Dublin in 2006 when this group started there. One of their first actions was to print and distribute a free large, full colour, gloss version of the Proclamation: they claimed they were handing out 50,000. A very nice idea. But who were they? Some people thought they were a breakaway from Ógra Sinn Féin. As a former printer, I had to wonder where all the money came from. In Milltown I noticed that they were even giving away cloth Easter Lilies—everyone else was *selling* the paper ones.

Breandán Mac Cionnaith is now one of the main leaders. He was introduced to me by an old Provo friend and turned out to be one of those people who constantly look over your shoulder to see if there was anyone more important around. (Not too difficult, in my case!) Indeed, I was struck by the number of self-important, jumped-up generals at the Eirigí commemoration—which numbered 3-400. At the end of it all I was no more aware of who they were. All I knew was that they had been cleared of violent connections by the now defunct "Independent" Monitoring Commission, and so safe enough to join. Their speakers sounded no different to what speakers from the Workers' Party have to say. Eirigí got over half a page coverage in the *Irish News*.

The Workers' Party held their parade on the Sunday afternoon. It had about 200 marchers and was less military in its formation than in previous years. John Lowry, one of its candidates, concentrated on integrated education. Early that morning a new group calling itself the Official Republican Movement held a ceremony at Milltown. The *Andersonstown News* gave full coverage to most events.

A writer in the *Andersonstown News* suggested that all groups should get

together and have one Easter Commemoration. It put me in mind of my father inviting the Officials, the Provos, the IRPs, the White group, and God knows who else, to a commemoration he was organising in Crossbarry. They turned up alright. And then proceeded to beat the living daylight out of each other. He said later that it was not one of his better thought out ideas!

SINN FÉIN ARDOYNE

The main Milltown Easter parade is not altogether representative of Belfast. Parades and ceremonies were also held in Ardoyne, the Short Strand, Bawnmore, Carrickhill, Newington, New Lodge and New Barnsley. In Ardoyne about 400 people marched, cheered on by people in their front gardens. Gerry Kelly MLA gave the oration—much similar to that of Pat Sheehan.

This writer discussed the 'hoods' [petty criminals, in Belfast jargon] problem in Ardoyne with a Sinn Fein leader some days later. (During the march a "dissident" supporter complained about the large number of house break-ins and the drug dealing.) He said that the punishment beatings and shootings in the past were usually counter-productive, as they created enemies of whole families, and those punished wore their wounds as badges of honour.

(I found a similar view in Palestine and South Lebanon where even informers were no longer shot—though it was usually made clear that they would be better off elsewhere. In both places there was also the shame on families brought about by their wayward offspring.)

The Shinner said that Sinn Fein members did speak to miscreants, but that increasingly the PSNI was doing its job. The big problem was the judiciary, which was constantly letting people off with a slap on the wrist. He reckoned that the hooded were far more fearful of jail than they were of having their kneecaps rearranged. (Personally I believe that the judiciary is heavily influenced by the British who are only too pleased to see chaos in Republican areas. Sinn Féin has a job on its hands.)

The Apprentice Boys also marched at Easter—mostly in Limavady. Their walk by Ardoyne was uneventful as it usually is. And they don't "march back" by Ardoyne. The Black also march peacefully. But then, they are strictly teetotal!

SINN FÉIN DERRY

Most Northern papers concentrated on Martin McGuinness' criticism of "dissidents". But Unionists affected to be more upset by him saying:

"The IRA by its nature was of the people and for the people. It could not have survived and fought the British State the way it did if it was small and unrepresentative.

"They [the IRA] were a revolutionary force who when an opportunity to advance the struggle for Irish unity through peaceful means was established, removed itself from the political equation."

Also in Derry, the RSF (or one of its varieties) and the INLA said that Martin McGuinness should have been executed for decommissioning weapons and for asking people to co-operate with the PSNI. For this, former Republican hunger striker, Marion Price, who said nothing of the kind, has been arrested.

THE SOUTH

As well as hundreds of events, North and South, there were the "official" commemorations. On April 24th a small military event took place at the GPO. This was attended by President McAleese, Margaret "poppy" Ritchie, Enda Kenny, and Eamon Gilmore (the official welcoming official—or is it Official?—for Queen Elizabeth). Two Hibernians, a Blue-Shirt and a Sticky. The public, such as it was, was kept well behind barriers at a good distance. The most notable event was the loud celebration of Kenny's 60th birthday. "*Irish men and Irish women, it's Enda's birthday...*"

The event was not screened by the national TV—RTE. Kenny did take the opportunity to welcome "*Her Majesty's*" forthcoming descent amongst us. A similar ceremony was held at Arbour Hill with the same *dramatis personae*, but without the public—even behind barriers.

THE REPUBLICAN KALEIDOSCOPE

Here I will do my best (which surely will not be good enough) to give a list or various republican tendencies. Sinn Féin (Provisional IRA—sort of); Republican Sinn Fein (Continuity IRA, now with separated groups in Limerick and Dundalk); Republican Network for Unity (fraternal attitude towards Óglaigh na hÉireann, whoever they might be); 32-County Sovereignty Movement (Real IRA with a splinter in Dundalk, which may or may not have rejoined the main group); The Workers' Party (Official IRA); The Official Republican Movement (a complete mystery to me—sorry); Eirigí (another mystery); a rumoured breakaway from the Provos in East Tyrone, but is possibly just one cross man; the Irish Republican Socialist Movement (INLA), which seems to be a serious group in Belfast and very much the opposite in the South. Deepest apologies to anyone who feels left out.

Conor Lynch

Whodunit?

continued

from outside the EU and another, the ECB, is independent of the EU. And the essential EU representative, the Commission, was essentially an onlooker. And everyone knows that some Member States were also major players, off-stage but clearly visible and active participants during the whole process. This created inevitable confusion, indecision and delays. Lisbon, how are you? But why should this be the situation?

The ECB dominated for the simple reason that it has a clear role and purpose—that is, to ensure the functioning of its piece of the capitalist world, the Euro area, for the benefit of 'its' capitalism. No other body has as clear a purpose. If there was a greater purpose, then its representative body would dominate.

The ECB was doing what it is legally obliged to do and, if there is any doubt about it, then one need only read Article 7 of the Maastricht Treaty, which set it up and was passed in Ireland without any need for second thoughts:

"ARTICLE 7

Independence

In accordance with Article 107 of this Treaty, when exercising the powers and carrying out the tasks and duties conferred upon them by this Treaty and this Statute, neither the ECB, nor a national central bank, nor any member of their decision-making bodies shall seek or take instructions from Community institutions or bodies, from any Government of a Member State or from any other body. The Community institutions and bodies and the governments of the Member States undertake to respect this principle and not to seek to influence the members of the decision-making bodies of the ECB or of the national central banks in the performance of their tasks."

In plain language the ECB is legally entitled to tell the whole EU to bugger off!

Dan O'Brien of the *Irish Times* is suddenly aghast at the reality:

"The apparent willingness of the ECB to take action as drastic as insisting a sovereign state accept a bailout with so little consultation with anyone raises genuine concerns about the checks and balances to which this powerful institution of government in Europe is subject. By international standards, the ECB is less accountable than most central banks in other democracies. Most notably, the European Parliament, based in Strasbourg, to which it is nominally accountable, does not have the power to enact

legislation to alter its structures or mandate. This is the most important difference with its counterpart institution in other large, advanced democracies—such as the US, Japan, Britain and Canada. In the US, for instance, an Act of congress could abolish the Federal Reserve. In Europe, only full-blown treaty change, involving agreement among 27 governments and ratification by 27 parliaments can alter any major aspect of the bank" (Irish Times, 27 April 2011).

I don't understand why he seems surprised. After the Thatcher assault on the EU, it caved in and adopted the free market in the purest, most ideological sense. It had to be ideological because there was no internal demand for the Thatcher approach in Europe but British political determination broke down the resistance personified by Jacques Delors.

Any other approach was dismissed with contempt as an effort to maintain 'Fortress Europe' and the EU became the leading element in the newly set up World Trade Organisation by its ex-Commissioner for Trade and Competition, Mr. Peter Sutherland (the former Chairman of Allied Irish Banks and erstwhile Fine Gael politician). The EU was not just satisfied with giving capital its unhindered head in Europe, it hoped to do so in the world as a whole via the WTO.

But, according to O'Brien, all this has a different origin altogether:

"This situation came about largely due to German insistence in the 1990s. It then feared that less inflation-averse countries in the euro area could pressure the new institution to take risks with price stability" (ibid).

What would we do without the Germans to blame? This argument is nonsense. Of course the Germans are concerned about inflation, for good historical reasons, but that does not mean they ever had a concept that banks could be independent of the State and act as a law unto themselves. Banks were local institutions and were there to serve industry and to facilitate the object of social development. The German had to be forced into the freewheeling capitalism personified by Britain and adopted by the EU.

WHO WILL BELL THE CAT?

O'Brien's despair at trying to make the ECB accountable to anything other than itself reminds me of the fable about the mice who wanted to bell the very predatory cat that was making their life a misery. The problem was—who would actually put the bell on the cat? And which of the EU mice would/could actually bell the ECB? The fabled mice at least did not

create their problem—the cat—but the EU mice did just that with the ECB and they would look rather absurd if they seek to destroy their very own creation.

But more significant than that is the fact that the real 'cat' here is that the ECB represents the new god of Europe—the market. The ECB is the EU Vatican. The original God is long dead and Europe sought to create a new paradise via the market, and the High Priests of the project are the financiers and their agencies—and of course they have their theologians called economists.

Politicians in Europe have put themselves at their mercy and made the ECB the purest, most perfect bank for the interests of capital. As O'Brien rightly notes, there is nothing quite like it anywhere else. Get ready for some bumpy rides, as banks under capitalism give rise to crises as regular as clockwork and as surely as cats chase mice. It's called creative destruction and is a mainspring of the system and the suffering involved should be offered up to the new gods as it was to the gods of old.

Jack Lane

Bin Laden

continued

It is not as if bin Laden has made a secret of why he has devoted the last decade and a half of his life to attacking the West. On the contrary, he has explained his objective in doing so in countless audio and video messages.

He has stated clearly that his goal was to end Western, particularly American, interference in the Muslim world, to free the Muslim world of "*Western dominance*", as he put it in his posthumous message. As a means to that end, he sought the overthrow of the autocratic regimes—in Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, etc—that allied themselves with the West and helped maintain Western dominance.

He has made it clear that attacks on the West, and on Western interests, will cease when Western interference in the Muslim world ceases. He has never suggested that the objective of Al-Qaeda was to change Western society.

WHY NOT SWEDEN?

One bin Laden message sticks in my mind. It was addressed to the American people and explained why America was attacked on 9/11 and what Americans had to do in order to avoid another attack. It was broadcast on Al-Jazeera on 30th

October 2004, immediately prior to the re-election of George Bush for a second term.

In it, he began by refuting Bush's claim that the attack was motivated by hatred of freedom, inviting the President to explain why the US was chosen as a target, rather than Sweden, if Al-Qaeda was driven by hatred of freedom:

"People of America this talk of mine is for you and concerns the ideal way to prevent another Manhattan, and deals with the war and its causes and results.

"Before I begin, I say to you that security is an indispensable pillar of human life and that free men do not forfeit their security, contrary to Bush's claim that we hate freedom.

"If so, then let him explain to us why we don't strike, for example, Sweden. And we know that freedom-haters don't possess defiant spirits like those of the 19—may Allah have mercy on them.

"No, we fight because we are free men, who don't sleep under oppression. We want to restore freedom to our nation; just as you lay waste to our nation, so shall we lay waste to yours. No one except a dumb thief plays with the security of others and then makes himself believe he will be secure."

And he mocks Americans for failing to seek out the causes of the attack as "*thinking people*" should do, and for still being in ignorance more than three years later. He accuses Bush of "*hiding ... the real causes*" from the American public, saying "*the reasons are still there for a repeat of what occurred*".

His final words were:

"And every state that doesn't play with our security has automatically guaranteed its own security."

The message is clear: leave the Muslim world alone and you will be left alone.

MARCH OF THE YES-MEN

They moralise, those with blood on their hands and go on killing to add to that sea, (victims can only make puddles or flee) the tide sweeps in with three wars in three lands, they assassinate, those who moralise, the populace seen as their regiments, water-boarding torture a supplement, Bin Laden dead again, his ghosts survive, a re-run of what happened to the Sioux, Murdoch, television, truth replacement, yes-men, that platitudinous crew with those blind-spots helped by news-creation, war machismo means alloy feet in shoes, world-order their bloodiest fixation.

Wilson John Haire
5th May, 2011

INDEPENDENT OF THE WEST?

In the last months of his life, bin Laden witnessed and no doubt rejoiced at the overthrow of some of the autocratic regimes that have helped maintain Western dominance in the Arab world.

It remains to be seen if the regimes that take their place of those that act more independently of the West. On the face of it, they ought to, since they will probably be the product of popular elections.

However, it can be guaranteed that the West will leave no stone unturned to attempt to make sure that they act in the West's interests just as their predecessors did. Bribing and bullying will be the order of the day.

There are some hopeful signs that Egypt is going to adopt foreign policy positions of which the US will not approve. This is being done by the military regime, presumably so that it is seen to be attuning foreign policy to popular opinion in Egypt.

The most important development is going to be the establishment of full diplomatic relations with Iran for the first time since the Islamic revolution in 1979. A key element in US foreign policy in the Middle East has been to build a coalition with Sunni Arab states against Shia Iran. For Sunni Egypt to desert this coalition and establish friendly relations with Iran would be a considerable blow to this strategy.

There is also talk of seeking an amendment to the Camp David Accords with Israel to remove the restriction on the stationing of Egyptian armed forces in the Sinai peninsula. Currently, no more than one division is permitted within an area lying approximately 50 km east of the Suez Canal in what is after all supposed to be sovereign Egyptian territory.

Since the Camp David Accords were signed, Egypt has received on average \$2 billion annually from the US, most of it in military aid. For sure, the US will threaten to cut off this aid in order to keep Egypt in line.

HONEY, I'M HOME!

Tell me, what has changed since

Bin Laden's death,
same Washington propaganda machine:
An old grey-beard watches a TV screen,
not porn, made in the US to excess!
He was shot in his underpants, ha ha,
medicine bottles on a shelf,
a book of bombs, one on do-it-yourself,
had had three wives and fifteen ba ba bas,
sounds a normal American household,
loved guns, especially the AK-47.
The world of the puritan was his goal,
the US also prays to enter heaven
but with their debt can they buy the leasehold.
Should he be dough you supplied the leaven.

Wilson John Haire
18th May, 2011

GULF STATES TO BE ALLOWED TO SUPPRESS DISSENT

It looks as if the absolute monarchies in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—are going to survive, with America's blessing.

They took the lead in the Arab League in pressing for action against Libya and the indications are that they have been rewarded—the US has endorsed the use of Saudi forces to suppress the democracy movement in Bahrain and, if necessary, in other Gulf States (see Craig Murray's website, 14 March 2011).

In addition, the *New York Times* revealed on 14th May that the UAE is in the process of setting up an 800-strong mercenary force, made up entirely of non-Muslims, in order to suppress dissent. Erik Prince, former CEO of the notorious US security company, Blackwater, has been employed to do the job. He is quoted as saying that the force has to be wholly Christian, because Muslims couldn't be relied upon to kill fellow Muslims. He is recruiting Colombians. It must be assumed that the US approves of the use of this force too, otherwise they would have stopped it being set up.

David Morrison

Crusading Again

The Knights Of A New Crusade is a poem contained within a book of verse published in 1915 to inspire the Redmondite crusaders in their efforts to conquer for Empire. The poems in the book were written by Alice Maude Peppard Cooke, who is described as the author of *Irish Heroes Of Red War*—a publication presumably devoted to the great blood sacrifice for Home Rule and Empire. (The poem across the page is called *1915* and is devoted to the Irish Guards and has the line, "Red is the earth, and redder the snow, your record is there to show it.")

Alice Peppard Cooke apparently resided in Cappagh, Ballingrane, Co. Limerick and is listed in a book about *Families Of County Kerry*. The title of her poetry collection is *The Pipe Of Peace*—although it seems to be mostly an encouragement to war. But that is not surprising as *peace* and *war* seem to be interchangeable terms in the British way with words. It is, of course, other nations who fight merely for the enjoyment of war; England always fights for a restoration of peace. And perhaps it is true then that Britain is the most peace-loving of all States whilst being the greatest wager of wars at the very same time.

In the *Preface* Cooke notes that her verses had appeared in the well-known papers *The Daily Express*, *The Church Of*

Ireland Gazette, *The Limerick Chronicle*, *The Limerick Diocesan Magazine* and *The Kerry Evening Post*.

The Knights Of A New Crusade previously appeared in *Irish Life*.

Professor John-Paul McCarthy may find the sentiments of *The Knights Of A New Crusade* more palatable than those of MacCurtain and McSwiney, the "generation who have nothing to teach us", as he put it (see April *Irish Political Review*), and who sacrificed their lives to prevent any more Irish participation in Crusades.

McCarthy might be at Oxford but he knows very little about British History if he can condemn the 1916 generation as "a small unrepresentative elite dictating the pace of change through the momentum of violence". That was exactly the point made by John Dillon and the Liberal backbenchers against the Liberal Imperialist cabal—who had gone behind the backs of the "great British democracy" and made secret arrangements and plans to join a European war against Germany.

Presumably, John-Paul would have preferred to be with the 'representative masses' going about their peaceful business at the Somme or crusading at Gallipoli or in Mesopotamia?

But then what are ten million deaths and the destruction of Europe against what our freedom fighters did in 1916 and afterwards in Cork?

Anyway, John-Paul, enjoy....

The Knights of a New Crusade

The furies of battle are loosing a hell.
As Bellona unsheathes her blade
Yet who are so fearless of shot and of shell
As the Knights of a New Crusade.

Imperial honour is calling us now
To conquer for country and weal.
The Prince from a palace, the man from
the plough
Come forward with sabre and steel.

Oh! the lilt of the tune as they march away
To do, or to die with the rest.
And the sign in the heart, and the smile is
so gay
While the lips of a hero jest.

Oh! the spirit of war in the souls of men,
Oh! the ache in the mother's breast.
And the pluck of a wife at the parting—
then
Is it easy to know who's best?

The Link of our Empire—the cry of a
home
And the Call of a world's parade
While the men who will answer, and gladly
come
Are the Knights of a New Crusade.

Pat Walsh

Shorts

from
the Long Fellow

INDO GROVELLING

The visit of Queen Elizabeth II was received with indifference by the vast majority of the population. The small minority that did take an interest could be divided in to the non political and the political. The non political were impressed that the 85 year old bird could deliver a prepared script without dribbling. The political element, on the other hand, could not restrain themselves from dribbling over her every word and move.

It was quite amusing to read that some of this country's OBEs and MBEs were not invited to the events. Have these people been contaminated by Republicanism?! The whole point of being a Lackey of the British Empire (LBE?) is to recognise one's inferiority. There is no point in grovelling to a person whom one regards as an equal. The monarchy bestows favours; they cannot be received as a right.

Fortunately, Kevin Myers was invited to the ceremony at Islandbridge and gave an abject lesson on how to behave:

"The President told the queen that I had done a lot of work on the Irish in the two world wars. This is a guess, because at that particular moment someone unplugged a swimming pool in my skull, and all I could hear was the roaring noise of several million gallons of water sluicing downwards. I am unclear about what followed next—however, in times of panic, I am inclined to speak Tibetan, mixed with Afrikaans. The two ladies blinked politely" (*Irish Independent*, 19.5.11).

The sheer joy of it all! Not only to experience humiliation, but the exquisite pleasure of writing about it! Ecstasy recollected in tranquillity!

SINDO GROVELLING

There are two elements to effective grovelling. Firstly, it must be established that the object of the grovelling is superior. Secondly, the grovellers must recognise their own inferiority so as to emphasise the superiority of the object of the grovelling.

While Kevin Myers was content to have a personal grovel, Ann Harris wished to involve the Irish people in her fantasies. On the front page of the *Sunday Inde-*

pendent (22.5.11) under the headline: "A New Path To A Common Wealth", she began:

"The euphoria is over. Her majesty the Queen has gone home. This week reality will return as once more our enfeebled Finance and Europe Ministers, Michael Noonan and Lucinda Creighton, will do a Perp Walk in Frankfurt as gruesome in its own way as Strauss-Kahn's in that New York courtroom..."

The abasement on behalf of the country continues:

"Who would have imagined, way back when Garret started his Anglo-Irish crusade that, in this low moment, it would be the English who would restore our self-esteem as a nation...?"

Amazing, isn't it? The country was not apathetic, but euphoric when the British Queen visited; our Cabinet Ministers represent a criminal State or are, perhaps, criminals themselves; and the English have restored our self esteem even if most of us hadn't realised that we had lost it in the first place.

But what is the secret of Lizzie Windsor's superiority? Harris can only speculate:

"Staying in touch with her children's many problems has clearly kept her growing as a person. Although I can't say it is what accounts for her prettiness."

OBAMA

So far, the Long Fellow has not read any equivalent grovelling directed towards President Obama, the head of the most powerful State in the World. And yet ordinary people did want to meet this sleek young President and his attractive wife. Tens of thousands turned up at College Green and many more were turned away.

His visit lasted less than 24 hours compared to the four dreary days of the Queen's visit. Whether consciously or otherwise, he upstaged the British Head of State at every turn. Whereas the Windsors declined a pint of the black stuff, Obama gulped one down lustily. Whereas the Queen managed a few words of Irish, Obama had a few sentences.

The Long Fellow was, however, a little disappointed with the speech. The "*isfeidir linn*" line was a bit like Obama imitating Eamon Gilmore, imitating Obama.

CHINA

Roger Casement believed that our relationship with Britain had cut us off from Continental Europe and the rest of the world. Independence enabled us to emerge from provincialism.

The idea being pushed during the Queen's visit that our future prosperity

lies with greater economic ties with Britain is a joke. Since Independence we have reduced our economic dependence on Britain with beneficial economic and social consequences.

From 2005 to 2010 our exports to China have increased from 1.5 billion euro to 2.5 billion. This country has a population of 1.3 billion, with a rapidly increasing proportion becoming urbanised and middle class. The opportunities, not only for trade, but inward investment are almost limitless.

Our impressive Irish Ambassador to China, Dermot Kelliher, who apparently speaks Mandarin fluently, remarked that the Chinese have "*no issues*" with us and we have much to offer the Chinese. Ireland is one of only three countries in Europe that has a trade surplus with China.

IRISH ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Throughout the economic crisis the productive capacity of our traded sector has remained intact. The vast bulk of the jobs that have been lost have been in retail and construction. Despite the merchants of doom we have the ability to trade our way out of our economic difficulties.

A very interesting article in *The Irish Times* (30.4.11) from Daniel Gros indicates that the country has the capacity to repay its debt. The big difference between this country and Portugal and Greece is that our net foreign debt is about 20% of GDP, whereas theirs is about 100%. This year we will have a balance of payments surplus.

These statistics indicate that the country has the capacity to raise taxes whereas it is doubtful that Greece and Portugal do. The following two paragraphs indicate that the problem is political rather than economic:

"...Argentina went bankrupt with little net foreign debt because wealthy Argentines had spirited their assets out of the country, and thus out of the reach of the government, while the poor Argentines refused to pay the taxes needed to satisfy the claims of the foreign creditors.

"However, when the foreign assets of the country are held not by households, but by institutions, such as pension funds, they can be taxed. This seems to be the case for Ireland. If there is a political way there should be a way for the Government to service its debt."

The constant shrill calls for reneging on our foreign debt are a form of displacement activity to avoid taxing wealth (either held by institutions or individuals). It also serves a political purpose: departure from the Euro zone and a return to the Sterling sphere of influence—the *Sunday Independent's* fantasy. •

The War Of Independence— *the simple soldier's view*

The blurb claims the military "were in fact winning the fight in Cork" and that "this book successfully challenges the received wisdom of the events and the outcome of the War of Independence". Did the British military win the war then? You can be winning a football match and still lose the game. But there is only one outcome of a war or a game—a winner and a loser. If the British military were winning, why was there any Truce and an unconditional Truce to boot? The British military certainly believed they did not win the war that ended like this and this is shown clearly in this book. If they were winning why did they not actually win? Or did they win without realizing it? Were Lloyd George, Churchill, Chamberlain, and Birkenhead who had just organized the winning of a World War so idiotic that they grabbed defeat from the jaws of victory in Ireland? These are the questions his thesis raises but does not answer. He does not even seem to realize that his thesis poses these questions.

The author is clearly fascinated by, and immersed in, British military history. His approach is to look at various British Army accounts of the war in Ireland and, lo and behold, they do not agree with the accepted Irish narrative of the war! Like all Generals and soldiers, the British military were certain they could have won this war if they were allowed to do so. But all sorts of people and problems got in their way—as always happen to military men who lose wars. Sheehan is surprised that the British sources on the war have not been highlighted before, but then finds there are not that many and those that exist tend to skip over that period. "It can be argued that the lessons of Ireland were not institutionalized in the British Army" (p174). He seems surprised but what self-respecting army wants to dwell on lost wars.

He quotes many military people who believed they were winning, about to win and could win. But not all were like that. Macready is sometimes quoted as saying it could be done in four months. But his argument was more nuanced. He said that, if it was not done in four months, the war was lost. That puts a very different complexion on the matter, but why would it be won *or* lost in four months? Greenwood reckoned that it would take years. And again it begs the question why

so long if the military were winning?

The daddy of all those who wanted and believed in a military solution was Sir Henry Wilson. And he had a plan for a drastic version of martial law to achieve it, which he outlined clearly in May 1921. He had it approved and it was to come into force in mid-July. It was essentially to allow nothing to move in Ireland—beginning with bicycles—without military authority. He was serious. It was to be the Boer War solution with knobs on and if implemented it would no doubt ensure military success. And Wilson did not lack the will or the courage or the means to carry it out. But Wilson, unlike Mr. Sheehan, did not have the 'simple soldier's' view of these matters as he was in a real situation. He was forced to change his mind and, being the type of man he was, he recorded why in his diary in June, reporting on a talk he had had with the Secretary of State for War, Laming Worthington- Evans:

"I told him that, unless we had England entirely on our side, I would strongly advise that we should not attempt martial law in all its severity because I was sure it would not succeed, and failure meant disaster. If the soldiers knew that England was solid behind them they would go on until they won out; on the other hand if they found this was not the case then we should have disaster. I have developed this thesis over and over again to Lloyd George, Bonar, Austen, Winston and others, and I never made so much impression on anybody as I did to-night on Worthy."

If there was not sufficient support in Britain, there certainly was not sufficient support in Ireland! If wishes were horses we would all go for a ride. But how could the British military win if they did not have the support and therefore the actual means to do it?

And later he confessed to his diary that he "really believed we shall be kicked out of Ireland" (28 June, 1921). But Mr. Sheehan says they were winning and seems to believe they could have won and, if so, he must know something that Sir Henry Wilson did not know! Perhaps he will tell us in his next book and not leave us in the dark.

The essential military problem was that they were faced with a war that had unique public support, such as they had never

encountered elsewhere in the world. This support was regularly tested and expressed in four elections, the General Election of 1918, the County Council Elections in early 1920, the Municipal Elections later in 1920, and the extraordinary result of the election of May 1921 when Sinn Fein won every single elective seat in the 26 Counties. None of these are mentioned by Mr. Sheehan. Only the military world exists for him. No war has ever had so many elections during it and the support for *the insurgents'* increased every time.

To Lloyd George and the British Government that election result of May 1921 of overwhelming, absolutely total, support for Sinn Fein made all the successes claimed by the military look pathetic and all promises of future victory even more pathetic and problematic. At this point, the penny had dropped for Lloyd George and even for Sir Henry Wilson but does not yet seem to have dropped for Mr. Sheehan.

WHAT WAS IT ALL ABOUT?

The Irish quite simply wanted political independence which meant that the result of a British election be accepted. That is as clear and as obvious as anything could be. Accepting the result was surely not too much to ask for and the real issue is why the result was not accepted by the 'Mother of Parliaments'? It was especially difficult for people to understand this just after at least 10 million people including up to 50,000 Irishmen had died for the freedom of small nations. These are total non-issues for Sheehan.

It is amazing to see Mr. Sheehan wondering why the British did not implement a *'hearts and minds'* policy in Ireland. They did. His own book, every line of it, is a detailed testimony to the fact that they tried by every means available to them to change the hearts and minds of the people. But the people did not want either changed. They wanted what they had voted for and what thousands believed they had died for—the freedom of small nations. The British war in Ireland *was* about changing hearts and minds. What else are wars for? How strange that someone who describes himself as a military historian does not seem to appreciate this most basic purpose of the military anywhere. He does not appreciate the most glaring facts, in fact the subject matter, of his own book!

Being immersed in British military history and its myths he creates a conundrum for himself when he tries to figure out why another type of 'hearts and minds' policy was not applied, by implementing all necessary reforms to remove grievances

and thereby undermine the enemy's war effort. He says:

"But this was not an option open to the British in 1921 for the simple reason that most of these reforms had already been implemented. Nationalist control of local government had been established in 1898, the police force was largely Catholic and nationalist and Home Rule had been on the statute book since 1914 and its implementation was expected at the end of the First World War. Catholics occupied the majority of local government posts in Ireland and their numbers in the more senior posts had been steadily rising. Ireland had experienced an economic boom during the First World War. It is difficult to see how a hearts and minds campaign similar to one carried out in Malaya in the 1950s could have been constructed" (p172).

It is incredible that anyone could write this in non-satirical vein. He just cannot see the whole point of national political independence, which was not just about reforms and eliminating economic and social grievances and providing jobs for Catholics. It was a considered and convinced moral statement by a people determined to run their own political life and the rejection of anyone else's right to do so. It was not exactly a unique demand then or since. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that this issue has almost dominated world politics since. How anyone with a modicum of understanding of Irish history, or any history, could write the above is beyond belief.

If ever there was a case of military blindness this is it. I can understand why Mr. Sheehan will not find any satisfactory answer as to why the Irish acted as they did in 1919-21 in any of his researches in British Military archives and sources. But as he comes from the heart of North Cork, and as he dedicates his book to his namesake grandfather who was in the IRA during the War of Independence (and to his father), I must assume he never asked either of them or any of his other relatives or neighbours what the war was about. I am simply baffled.

WAS THE IRA LOSING?

To make his case about the military actually winning he quotes Collins and Mulcahy downplaying the military successes of the IRA during the war—but in the context of the 'Treaty' debate, this was self justification for acceptance of the Treaty. He quotes Mulcahy: "...we have not been able to drive the enemy from anything but from a fairly good-sized police barracks. We have not that power" (p19).

Mulcahy had to belittle and denigrate such matters as the successful organization

of a Government on a war footing for 3 years, all the military successes such as Kilmichael, Crossbarry, Clonbanin, to name just some local ones (as the war in Cork is the subject), the running of an alternative Court System etc. For instance, Dublin Castle on 18th May 1921 reported higher casualties that week than at any time since the Rising. As for RIC barracks, 218 were destroyed and 17 tax offices raided throughout the country on *one night* in early April 1921.

Sheehan makes great play of improvements in the British military strategies during the war but that is only to be expected. Every army has to learn and adapt but so did the IRA and that is the nature of war. Wars escalate.

For example, in terms of acquiring arms, which is a pretty crucial aspect of any war, the IRA official returns for October 1921 from all four Divisions gave a total of 3,295 rifles, 15,160 shotguns, 1,228 automatics and 4,683 revolvers. While this does not compare with British resources there are a few things to bear in mind. This is obviously an underestimate as not all weapons would be 'declared' in a Truce situation but the important fact is that this was an increase from zero in just a few years—or rather an increase from the number of hurleys that they had to begin with. (The first Government casualty after the Rising, that of Inspector John Mills on 10th June, 1916, was effected by a hurley.) And if the British were developing their skills in Intelligence and with airplanes and aerial photography etc., which Sheehan describes in some detail, the IRA were also developing new skills such as the naval skill that led to the capture of the Admiralty ship 'The Upnor' and its contents in Cork harbour on 30th March 1922—an operation which netted 1,500 rifles, 55 Lewis guns, 6 maxim guns, 3 Vickers guns, 500,000 rounds of .303 ammunition, 1,000 revolvers, 1,000 .455 automatic pistols, (all with appropriate ammunition), 3,000 hand grenades and a quantity of rifle grenade throwers. All were immediately distributed by 126 lorries throughout the Cork area. This does not look like the actions of an army on the run in Cork. There is no game, or war, that two can't play.

Sheehan gives the capture of Sean Moylan as an indication of British success. But he should have mentioned that his Column carried out a very successful ambush at Rathcoole shortly afterwards and showed no sign whatever of letting up without him. An interesting footnote on that ambush was the account that was given by the British Officer in charge,

Lieutenant Crossey, to the subsequent enquiry. He claimed that they had been subject to a massive assault by about 300 attackers and painted a picture of a Zulu-like attack but suffering no casualties or losses on his side. That is how unreliable the sources can be which Sheehan seems to use uncritically. On the day of the Truce, the North Cork and West Limerick Flying Columns were forced to abandon a joint ambush prepared near Templeglantine. The operation involved eight road mines and four Lorries of British soldiers—double the contingent wiped out at Kilmichael!

NUANCING REPRISALS

The British military effort was a campaign of terror and the most typical example of this was the campaign of reprisals beginning '*unofficially*' and were then made official. Mr. Sheehan does indeed "*challenges the received wisdom of the events*" in this connection. These reprisals were so unacceptable that the Auxiliaries own O/C, Frank Crozier, resigned his position in protest and said that "*the whole cabinet should have been marched to the Tower in company with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and there shot, on account of what they permitted to be done in the King's name and by the authority of his uniform in Ireland*".

The future leader of the British Union of Fascists, Oswald Mosley, crossed the floor of the House of Commons in protest—they were even too much for him. King George V complained personally to Macready about it and implored him to stop it saying that "*in punishing the guilty we are inflicting punishment no less severe upon the innocent*". Several other prominent people including the Archbishop of Canterbury protested. The *Times* editorialized about the "*...truth which seemed to support the charge that the forces of the Crown are no longer acting in accordance with the standards of civilized government*" (23.9.1920).

But Sheehan approaches the issue with much more equanimity than these people. He has discovered that these reprisals have been misrepresented.

"Nevertheless, these events do not speak for themselves and therefore need to be located and understood within and in relation to the character of the period. This allows a more nuanced analysis.... they can be considered an almost primitive struggle for the possession of public space, and an occasion for the control of local women" (p24).

And, believe it or not "*Reprisals were uncontested by the local populations of*

Fermoy, Mallow, Bandon and Cobh, the residents merely seeking shelter from the storm" (p37). In Cork city the aftermath of a conflict between residents and troops is described as "the evening's entertainment over, the civilians began to disperse" (p17). And "in policing the soldiers and civilians the RIC were often at the receiving end from both communities" (p38). The garrison army was a community just like the local residents! He goes on to lay great store on alcohol consumption, the fact apparently that these things happened after the soldiers' payday, local looting, etc., being taken as major factors. In fact, it all seems to have been great fun.

Strangely, for all his detailing and research on a few reprisals along these lines, the biggest reprisal of the lot—the burning of Cork—is not analyzed at all and given only a passing reference with the wrong date and with an effort to shift the blame from those responsible for it—the military under Strickland. Less attention than even Peter Hart gave it. Maybe Greenwood was right after all when he claimed that it was the people of Cork may burned their own city!

And it would be interesting (and entertaining) to have his analysis, from these new perspectives of his, on the sacking and partial sacking 90 other towns between September 1919 and September 1920. I can supply him with the names and dates if necessary from *The Evidence on Conditions in Ireland* given to the *American Commission on Conditions in Ireland*, pages 823-5, and that is just a sample of the total. He might become a bestselling author in those towns.

Reading Sheehan's description of British military successes in Ireland reads like a report of last year's All-Ireland final where all the losing side's scores and tactics are emphasized, explained, highlighted and admired but the other side and the final score is ignored. For example, "the myth of Crossbarry" is described in such a way that the outcome is almost unclear!

The fact that increasing pressure on the IRA meant they were failing is an illusion. The fact is that the pressure was increasing but so were the IRA successes. Sheehan seems to have too linear a mind to appreciate this and can't get his head round it. But it is a fact that becomes obvious to any objective observer. For example, a recent thesis concludes:

"The IRA faced its greatest pressure from government forces in late-1920 and the first six months of 1921. In this same period, it achieved its greatest military and propaganda victories. These successes were the combined results of GHQ

policy and local initiative. IRA leaders played a role in planning attacks in Dublin, while the institution of flying columns provided the weapon that inflicted the greatest wounds on the police and British army in the countryside. The Irish Bulletin provided an increasingly effective republican mouthpiece, no longer shying away from the violent side of the movement... In forcing the government to the negotiating table, the IRA won a concession that many had considered unimaginable. As late as December 1919, the New York Times warned republicans that 'nothing could be more hopeless than taking on the British army'. The IRA did this with

a considerable measure of success" (*Tactics, Politics, And Propaganda In The Irish War Of Independence, 1917-21*, by Mike Rast, Georgia State University, May, 2011).

And there is no doubt who felt they had won and who had lost the war when the unconditional Truce was declared in July 1921. There may be runners-up in sport but not in war. There are many teams that nearly won a match and many armies that nearly won a war but, as any farmer will tell you, *nearly* never bulled a cow.

Jack Lane

Last month Wilson John Haire recollected his experience of Jewish identity in the Communist Party. Here we consider the role of Britain in the formation of the Jewish State

Judaism And Zionism

"...from the beginning I had looked upon Zionism as a force for life and creativeness residing in the Jewish masses. It was not simply the blind need of an exiled people for a home of its own. I could not agree with Herzl that the *Judennot*, the tragedy of Jewish homelessness, persecution and poverty, was sufficient to account for the Zionist movement, and was capable of supplying the necessary motive power for the creation of a Jewish homeland. Need alone is negative, and the greatest productions of man spring from an affirmation. Jewish homelessness was not just a physical discomfort; it was also, and perhaps in larger measure, the malaise of frustrated capacities. If the Jewish people had survived so many centuries of exile, it was not by a biological accident, but because it would not relinquish the creative capacities with which it had been entrusted.

"For assimilated Jews all this was a sealed book; in their complete alienation from the masses, the source of inspiration, they had not the slightest concept of the inner significance, the constructive moral-ethical-social character of Zionism. They looked upon it... as a primitive tribalism. They felt themselves, when they were men of an ethical turn of mind like Claude Montefiori, called upon to 'rescue' Judaism from Zionism..."

This was the view of the founder of practical political Zionism, Chaim Weizmann, as expressed in his autobiography, that was published when the Jewish nationalist State had been established through a Jewish terrorist war against Britain (to which Britain surrendered) and was being consolidated by a massive ethnic cleansing of the natives of Palestine. (*Trial And Error*, 1948, p223).

The Zionist project had been presented

to British opinion during the First World War as an Imperial project and was put in terms likely to appeal to the English Liberal Imperialist view of things—plausibly and pleasantly Utopian. Claude Montefiori, a Jewish Englishman, did not believe it. He opposed the *Balfour Declaration* on the grounds that the wrapping of liberal utopian propaganda in which it was presented for adoption could not see it through to implementation. The spirit needed to realise it would be the fierce, intolerant, fundamentalist Judaic spirit of the Maccabees. Weizmann succeeded. Montefiori was forgotten. But the Israeli populace lives today in the revived world of the Maccabees.

And the two attempts made in the 20th century to establish a tolerable and viable world organisation (the League of Nations and the United Nations) were tainted at the outset by the adoption of the theocratic principle of Zionism which overruled earthly considerations.

In 1919 England over-ruled the national-democratic principle, which in 1914 it had declared was its purpose in making war on Germany and Turkey, by making war on the nation-state the Irish had voted for and by proclaiming the destiny of Palestine to be a Jewish nation-state even though there were hardly any Jews there to vote for it. And in 1947 the theocratic principle was re-asserted by the United States and the Soviet Union after Britain tried to withdraw from the project.

God gave Palestine to the Jews. Even though the Jews went berserk against Roman civilisation and lost Palestine two thousand years ago, the world must give it back to them so that the destiny set for humanity by God might be accomplished.

This can be dissimulated in secular terms, but it is the driving force on the ground and is supported by the Old Testament underlay of the Christian world, which seems to retain its vigour as New Testament novelties are discarded.

It was not mere empirical need that brought about the restoration of a catastrophic Jewish State in Palestine. Weizmann was certainly right about that.

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"I cannot avoid the conclusion that a Jewish Commonwealth will neither solve the Jewish problem nor reduce anti-Semitism. Only for the tiny minority of Jews who actually go to Palestine will it afford a solution. They will really lose their "separateness" and become members of a modern nation alongside other nations. But for the vast majority, who remain citizens of other states, Zionism, despite the inner need which it satisfies, is an added menace to their security. The diagnosis of the anti-Zionist Jews is right enough.

"But their conclusion is wrong. The dangers of nationhood must and will be accepted by a people which has learnt to live dangerously and whose virtues and greatness are a product of that danger. The Jew who opposes the national home and tries to convert Judaism into a religious sect is denying the greatest Jewish achievement of our age and suppressing a part of his own personality. Sex may be dangerous, but that is no argument for becoming a eunuch. In the twentieth century a people without nationhood is a people without virility.

"Is the Jewish problem then insoluble? The answer seems to be "yes". The Zionist makes a great mistake in claiming that he has found the solution when he is really formulating the 20th century adaptation of Jewry to a hostile world. Despite the national home, the Jews will remain in constant danger of persecution; and their relations with their fellow Gentiles will be a fairly accurate measure of the degree of civilization to which any nation has attained. It is the destiny of the Jews of the Dispersion to provide by their presence the test of Christianity...

That was the view of one of the most effective Gentile supporters of Zionism at the moment when the Jewish-nationalist colonial state was being imposed on Palestine by a collaboration between the Soviet Union and the United States using the United Nations as their instrument for that purpose—Richard Crossman. (*Palestine Mission*, 1947, p80.)

Crossman, a Socialist intellectual in the British Labour Party, was appointed by Ernest Bevin, British Foreign Secretary, to the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry into the Jewish problem with reference to Palestine. The appointment was made on the assumption that Cross-

man was in sympathy with Bevin's views. It had been customary for a generation in the Labour Party for pro-Zionist resolutions to be adopted at Labour Party Conferences. During that period Bevin was pre-occupied with holding the Labour Party together and making it politically functional in the state. In Churchill's wartime Coalition he was effectively in control of the government of Britain, and laid the foundations for the post-war welfare state, while Churchill dealt with the war. When he became Foreign Minister unexpectedly in 1945, and saw what would be involved in the implementation of the Zionist resolutions, he could not engage in the atrocity of implementing them. He appointed Crossman to the Committee of Enquiry assuming that he would act in accordance with the Government position, but Crossman became an enthusiastic Zionist while on the Committee. When the Jewish State was established he was its honoured guest as a "*righteous Gentile*".

Crossman's conclusion that the establishment of Palestine into a Jewish State would not do away with the Jewish problem was realistic, but his idea that the handling of the Jewish problem by Gentile states was an index of civilisation, with the suggestion that they would overcome it, was less so.

Here is how Weizmann saw the matter:

"The Aliens Bill in England and the movement which grew up around it were natural phenomena which might have been foreseen. They were a repetition of a phenomenon only too familiar in our history. Whenever the quantity of Jews in any country reaches saturation point, that country reacts against them. In the early years of this century Whitechapel and the great industrial centres of England were in that sense saturated. The fact that the actual number of Jews in England, and even their proportion to the total population, was smaller than in other countries was irrelevant; the determining factor in this matter is not the solubility of the Jews, but the solvent power of the country. England had reached the point when she could or would absorb so many Jews and no more. English Jews were prepared to be absorbed in large numbers. The reaction against this cannot be looked upon as anti-Semitism in the ordinary or vulgar sense of the world; it is a universal social and economic concomitant of Jewish immigration, and we cannot shake it off..." (*Trial And Error*, 1949, p119).

Weizmann is understanding of the motives of Sir William Evans Gordon, a leader of that English anti-Jewish movement that was not Anti-Semitic:

"He had been horrified by what he had seen of the oppression of the Jews in Russia, but in his opinion it was physically

impossible for England to make good the wrongs which Russia had inflicted on its Jewish population... Also, he was sincerely ready to encourage the settlement of Jews almost anywhere in the British Empire, but he failed to see why the ghettos of London or Leeds or Whitechapel could be made into branches of the ghettos of Warsaw and Pinsk..."

England was less tolerant of Jews than other countries. But all countries were intolerant of Jews. The Jewish problem was an objective social problem, but different countries had different degrees of tolerance of it. England was one of the least tolerant. But the low level of English tolerance of Jews was not anti-Semitism, at least "*in the ordinary or vulgar sense of the word*".

Weizmann was dismissive of the approach to the Tsar made by Theodore Herzl (author of *The Jewish State*, who established Zionism as a propaganda force):

"Lack of realism could go no further; anti-Semites are incapable of aiding the creation of a Jewish homeland; their attitude forbids them to do anything which might really help the Jewish people..." (p109).

But it was through English anti-Semitism—because a low tolerance of Jews is generally described as anti-Semitism—that Weizmann made Zionism a political force in world affairs.

When Joyce praises the Irish for not having a Jewish problem "*because we never let them in*", it is English anti-Semitism that he praises. Ireland had no more control of immigration into Ireland before the 1920s than Palestinians had had of immigration into Palestine after 1919.

England drove out the Jews in the Middle Ages, and let them back in when it decided it had a use for them in the mid-17th century, but kept them under political restriction, and under cultural restriction when political disfranchisement ended. English literature includes two high-quality anti-Semitic works (*The Merchant Of Venice* and *Ivanhoe*) and a great quantity of routine anti-Semitism. Exposés of anti-Semitism in English culture are published every now and then and are ignored.

Three distinct motives went into the English decision in 1917 to make Zionism a force in world politics: Imperialism, anti-Semitism and Biblical Utopianism.

England was not doing very well in its war on Germany. The Foreign Secretary (Balfour, an anti-Semite of the kind that was not vulgar) sought to win international Jewish influence to the English side by

supporting the Zionist project. Churchill (an anti-Semite of a rather more vulgar kind) saw in Zionism a means of turning the Jews against Bolshevism, which he saw as being largely a product of the restless energy of international Jewry.

The Zionist and Bolshevik projects ran in parallel, and in conflict, from the end of World War 1 to the end of World War 2. The first was a Jewish colonial project conducted under the auspices of the British Empire. The second was a project of world revolution centred on the Bolshevik State in Russia in which Jews were heavily involved both in Russia and abroad. The Zionist project was entirely at variance with the Bolshevik project, and was incompatible with the Bolshevik policy on nationalities. But in 1947-8 it was Bolshevism that gave effect to the Zionist project when its originator, Britain, was trying to withdraw from it. It collaborated with the US in getting a Zionist motion adopted by the UN General Assembly, against the opposition of all the Governments in the Middle East, and it was itself the main military backer of the Zionist conquests of 1948.

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"...was there ever a chance for Britain to keep faith with the Jews and fulfil her promises without violating her obligation to the Arabs? I believe that the Balfour Declaration could have been fulfilled by building up a Jewish majority very quickly indeed. In order to make this possible, the British Government would have had to appoint a first High Commissioner strong enough to purge his own staff of anti-Zionists, to disregard Arab opposition and encourage large-scale Jewish immigration. Obviously he would have had to be a Gentile, because no Jew selected by a British Government could possibly commit the lesser injustice to the Arabs required to build a National Home in the 1920s. Once Sir Herbert Samuel was appointed the first High Commissioner, a radical policy of this kind was out of the question..."

"World Jewry failed equally to fulfil its share of the task, the provision of half a million immigrants in the first few years. The main cause of this failure was, of course, the Bolshevik Revolution. Zionists had always assumed that Russia would provide the main source of mass immigration into Palestine" (Crossman, *A Nation Reborn* p62-3).

What the situation required was a masterful Imperial policy. Weizmann was ready for this: "*Weizmann accepted almost without question the virtues of the Empire and assumed that one of the tasks of the Jewish nation would be to protect Britain's Imperial interests on the Suez Canal*" (Crossman, p35).

But the timing proved to be wrong.

Certain events spoiled the atmosphere, making it impossible for the "*conquering Jewish race*" (p95) to slot itself into place. These poisonous events were the work of Lenin and De Valera.

"De Valera got rid of the British by encouraging Irish civilians to shoot British soldiers in the back and to burn them alive in the houses where they were sleeping. He won, because world public opinion was more shocked by British oppression than by Irish atrocities" (p57).

And Lenin, secretly transported from Switzerland to Russia by the Germans in 1917, established a Communist State which undermined "*European world domination*".

Before this: "*World opinion still regarded war as a matter for professionals*" (p56). But De Valera and Lenin made war everybody's business.

The combination of the national principle combined with the practice of self-help in warfare prevented the imposition of a Jewish State in Palestine without injustice to its Arab inhabitants:

"If the Jewish settlers had achieved their majority before 1914, they would have been accepted without moral compunction of any kind. But now they were hated by the Arabs, who regarded them as "white settlers", come to occupy the Middle East" (p58).

And of course they were what they were seen to be: white settlers occupying the Middle East. If they had been placed in dominance during the era of undisputed white supremacy, that would possibly have been accepted as the way of the world. But, when the colonisation process was launched in 1919, it was no longer the way of the world. A new world order had been announced by the vast Russian State. Britain itself had proclaimed nationality as the basis of legitimacy in 1914, and it had stirred up an Arab nationalism in 1916 in its war on Turkey, and then had the problem of slapping it down in order to establish its colonial Jewish State.

The time of legitimate white conquest of inferior races had passed before the colonisation of Palestine began. The League of Nations and the United Nations might except the Jewish conquest of Palestine from their own principles of legitimacy but that exception could not be made good in the realities of the world. The Jewish conquest was resisted. It is still being resisted. But it must continue. The land God gave to Moses was not the meagre fragment awarded by the UN in 1947, or even the additional area conquered in 1948. Indeed it is scarcely covered by the conquest of 1967.

Crossman, understanding all of this, supported the belated conquest through thick and thin. He went on to become an editor of Bagehot's *English Constitution*, a senior Cabinet Minister, and an honoured guest of Israel as a righteous Gentile:

"The fact that Weizmann combined a love of Western civilisation with a hatred of assimilation explains one puzzling aspect of his character, which struck me on my first meeting with him in Rehoveth. I was confronted with a personality which combined the fanaticism and power of Lenin with the sophisticated charm of Disraeli. Even more puzzling, here was a Jew who obviously preferred the company of British Gentiles to that of assimilated Jews. As I got to know him, it became ever clearer that we English were regarded as Goyim, for whom allowances must be made, whereas he never forgave the shortcomings of the Jew—especially the German Jew—who should have known better. For, to Weizmann, every Jew was a potential Zionist, and those whose Jewish patriotism was qualified by any other national loyalty were to be pitied or despised..." (*A Nation Reborn* p19).

"Antisemitism, he used to say to me, is a bacillus which every Gentile carries with him, wherever he goes and however he denies it. Like other bacilli, it may remain quiescent and harmless for years. But once the right conditions are created, the bacilli multiply and the epidemic breaks out. The condition for an outbreak of overt anti-semitism in any nation is that the number of Jews should rise beyond the safety level of that particular nation. Hence the only radical cure for antisemitism is the creation of the Jewish State. At our first meeting, which lasted most of the way through the night, Weizmann outlined his theory to me and asked me whether I was antisemitic. When I said, "Of course", I felt that our friendship had begun. For, if a Gentile denied his latent antisemitism, Weizmann concluded that he must either be lying or, even worse, deceiving himself. In his view the only attitude for a Gentile to adopt was to admit his unconscious prejudice against Jews and to ensure that it did not influence his behaviour by consciously making allowances for it..." (p21-2).

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Russia became an obstacle to Zionism for thirty years before inexplicably deciding in 1947 to establish it in power in Palestine. It blocked it both by delegitimising the world order in which colonial conquest was normal, and by cutting off the main source of Jews for Palestine by making Jewry one of the main components of the new Russian State established in 1917.

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Leninism/Bolshevism was an organised, centrally-directed, political structure whose purpose was to establish Socialism

throughout the world by means of decisive action by a centralised leadership which established an effective connection with the raw, exploited masses created by Capitalism and Imperialism. It was directive, not representative. It was, as Lenin put it, an "*alien intrusion*" into the working class movement shaped by Capitalism.

It was not a kind of belief capable of operating spontaneously throughout the world, emerging out of itself. Very few things are. Leninism was the one that was least capable of doing so. It was the anti-type of Islam.

Leninism was a hierarchically-organised means of action, even when it consisted of a mere handful of people. It was described accurately enough by Trotsky when he denounced it. A dozen years later Trotsky joined it in order to be effective in a revolutionary situation. Seven years after that, when the Party consolidated its rule by raising hundreds of thousands of politicians out of the masses to act under its direction, he denounced it again, in much the same terms as he had done twenty years earlier, the only difference being that he now called it Stalinism instead of Leninism.

If it makes sense to say that there were Leninist victims of Stalinism, then by the same token there must have been Leninist victims of Leninism. The Bolshevik State acted by rough measures against broad categories of people. When a handful of scientific socialists took power in a vast, sprawling society it could not have been otherwise. But that State could only have done the things it did in the course of two generations if those who felt they benefited from its action were not many times greater than those who suffered from it.

Leninism was a "*voluntarist*" break with the Marxism of the Second International, which had become a form of contemplative understanding of, and adaptation to, the Capitalist/Imperialist order in the world. Anti-Stalinist Leninism, which flowered for a generation after the Bolshevik State began to question its own presuppositions in the 1950s, then dissolved into a kind of Second Internationalism. Eric Hobsbawm is Kautsky today. This kind of contemplative Marxism is neither a means of action nor a belief. It is little more than a literary form.

The Bolshevik State operated by a combination of coercive power and political conviction. Wherever its coercive power went, its political conviction could evoke a popular response. As that ceased to be case, Soviet power became predom-

antly coercive and began to meet with insurrections which it suppressed in the manner of capitalist Imperialism.

It might be that Leninism had exhausted its potential by the early 1950s, and that this fact coincided with the death of Stalin. Or it might be that the highly centralised system was disrupted by the second change of leadership. Or it might be that the Zionist sensation-monger, Simon Sebag Montefiore, is right and things went awry and Stalin had become brain-dead. ("*As his brain atrophied, Stalin still 'swotted like a good pupil...'*" Court Of The Red Tsar, p637). But these are things that need to be argued, not slipped in.

And the Soviet decision to act with the United States to give effect to a Jewish-nationalist colonisation of Palestine when a British Labour Government wanted to abort the Balfour project, is something to be dealt with when discussing Zionism/Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.

The Zionist project was a British Imperial project. One of its earliest advocates was the Liberal Imperialist *Manchester Guardian*. The *Guardian* in July 1914 saw the war on Germany, which it suspected the Government intended to launch, in much the same way as Casement saw it. It would be a crime against Europe. But it knew that, when war was declared, it must support it. It could not support it on the moderate terms of a cynical calculation of national advantage. If it was to be supported, it must be on transcendental, millenarian terms, and the advocacy of Zionism fitted in with this. But the *Guardian* journalist, Herbert Sidebotham, who wrote the first book in support of the Balfour Manifesto, remained hardheaded enough to warn that, on the precedent of history, a Jewish State in Palestine was likely to be a catastrophic affair. But he reckoned that, as a British colonial project, managed by the Empire, the catastrophic dimension could be contained.

Thirty years later Britain, having set the project in motion, washed its hands of it. It surrendered to Jewish terrorism. Churchill had authorised the formation of a Jewish Brigade in the war on Germany, although he must have known that Germany would not be its only enemy. (A history describes it as "*An Army With Two Masters*": *The Jewish Brigade 1944-5* by Morris Beckman. 1998.)

The post-war Labour Government, faced with unrestrained Jewish terrorism in Palestine, could not cope. (When the King David Hotel, filled with British officers, was blown up, Weizmann tut-tutted, but reflected that the world would

have hailed it as a glorious event if it had been a German headquarters.)

When Britain gave up on its undertaking to exercise control over this new force that it had established in Palestine, Moscow and Washington collaborated not only to legitimise Zionism but to give it its head. And scenes of ethnic cleansing and plunder followed very quickly. If Lozovsky was the true Leninist speaking truth to a State that had ceased to be Bolshevik, he might have said a word about that. He didn't.

(S.S. Montefiore's book on Stalin is a post-Soviet potboiler, which does not even have a Cold War purpose. It is a fitting companion to his book on *Monsters*—100 of them, including Robert Mugabe, who repossessed some English colonial estates. None of the organisers and perpetrators of the conquest and plunder of the people of Palestine in 1948 finds a place in it.)

es ahora *

20TH MAY 2011.

CORK BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT

I have a confession to make and it seems almost treasonable to make it amidst such goodwill and cheer. Since the Queen Elizabeth 11's arrival to this country, I haven't been keeping up with the news—neither by TV, Radio, or newspapers. This I assure you all is not because I am churlish by nature but personal commitments elsewhere held me in thrall and so it was by phone calls from various friends that kept me on message so to speak. And knock me down if the arc of the Irish royal narrative kept up-playing to the point where I began to think my friends were either all drunk out of their skulls or actually the country that I knew was forever changed and changed utterly, if I could use an Yeatsian sentiment here. When the educationalist, Elma Collins infamously pronounced to a crying child that "*we had no more heroes here*" she of course meant "Irish" ones. Now all that has changed and the adoring Irish media/academia has crowned a foreign Head of State to take on a new mantle as the "*heroic*" object of our affections.

I saw for myself on Friday, 20th May 2010 as Cork created new flags, the most favoured one being on a rust-red background with a symbol of The Crown, with the words "*Cork city welcomes You*" and the date. There were other smaller ones which were used by certain school children which I think were the Royal Standard. During the recent Royal wedding in London, much was made of the symbolism

It Is Time

stitched into the new Duchess of Cambridge's dress. The four home nations were featured and of course Prince William, grandson of the Queen, was made colonial-in-chief of The Irish Guards a few weeks before-hand by the Queen. Thus his uniform was that of the regiment with shamrock-motifs embroidered on the collar of his military tunic.

Throughout her visit to Ireland, the Queen's Royal Standard flew on her huge 4x4 limousine and there on the bottom was the gold celtic harp—symbol of the Irish State, amongst the other three of Wales, Scotland and England. I was passing City Hall a few days previously and there was this big flag with the words "Small City—Big Heart" with the Elysian building falling sideways as though imitating the Leaning Tower of Pisa. But I saw a somewhat ironic tilt at the weight of this building on the shoulders of the poor benighted citizens who have been burdened with its debt—while its owner Michael O'Flynn, according to a recent RTE expose, still flew in his helicopter to see his horses race around the country. I correct myself—it is of course NAMA that now holds these buildings on our behalf.

The papers said that there were about 30,000 people in Cork that day to see the Queen and in truth—while I do think that figure to be an exaggeration—there was no denying the warmth and hysteria that greeted Her Majesty and her Royal Consort, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. All along the South Mall and in the Grand Parade the people were enthusiastic in their greeting. There were two huge TVs—one stationed in the latter and one in Patrick Street, where there was a band, and a much younger crowd sang and watched the Royal visit to the English market. As they say here "the craic was mighty".

From the South Mall, I looked at the wavering flags on the AIB building to see what way the wind was blowing as it was getting very cold and was stupefied to see on the roof—some Garda snipers and they were also across the road on the other tall buildings. There were mounted Garda on some fine horses up in the Grand Parade and then some fierce Alsatian dogs with Garda handlers came from the direction of Parliament Bridge and went on up towards the market entrance. From there to University College Cork's Tyndall Institute where the Queen's entourage was welcomed by President Michael Murphy and the CEO of the Institute, Professor Roger Whatmore. Of course the visit would be nothing if former academic historian John A. Murphy didn't entertain her with the story of the Statue of Victorian where his gloss on the account can be read in the *Evening Echo*, 21st May 2011.

The media/academia figures were all catered for in the State Dinners and all the politicians except for Sinn Fein. I thought

that the attendance at the Dublin Castle event of the North's First Deputy Peter Robinson and his wife Iris—the latter dressed in resplendent green—was very important. And, when the former addressed the media on his way in, he rightly condemned their pursuit of his wife and said they had little notion of mental illness and its consequences. That was brave and quite inspiring but there is the real question of what if that had happened in the other camp—how it would have been handled by those who are the commentariat?

On the following day, there was not an *Irish Examiner* to be found for love nor money in Cork city and when I questioned one of my most faithful newsagents he told me that people were out early and were buying 3 or 4 copies as souvenir editions. One loud man in the crowd the previous day stated while looking at all of us: "Well, we are all Royalist now". I thought he was being sly as he looked over at a mute (for once) me and then two well-dressed ladies from the more salubrious suburbs, thinking he was being straight, immediately replied: "Oh yes, she was such a lovely lady—so frightfully splendid".

Probably what most astounded me was the ignorance of the media, but of course it could have been feigned. Apparently RTE had Professor Diarmuid Ferriter on standby for commenting as the trip unfolded. I haven't seen any footage but probably will be able to have seen some by the next issue of the *Irish Political Review*. Ronan O'Reilly, in the *Irish Daily Mail*, 23rd May 2011, stated that Gerry Adams was the Queen's subject and should he have been able "to shake the monarch's hand and demonstrate that his objection to Britain's involvement in the North is strictly political and not personal, he would have been able to claim the moral high ground". The fact is that this is tosh. The Queen in her personal capacity is Head of Her Majesty's Armed Forces and Head of the (very Protestant) Church of England which excludes Catholics from ever being in line of succession to the throne. All of which makes her position officially sectarian and militaristic. O'Reilly goes on to write that "there was no hidden agenda behind the royal visit other than a friendly neighbour dropping in for the diplomatic equivalent of a cup of tea". And as if this wasn't enough bilious *raiméis*, he also sticks it to the Pontiff, should the latter ever visit, by suggesting the only thing the Holy Father would do "would be to tell us that we're a bunch of no-good sinners who have let Him Upstairs down badly" and he contrasts that with the loveliness of the Queen's visit.

I have heard a lot of nonsense about the Queen's surname during the visit. King George V was pushed by a nervous court and ever more outcry from Fleet Street—then as always up to their shenanigans—

who put such pressure on His Majesty that "the King abandoned his German titles and name in 1917. The house of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha became Windsor. It is said a Bavarian nobleman of the old regime has observed wittily enough: "The true royal tradition died on that day in 1917 when, for a mere war, King George V changed his name". Indeed at that time there was even a question if the British throne would last amidst so many others losing theirs. "The King and his immediate advisors seem to have decided that to meet the challenge of the new world the King and the Royal Family must increasingly display themselves throughout the country and the Empire."

The recent, acclaimed, picture *The King's Speech* showed what happened when David, heir and Prince of Wales abdicated for love (there is of course another story here which has yet to be told) and so Bertie, the second son became King George VI, a man burdened by a stammer and such was the strain of inheriting the throne that he had a breakdown but was blessed by his wife, the Queen Consort Elizabeth who would later become more widely-known as the Queen Mum—much to her fury as confided to her courtiers.

The monarchy as an actual power diminished forever over the course of the Great War. As many biographers would agree, it really became a pawn for the Government, Lambeth House—to a lesser extent, but really to Fleet Street in all its bullying form. I think the present monarch has been generally good in her brief—she has bowed enough to modern influences but carefully kept her distance at the same time with the mantra that less is more and boring is definitely good. Queen Mary of Teck, wife of George V, brought some great German/French jewellery to England and the Tiara that Queen Elizabeth II wore to the State Irish Ball had belonged to her, and is now used by the present Queen as the Commonwealth Tiara—somewhat unusual to wear in what after all is still The Republic of Ireland. But if I know the Queen—and I have read extensively about her—that was no accident but a very intentional nod to some conventions we maybe have overlooked thus far.

WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

There are many women's magazines on the market that cater for all tastes, as indeed there are for men. The big glossy now is definitely *Grazia*, which is one of the biggest selling in Britain and here in Ireland. It does politics with a very small 'p' but still is a good enough indicator of the constructs of UK power. It had a gloating propaganda coup on the killing of Osama Bin Laden—the kind of mindless jingoism that is still going strong in the UK. But in a recent issue, 2nd May 2011, one of its leading columnists Lowri Turner

was very angry, protesting about posters of girls-in-bikini shots for H&M which had been "defaced" in London on one of those bus waiting places—commonly known as shelters. The girls advertising the bikinis leave nothing much to the imagination and someone—gasp, shock, horror—had thrown *black paint* covering them up. Turner said: "*This photo, drips of black paint running down the model's legs, sends a shiver down my spine*".

Though Turner cannot possibly know who did such an act, she sees in it the dark hand of fundamentalist Islam. And she wonders if the French aren't right in throwing veiled ladies into police vans. Then she takes off about "*Islamic countries and how they treat their rape victims*", ending her diatribe about her freedom to dress or undress as she sees fit by suggesting that perhaps the UK should rethink the whole "*burka ban*". Obviously Turner doesn't see the contradiction she presents here. If some ladies want to go around in various stages of undress, as they do here in this country, why can't ladies equally of another community group dress as they see fit. It is called *equality* Lowri Turner and it is meant to benefit us all. Actually I thought it was a PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) project but then realised they use red paint and that sort of protest goes down a treat with the urban chic.

Then in *Grazia*, 22nd May 2011, there was a two page feature on "*The Slutwalk*". There were shots of women in their underclothes shouting slogans in a Boston street as part of the new "*SlutWalk*" movement. The ladies were also wearing various catchy slogans on placards stating: "*It's my Hot Body—I do what I want*", "*Awesome Slut*", "*Proud Slut*", "*Believe it or not my Short Skirt has Nothing to Do with You*" etc. The *Observer* columnist Eva Wiseman said she will be joining her sisters in the London march on 11th June 2011. In Toronto last month, according to Wiseman, there were over 3,000 women on what was really the first '*SlutWalk*' and there are huge protests on Facebook and other social media sites on the Internet.

It all kicked off apparently because Police Constable Michael Sanguinetti was talking—at their invitation—to a group of Toronto female students about street safety where he said: "*Women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimised*". Now that is according to the ladies present. So all you activists who have no more to worry about that a stupid stunt—when the whole of North Africa is in turmoil and the rest of us in economic meltdown—go out and join the '*SlutWalk*' at Trafalgar Square on 11th June 2011, at 1pm.

Julianne Herlihy ©

Stickie Sneer Or 'Stalinist Smear'?

A Question Of Harrisment

In the *Sunday Independent* this past 27th March, Eoghan Harris evoked an inner-Party faction fight with an erstwhile comrade of two decades ago:

"Last Sunday morning ... I tuned into Marian Finucane. My smile faded on hearing the panel included the plummy-voiced Paul Sweeney ... Marian Finucane casually mentioned that I had given Eamon Gilmore a clip across the ear in my column by wondering why the Tanaiste had not attacked Gaddafi on the grounds he had armed the Provisional IRA. As both Gilmore and Sweeney were colleagues of mine in the Workers' Party, I wondered how Sweeney would sidle past this problem. But in my wildest dreams I could not have predicted what would actually come out of his mouth, and I suspect neither did he. Sweeney ruminated for a moment and then muttered '*Eoghan Harris ... yeah ... and his love of Moscow and Josef Stalin ... Heh Heh ...*' The commercial break came before he could cost RTE some real money. Within minutes of the Stalinist smear my mobile was hopping with texts from former Workers' Party members wondering whether Sweeney had finally lost both his marbles as well as his memory. And no wonder. Because Sweeney calling me a Stalinist was a blatant case of the pot calling the kettle black. Back in 1989, I presented the Workers' Party with a document called *The Necessity of Social Democracy* which predicted the collapse of Soviet-style communism. The WP leadership of De Rossa, Rabbitte and Gilmore refused to publish the pamphlet. When Eamon Smullen published it anyway, we were effectively forced out of the party.

"In sum I left the Workers' Party in 1989 because I publicly rejected Soviet-style socialism. But Sweeney supported those I dubbed the Student Princes (ie Rabbitte and Gilmore) who professed to believe in Soviet-style socialism for another two years when they finally saw the light and left to form Democratic Left ... Accordingly it would be a lot more reasonable for me to call Sweeney—and indeed Gilmore—a Stalinist than the other way around. But I would no more call anybody a Stalinist than I would call them a fascist or a Thatcherite. These terms only made sense in the period of Stalin, Hitler and Thatcher. Nowadays the jibe of 'Stalinist' is only made by ignorant socialists who wrongly think a Stalinist is someone who supports the dictatorial system of 'democratic centralism'. But of course this was the creation of Lenin, not Stalin. Communists in the Workers' Party simply called themselves Marxist-Leninists. But while I certainly called myself a communist, I never had any time for Stalin, and for one simple reason. Stalin was an anti-semite. And I was reared as an anti anti-semite, and never forgot my leftist father quoting the old adage of the German social democrats: '*Anti-semitism is the socialism of fools*'..."

Methinks he doth protest too much. Paul Sweeney's jibe was obviously a Stickie sneer delivered solely as an in-joke for the benefit of the *cognoscenti* of the Old Boys' network of ex-SFWP comrades, while it remained utterly meaningless for the general listenership. It so clearly lacked sufficient substance to constitute a smear that it would have been cheerfully ignored by anyone else less preoccupied with his ego. Moreover, Harris is also chancing his arm about his own ever-shifting autobiography: "*I would no more call anybody a Stalinist than I would call them a fascist ... terms which only made sense in the period of Hitler, Stalin ...*" Really? So much for his name-calling of Sinn Féin as "*fascists*" in his *Sindo* column of 6th September 2009, of which there are many similar examples. He also 'forgets' that it was not 1989 but 1990 when he resigned from the Workers' Party. It is, however, painfully obvious that Harris is still smarting from that Party's final rejection of his talents. In the short space of only one week, in his column of this past 3rd April, he further pre-dated that break when he yet again complained that "*back in 1988 he—the Tanaiste, Eamon Gilmore—and Pat Rabbitte opposed my document, The Necessity of Social Democracy, which called on the Workers' Party to pack in Soviet-style socialism*".

So, what of his latest claim—proclaimed not once but twice, since it was repeated and highlighted in the form of a bold sub-heading—that "*while I called myself a communist, I never had any time for Stalin, and for one simple reason. Stalin was an anti-semite*"? Such "creative autobiography" does indeed leave me confused.

Regarding Harris's 'communist' phase, I recall the report from Séamus Martin in the *Irish Times* of 16th December 1992, where he quoted the following from the letter he had unearthed from the Moscow archives, and dated as late as 1st July 1986, from the Workers' Party to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:

"As part of this struggle some members of the Workers' Party recently formed Iskra Productions ... an independent film company based in Dublin ... Iskra Productions is a Marxist film-making enterprise which commands this party's full support ... We hope you can fraternally assist this undertaking by entering discussions with representatives of our Party and Iskra Productions and the relevant CPSU representative on matters of mutual interest in the area of mass communications media ... Iskra does have a very talented team

behind it... Eoghan Harris is a veteran television producer. He has won many awards for his strident films ..."

Now, I do not believe for a minute that—as distinct from the WP itself—*Iskra* Harris ever received a red cent from Moscow. But this was not for want of the WP trying so hard on his behalf, and for Harris himself remaining on his best Soviet behaviour for the duration of such efforts. For throughout the 1970s and 1980s, while I was publicly challenging the anti-semitic propaganda of both the Soviet State and of the WP itself, Harris's silence on such matters was deafening while, of course, making sound Party business sense. But did Harris, perhaps, at the very end, choose to make a charge that "*Stalin was an anti-semitic*" an issue in his exit strategy from the WP in 1990? What exactly was it that he had to say about Stalin in his *Necessity of Social Democracy* pamphlet? Now I do not wish to repeat the Gilmore/Rabbinette suppression of what Harris believed it was so important for him to say. But still less will I play along with Harris's own make-belief on the matter. So, I will quote every criticism that Harris had to make of Stalin in 1990, as he announced that he was no longer a "*communist*", nor even a "*democratic socialist*", but was now a "*social democrat*":

"Is socialism dead? Yes or no? Yes. Sorry for your trouble. Yours and mine. Because no more than you do I like church bells ringing out to celebrate the end of communism. But there it is. Dead as door-nails. Five socialist states are no more. (Romania, a family dictatorship, rather than a one party socialist state, is outside the scope of this analysis)... Socialism died in 1989. The capitalist media tried to pretend it had been killed by democracy, by which they meant capitalism. But in fact it committed suicide. Socialism in the Warsaw Pact countries had been sick for a long time. It had lost the will to live... This system which had survived {the Great Patriotic War of 1941-45 against the Nazi German invasion—MOR} at the cost of twenty million lives and beaten all foes became sick and stagnant because it could not meet the need of its own people for personal and political freedom, for that democracy which was the whole meaning of the French Revolution whose bicentenary was the year 1989..."

"But hindsight is smug sight. Given the backwardness of Russia, the invasion of the infant Soviet Republic by the imperialist powers; given the need to industrialise at speed, first to fight the Allied Imperialist powers and later Hitler's fascists, given the imperatives of ideology, imperialism and industrialisation it is hard to see from their viewpoint how Lenin and Stalin could have acted otherwise. Even aside from Stalin's personality, his cruel collectivisations and paranoid purges, even still there would have been suffering on a colossal scale once the Soviet Union decided to defend socialism. And what else could it do since socialism was the point of all of it? Given the Allied and the Nazi attempt to batter the shaky Soviet state back into barbarism, the

only choice open to Lenin in 1920, as to Stalin from 1936 onwards, facing Hitler, was to dragoon and discipline or surrender socialism and their country to an evil enemy and sink to the level of a slave state. What would any of us do in these circumstances? Faced with a similar choice in Ireland the Free State Government resorted to state terror in 1922."

"To explain is not to excuse. The fatal flaw was not in the execution, but in the enterprise itself. Socialism came too soon. Stalin was the product of all this. Stalin had seen two German invasions of Russia. {In actual fact, it was British imperialism's soul mate, that "prison-house of nations" and powerhouse of anti-semitism, Tsarist Russia, that had invaded Germany in 1914, with anti-Jewish pogroms central to the manner in which the Tsarist army waged that First World War, as had been so clearly pointed out at the time by James Connolly in his polemics against what described as "*the war against the German nation*"—MOR} Was it any wonder that from 1946 he strung a steel necklace of puppet socialist states all across Eastern Europe to face a Germany whose war criminals were being put onto the Atomic payroll of the Allied Powers? Should we be surprised that Stalin wanted an insurance policy against any future threat from a Germany that had twice {sic!} cost the Soviet Union millions of lives, as well as the material means of creating a civilised society? Who could deny that even today there is a fear of a united Germany among social democrats and liberals?"

"Socialism survived the war. But it had suffered severe mental and emotional damage. In 1946 it stamped out of the Soviet Union wearing the rigid mask of Stalin, speaking a zombie jargon, brutalised by war—and was given a hero's welcome in the West and imposed on Warsaw Pact countries as the model for all systems... By 1986 the Warsaw Pact's countries' socialism was in a coma, brain dead and kept alive only by the Soviet Union's millions of troops, the most expensive life support machine on earth. Until in 1986 Gorbachev switched it off..."

In which year, of course, Gorbachev also decided that he would have no use for the WP's offer to the CPSU of "*strident*" Harris's *Iskra* Productions! Having ceased to be a "*communist*", Harris also ceased to be an Irish Republican. He was now seeking to establish his credentials as a Free Stater by portraying the measures taken during the course of the so-called "*civil war*" against the Republic—instigated and waged by the Collins-Cosgrave-O'Higgins regime at the behest of Churchill and British Imperialism—as having the same political character as those measures taken by Lenin in resisting the war of intervention (designed to strangle the young Soviet Republic at birth) that had been waged by Churchill and the imperialist Allies, as well as those taken by Stalin in the face of the rise of Hitler. But Stalin was no O'Higgins ("Socialism in One Free State"?), and while he can be accused of that war crime against Poland perpetrated at Katyn, in no

way should he be held responsible for the Free State war crimes at Ballyseedy Cross and Killarney's Countess Bridge!

This is not to overlook a certain Free State fascination with Russia, although the object of such admiration had not been Stalin. In his 1935 book *Could Ireland Become Communist?* Fine Gael's Blueshirt ideologist, University College Cork Professor James Hogan, maintained that de Valera was no better than one who would play the role of "*Ireland's Keren-sky*", providing a rather different "*stepping stone*" than that envisaged by Collins and paving the way for a seizure of power by "*Ireland's Lenin*", the Republican Congress's Peadar O'Donnell, whom Hogan proceeded to characterise as "*serpentine*". Just over a decade previously, Hogan had been the Free State Army's Director of Intelligence during the 'civil war', while his brother Michael commanded that Army's forces in Kerry at the time of the above-mentioned 1922 killings of Republican prisoners in that county—blown to smithereens while tethered to land-mines. Moving on to James Hogan's mindset a couple of years later, a presumed kinsman, E.M. Hogan, has provided the following interesting insight into an aspect of his testimony to the Committee of Inquiry into the 1924 Free State 'Army Mutiny':

"Other threats to the state, he felt, were posed by the 'Irregulars' and by 'Communist elements within Irish society'. Hogan's testimony to the inquiry also reflected his fascination with Russia. He had met with Soviet officers in Paris (in early 1924) and seems to have exchanged views on the conditions of the Free State and Red armies. A particular admiration for Trotsky and the way he dealt with factionalism in the Red Army is also evident. When asked at the inquiry whether Trotsky's methods would be tolerated in Irish society Hogan replied that the methods employed were not, in fact, that harsh. It would be interesting to know whether he had read Trotsky's defence of 'the Red Terror' and his argument that the only way a revolutionary government can defend itself from counter-revolution is through harsh measures proportional to the threat posed. (Leon Trotsky, *The defence of terrorism: terrorism and communism: a reply to Karl Kautsky*, London, 1921) Did Hogan apply this to conditions in the Free State during the Civil War? It is probable, as he was an admirer of Kevin O'Higgins whose courage and resolve in the face of anarchy, he believed, saved the state" (E.M. Hogan, "*James Hogan: A Biographical Sketch*", in *James Hogan: Revolutionary, Historian and Political Scientist*, edited by Donnchadh Ó Corráin, University College Cork, 2000, p 11)

Since Harris continues to use the word "*Trotskyite*" as little more than an all-encompassing term of abuse, it is unlikely that his love affair with Free State Terror would extend to a tribute to Trotsky similar to that paid by Hogan, notwithstanding the fact that, as noted by Anthony Cough-

lan in the Spring 1999 issue of *History Ireland*, Harris figures "among the many students who were influenced by him". So Stalin is all we are left with. But, far from what his recent *Sindo* column would have us believe, in his 1990 "God that failed" adieu to what he called "communism" Harris did not in fact make a single mention of anti-semitism on the part of anybody at all in the Soviet Union, and certainly not on the part of his much-discussed Stalin. The one national prejudice which he attributed to Stalin was against Germany *per se*. But it was a false attribution. For, at a time when the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War was being waged on a ferocious scale, Stalin issued the following order of the day on 23rd February 1942:

"The Red Army's aim is to drive out the German occupants from our country and liberate Soviet soil from the German fascist invaders. It is very likely that the war for liberation of the Soviet land will result in ousting or destroying Hitler's clique. But it would be ridiculous to identify Hitler's clique with the German people and the German state. History shows that Hitlers come and go, but the German people and the German state remain."

I write here, moreover, of an attribution rather than an accusation, for Harris, the new-born but short-lived "social democrat", clearly identified with his own false portrayal of Stalin in that regard, and would continue to do so in his next political reincarnation as a neo-liberal free-marketeer, as he also went on to thoroughly immerse himself in what he himself would describe as "the British side of our national self" in the *Sunday Independent* of 8th August 2004. So it was that, in that self-same column, Harris could get his juices going by rejoicing in not just one, but in "two big wars against Germans" as he exultantly evoked the 1915 *Daily Mail* headline in respect of Michael O'Leary VC—"Killed Eight Germans". Yet Rudyard Kipling suggested, with approval, that at least one of those O'Leary killings being celebrated by Harris had, in fact, been a war crime—the killing of a German soldier attempting to surrender, but whom O'Leary could not be bothered to escort back as a prisoner-of-war. (For a more detailed argument against Harris's Germanophobic myopia in respect of O'Leary, see www.ballingearyhs.com/ for my article *Michael O'Leary, Kuno Meyer and Peadar Ó Laoghaire*, in the 2004 issue of the *Ballingeary Historical Society Journal*). Harris had proclaimed that "to explain is not to excuse" and then proceeded to invoke the 20 million Soviet war dead of 1941-45 as an "explanation" of his own line on Germany which he misleadingly projected on to Stalin and which has been shown to have no basis in historical fact. But what on earth can explain, still less excuse, Harris's anti-German blood-lust in respect of the carnage of 1915?

Manus O'Riordan

Naval Warfare

Part Eleven

David Urquhart was the first champion of the right of "stop, search and seizure" and the famous opponent of the view that "the neutral flag covers enemy cargoes", contained in the Armed Neutralities of 1780 and 1800 and the subsequent British acceptance of the Declaration of Paris in 1856.

Urquhart had come to maritime affairs through a friendship with Jeremy Bentham who kindled in him an interest in the East. On the suggestion of Bentham he went off on Lord Byron's Greek revolutionary adventure against the Ottoman Empire, sailing with Lord Dundonald and helping to suppress a mutiny on board ship on the way.

But having fought against the Ottomans he then found he preferred the Turks after all.

Whilst in Istanbul Urquhart developed his belief that the Russians posed the greatest threat to England and he went on to popularise the idea that, if the Russians ever took Constantinople, they would gain access to the Mediterranean and threaten English maritime dominance. This idea persisted in England until the 1907 Agreement with Russia which, by leading to the promise of Constantinople to the Czar in return for his Army to fight Germany, overturned the best part of a century of British Foreign Policy.

Urquhart became friends with William IV, who had been an Admiral before he became King, and convinced him of his views with regard to Russia and Constantinople. The friendship meant Lord Palmerston became obliged to make him Secretary to the British Embassy at Constantinople; against his better judgement (Urquhart was a vocal critic of Lord Palmerston's tricky diplomacy).

Whilst at the Embassy in Istanbul, Urquhart set about drafting a Treaty that would have crushed the Russian corn trade, which he viewed as threatening the British market by cheapening the cost of food in England.

In Istanbul Urquhart apparently went native, and lived the life of an Ottoman *pasha* and it was said he even kept a harem for a time. And from this metamorphosis, he helped popularise the Turkish bath in England (which, interestingly, had Tommy Bowles, the other advocate of a more vigorous Royal Navy, as its other most famous enthusiast).

On his return to England Urquhart became the independent MP for Stafford and served on Foreign Affairs Committees from 1838 to 1863 where he championed the "right of stop, search and seizure", saying that the abandonment of this robbed

Britain of its most powerful weapon in warfare.

Although a staunch Protestant and anti-Papist, Urquhart came to see the Catholic Church as the "one moral force left in Europe" and set out to convince the Vatican of the validity of his views on "stop, search", so that it would convince its flock of the same. But, although Urquhart entered into relations with the Vatican, his efforts ended in failure—symbolised during the Great War by Benedict XV's attempts to stop the Great War by settling the question of maritime rights through a peace conference.

Urquhart saw the "right of stop and search" as a Natural Right, fundamental to the Law of Nations. In a speech to the Whittingham Club made on 20th January 1862 some of the flavour of his argument is revealed:

"I said there are some men who have designed to barter away the trident of England. These men work to upset the laws. Our work is to create for those laws defenders. It is not a case that has to be expounded, but men that have to be found. I have now to connect the power of England with the law. The law I mean is that of the Ten Commandments. There is no other law upon earth. All that you hear of as law—the law of Parliament—even the common law of the land, is mere application, direction, instruction, modification; sometimes, indeed, applying to the just fulfilment of the law—at other times not so. The law of the Ten Commandments—the dictate of God—can be violated by the community only in those three items of which I have already made enumeration, namely, "Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not bear false witness".

"No state in its aggregate capacity commits wrong against another state without breaking these three commandments. We cannot commit an act of injustice against France, or any other state, without either using the threat or executing the threat of killing" (*The Free Seas in War*, pp.50-1).

Urquhart saw the rights of search and seizure of enemy goods on neutral ships as being inherent in the doctrine of sovereignty. He believed that England was the guardian of rights on the sea and the main issue was the strengthening of this guardianship and not its dilution, which could only lead to chaos.

For Urquhart war represented a judicial sentence against the enemy involving the right to seize his goods as well as the right to kill him. As such it was the "lesser of two evils" and it would be ridiculous to claim the ultimate right of destroying the enemy's existence when denying oneself the right to seize his property. The right of seizure was, therefore, inherent in the sovereign rights of nations, with England as trustee.

Urquhart argued that the right of stop and search was derived from the *Consolato del Mare*—maritime and commercial law of the 13th century, applied in Byzantium,

Jerusalem and the Scandinavian countries. Although England was not included in this set of laws Urquhart saw the same contained in the laws of Elizabethan England.

Urquhart recounted how Queen Elizabeth I had written a letter to the Polish Ambassador when he had protested against the seizure of goods in Polish ships and lectured him about realities:

"For your part, you seem indeed to us, to have read many books; but yet to have little understanding of politics. For whereas, you so often, in your oration, make mention of the Law of Nations, you must know that, in the time of war betwixt kings, it is lawful for the one party to intercept the assistance and succours sent to the other, and to take care that no damage may grow thereby to himself. This, we say, is agreeable to the law of nature and of nations, and hath been often practised, not by us alone, but also by the kings of Poland and Sweden, in the wars which they have had with the Muscovites."

After the Queen, her Ministers put the Ambassador straight:

"He was afterwards told by her Council, consisting, amongst others, of the two Cecils, that to intercept succours sent to the enemy was not against the Law of Nations, seeing it was ordained by Nature that every one should defend himself; and this is not a written law, but born and bred in us" (*The Free Seas in War*, p.56).

According to Urquhart it was Frederick the Great who first claimed "*free ships make free cargoes*" as a *right*, in 1753—a few years before he became an ally of England in the Seven Years War. The legal opinion given in London against Frederick (and the Danes and Scandinavians who supported his view) was as follows:

"When the powers are at war they have a right to make prizes of the ships, goods, and effects of each other upon the high seas, whatever is the property of the enemy may be acquired by capture at sea, but the property of a friend cannot be taken, provided he observed his neutrality. Hence the Law of Nations is established that the goods of an enemy on board the ship of a friend may be taken; that the lawful goods of a friend on board the ships of an enemy ought to be restored; that contraband goods going to the enemy, though the property of a friend, may be taken as prize because supplying the enemy with what enables him better to carry on the war is a departure from neutrality.

"By the Maritime Law of Nations, universally and immemorially received, there is an established method of determination whether the capture be or be not lawful prize. Before the ships or goods be disposed of by the captor, there must be a regular judicial proceeding, wherein both parties may be heard, and condemnation thereupon as prize in a Court of Admiralty, judging by the Law of Nations and of treaties. The proper and regular court for these condemnations is the court of that State to whom the captor belongs" (*The Free Seas in War*, pp.60-1).

Urquhart also described how England refused to let maritime law be discussed at the Congress of Vienna in 1815—which swept away all existing Contracts and Treaties. So Urquhart's argument was that the "*right of stop and search*", which England had established in the world prior to the war of 1793 to 1815, a war in which she had upheld this principle against the attempts at Armed Neutrality, remained in force as the Law of Nations.

Urquhart was of the opinion that "International Law could never replace such a fundamental as the Law of Nations. And he saw the Declaration of Paris as "*an act of suicide*" for England and "*treason*" by any Minister of the Crown who supported it.

One of the chief arguments that Urquhart used against the Declaration of Paris centred around Lord Clarendon's use of the Crown's power of prerogative to sign up to the Declaration, without the seeking of Parliamentary approval (or indeed the signature of the Queen).

So when, in 1866, W.H. Gregory, the MP for Galway, sought to extend it into law in the British Parliament, Urquhart published *The Declaration of Paris. A Letter To Mr. Gregory On His Motion Of March 2, 1866, For Sparing Private Property in War At Sea*. Here are some extracts:

"The QUEEN, since her accession, has evinced a careful and judicious anxiety to... secure the rights and well-being of her People. To advise her to forego the right and duty of seizing and confiscating the property of the enemies of her Crown, war being declared, is to assume upon her part the felonious design of abandoning the only means by which England has attained to greatness, or can preserve existence... That to propose such a resolution to the House of Commons is to assume in that body a total ignorance of the Laws and of history..."

"The assumption of the Resolution, namely, that the sparing of British property by our enemy will compensate to Great Britain for the sparing of enemies' property by her, is manifestly fallacious even if established by enactments, and even if carried into effect by practice, since England has no means of coercion against great States, save in the superiority of her Maritime Power, which can only be brought to bear upon them by the seizure of their property at sea, through which she can annihilate their commerce, extinguish their finances, and force their fleets from behind their batteries into the open sea... Supposing the contrary to be true, namely, that the counter-cession of the Right of Seizure would compensate to England for the loss of its exercise, then, and on that very account, the cession by Foreign Powers would not be made, and, if made, would not be observed; for the sanction of all Treaties depends upon the power of enforcing them, of which England will have denuded herself... My motive in addressing you... springs from my inability to dissociate myself from the State, and the ruin that must fall upon myself and upon my family

should the Declaration of Paris not be reversed before the contingency arises of another War...

"By reason of the love of mankind we propose... to enact that war shall henceforth be carried on solely by means of bloodshed, and no longer by distraining goods... Now England being a Maritime State, a great Maritime State, and only a Maritime State, is under no necessity to spill blood or expend treasure to coerce her enemy. She can do so by distraining his goods, and thus making the war support itself, when carried on, as it need only be, by Privateers who seize the vessels, and judges who condemn them; whilst, on the other hand, she has no military force to land upon the shores of the United States, of Russia, of Prussia, of Austria, France, or Spain, so that the maxim of sparing enemy's property, disguised under the term "private property", could only be logical as flowing from a particular hatred of England" (pp.1-6)

In 1874, in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, David Urquhart published *Naval Power Suppressed By The Maritime States*. This book argued that France owed its defeat in this war to the fact that it was deterred from using its naval power against Prussia by the Declaration of Paris. Urquhart believed that France, which had a great naval superiority over Prussia, had effectively fought the war "*with only her left hand*" on a battleground that greatly advantaged the Prussians. He suggested that, if the French navy had blockaded Prussia, ruined her commerce, or made amphibious landings on the Prussian coasts, the Prussian army would have been unable to concentrate its efforts as it did and win the war. He suggested that "*the capitulation of Paris in 1871 was the result of the Declaration of Paris in 1856*".

It was Urquhart's view that England had a hand in the defeat of France, for *Balance of Power* reasons. Urquhart recounts that a dispatch of Lord Granville, reminding France of their duties under the Declaration of Paris, had the effect of disabling the French response to Germany and deterring the French from using their maritime power: "*To make war is not the only means of prostrating a country and... a Minister can by writing a letter, ruin an ally and do so without the knowledge of his victim and of his own country*" (p.13).

Urquhart's 1874 book also took a sceptical view of the Crimean War, from which the Declaration of Paris originated. He viewed the war as a phoney war in which England and France pretended to come to the aid of the Turks—but instead had different intentions entirely in the region. These intentions had been intensified by Czar Nicholas's attempt to convince Sir Hamilton Seymour, the British Ambassador in St Petersburg, that the Ottoman Empire was on the point of collapse. He had told the British Amba-

continued on page 30, column 3

Does
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SHAKESPEARE

The Shakespeare myths are powerfully embedded in the English Protestant mind. Any mild reference to a Shakespeare myth will produce an outbreak of defensive vituperation. Leaving aside the identity or identities of the great playwright(s) and the somewhat tenuous connections with that great money-earner Stratford-on-Avon and the apparent lack of any library of books used by such an erudite scholar—there is the question of the playwright's Catholicism. Undoubtedly, William Shakespeare the actor was indeed a great actor. Also no one questions the possibility that he was a superb director and producer of plays. But whoever wrote the plays was a man of genius.

Shakespeare's father John in his last Will and Testament professed his Catholic faith. Shakespeare's mother was a Catholic as was his patron the Viscountess Magdalen Montagne. The plays have many positive references to Catholic characters even though in his time it was *popular* and *politic* to portray Catholics as villains—as in today's modern Ireland. Even Shakespeare's Catholic clergy are shown in a positive light which for those times was incredibly iconic. Father Owen Gorman wrote that Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet* is no villain but is referred to by the prince as "*a holy man*". Likewise Friar Francis in *Much Ado about Nothing* is a man of deep moral integrity coming to the defence of the wrongly accused maiden, Hero, who was thought to be unfaithful.

The other sacraments of the Catholic Church also figure in a coded way in Shakespeare's plays. The ghost of Hamlet's father laments to his son that he was murdered "*unhouse'led unanel'd; no reckoning made, but sent to my account with all my imperfections on my head*". According to the scholar Paul Voss, this refers to the deprivations of the sacraments of the Catholic Church: "*unhous'led*" (means without the Eucharist), "*unanel'd*" (means without anointing in Extreme Unction), "*no reckoning made*" (without confession and absolution). Reading it in the light that Shakespeare's audience would, the sense of tragedy and injustice associated with the murder would be thus intensified.

The ghost of Hamlet's father is also the character used by Shakespeare to alert his audiences to the Catholic doctrine of purgatory. In Act 1, Scene V, the ghost tells Hamlet: "*I am thy father's spirit, doomed for a certain term to walk the*

night, and for the day confirmed to fast in fires, till the foul crimes done in my days of nature are burnt and purged away".

The questions of Shakespeare's religious convictions is once again upsetting the academic apple-cart and forcing a rethink of his work. The emerging truth is that the greatest dramatist in the English language had deeply-held Catholic convictions which inspired and shaped his art.

NAMA STORM

Like a passing thunderstorm NAMA is, as designed, rolling onwards; thundering now loudly, now faintly, into the distance; carrying with it the secrets of who really was borrowing what and from which banker. There has been some fallout, as in the occasional rain shower from a thundercloud but mostly the cloud is intact so to speak, and it will disappear rumbling gently over the horizon with the taxpayers' money.

It need not have been like that. The State was guaranteeing the smaller depositors up to €100,000 and that was enough. There was no need for the State (i.e. the taxpayers) to guarantee whole banks. The banks should have been left to the capitalist system which well knew how to deal with them. The banks were and are experts in dealing with defaulters. The State formerly had two banks, The Agricultural Credit Corporation and The Industrial Credit Company Ltd, but it sold them off years ago. The thing the State should have done in 2008 was to set up a new State Bank, so as to give credit to businesses and let the old Bank of Ireland, AIB and Anglo-Irish Bank rise or fall in the capitalist system. That was not done and now the Irish economy is in a shambles and will remain so far into the foreseeable future.

What can be done now and what must be done is for the State to stop borrowing to meet current expenditure. Why should the taxpayer be shoved deeper and deeper into debt to pay current expenditure we cannot afford? It has to stop. The money has run out and when the money has run out the only justification for continued spending is a prospective future increase in income. There is no realistic prospect of an increase in the State's income nor in Local Authority income. Logically, incomes all around will decrease for a few years as the economic bubble settles down and as some more jobs and incomes disappear. Then there will be some years of re-organising the economy and then there will be a long slow rise to a moderate level of economic activity. If ever the economy rises up to the levels of 1995 -2005 watch out! It means another bubble will inevitably burst upon us again.

BRIAN LENIHAN

Brian Lenihan was the fourth Minister for Finance—after Brian Cowen, Charles

McCreavy and Bertie Ahern—who followed the free-spending pseudo-economy theory that a State can spend its way out of a depression. A State can no more spend its way out of a depression than an unemployed person can spend their way into a job. When in 2006 and 2007, those in the know could see that the economy was going down they talked of a soft landing and their talk persuaded most people to look at their holiday sites while the Public Service looked after themselves, ably helped by that part of them that are the politicians. Enormous pay increases were taken. Huge expense accounts were maximised and great pensions were set up index-linked to continuing pay increases in that sector. Brian Lenihan continued the trend enthusiastically without any regard for the welfare of the economy or the taxpayers.

Maybe "enthusiastically" is not quite the right word. Brian Lenihan was a sick man, and he should never have been appointed by Brain Cowen and, even after the appointment, he should have resigned or been removed from the job when he was receiving life-saving medical treatment. Brian Cowen is an intelligent man and he knew what it takes and he wilfully put Brian Lenihan into the job and kept him there while the economy and the State finances and the banks collapsed.

After the Bank crises which broke into the public domain in September 2008, Brian Lenihan with the approval of the Cabinet guaranteed all the banks, pledging us all to virtual economic slavery for years to come and then some. And then nothing. There were days and weeks and months in 2009 and 2010 when nothing was done for Ireland. The people hoped—many now in increasing disbelief that something was being done behind the scenes but as we now know—*nothing was being done* except perhaps a botched cover-up. The Finance Minister, the Cabinet and the Dail and Seanad took the same Easter and Summer holidays as if no crises were happening. Brian Lenihan all this time, we were given to understand, was receiving treatment for his pancreatic cancer. And on those occasions when he did come into the Department of Finance, orders were placed before him to sign. Orders which authorised increases in wages and salaries and bonuses for senior public servants and senior executives in semi-State companies. Brian Lenihan confirmed recently that these salaries would have come before him for his signature but he says he cannot remember. Loss of memory has been a convenient pleading by Ministers since Jack Lynch used it about the arms imports in that so-called "Arms Crisis". And of course all this signing is strongly reminiscent of Bertie Ahern signing blank cheques which he did early on his career, and then of course not remembering!!

As a result of this awful mismanage-

ment—to use the mildest name for it—the State is now saddled with this enormous range of huge salaries. Some of them are twice what the Taoiseach earns. The head of An Post is on €500,000 a year and that is only one example. And pensions to match and so even if the situation was to be fixed today and retire them all, they would be hanging like an albatross around our necks for the next thirty or forty years on these enormous pensions. It was and is a con job done by the aforesaid four Ministers but hugely by Brian Lenihan—on the Irish taxpayer. And then, when they knew the game was up, Ireland was sold down the river to the ECB/IMF/EU in November 2010.

TURFCUTTERS

Would you fancy a day on the bog? In the months of May and June with the sun shining and the larks flying high overhead, the bees gently droning as they worked on the Marsh Gentians making honey—it has always been traditional to spend a few days on the bog, cutting turf for the next Winter's fires at the homestead. It was heavy man's work with the *sleán* but women and children of the family helped with footing the turf in neat rows to dry out. It was part of our culture. But no more. The EU has decreed that no more turf will be cut and the bogs are to be preserved. A tiny minority of urban dogooders have got their way after intruding into a rural way of life they wouldn't know if it hit them on the *fisóg*. The giant turf-cutting machines of Bord na Móna may have overdone the cutting but that sort of industrialised cutting was coming to an end in any event—the giant machines were running out of space. But why did the ban on turf-cutting have to apply to family turf-cutters using hand-held tools? Why does a culture have to be so needlessly destroyed?

The same EU reasoning was applied to fishing—just because giant trawlers (*not Irish*) were over-fishing, the EU banned all fishing—even small rowing boat fishermen! What an awful bureaucratic monster the EU is, crashing and blundering through *our country* in mindless destructiveness. Ah—I hear you ask—what about the rest of the EU? Well from my sailing experiences, I can tell you with absolute truth, having seen the evidence before my own eyes—the French, the Spanish and the Portuguese are all busily out every week-day with their little boats and are doing a roaring trade. So where is the EU handicapping system involved there? Let me further enlighten you and say that the EU *dare* not touch these fishermen because they have proper politicians who monitor any interference with their way of doing business. And try telling the French what they are *not* allowed to do and their ruthless response (which I so admire!) is to put everything on fire and scare the bejessus out of everyone.

The Turfcutters will be compensated in money. Is the money for the purpose of buying alternative fuel? Coal will add to Ireland's imports which again harms Ireland's economy. A re-run of the Irish sugar beet industry all over again—against our own interests we went for the import option because our politicians and yes—our farmers—were too short-sighted to think about our long-term future economic viability. Already we see from the Colm McCarthy Report that the sell-off of our Irish forests and bogs is going ahead. So it was never about conservation—was it? As Coillte and Bord na Mona—now to be amalgamated as 'BioEnergy' sell off our trees and peat, we will truly see the awful results of that ECB/IMF deal.

Before the last Election, the outgoing Government in the dying days of its remit—gave out licences to a number of multinational companies "to drill test bores searching for gas and oil deposits in the shale beds under various parts of our country". The new Government promised to rescind all these—stating that if we are a tourist-oriented economy, the very nature of such activity would kill our wholesome food/and wild landscape/seascape with one fell swoop. The Fine Gael/Labour Government seems now to be forgetting those promises and say they are hampered by deals already set in legal stone. There is no such thing as the latter—why don't they read our Constitution—it does not cover deals done by crooks and pick-pockets. They'd want to listen to the people or we'll be having our very own "Spring movement" one of these days.

Michael Stack ©

then from the Trade Unions—who also gave him employment for 11 years. Now that he is a man of means and has many friends who are men of means, he cheerfully spits on those who helped him in the past.

Prince Albert of Monaco recently visited Ireland. He was portrayed as an all-round nice person—never mind that he provides a tax haven for no end of shady customers. *The Irish Independent* [11th April] reported:

"Tánaiste and Foreign Affairs Minister Eamon Gilmore has insisted he did not know Prince Albert of Monaco attended a controversial dinner with Michael Lowry and Michael Fingleton during his visit to Ireland last week. The dinner took place in the K Club, which is owned by Dr Smurfit and is where Prince Albert usually stays when he comes to the country on private visits. Also on the guest list were disgraced TD Mr Lowry, the former Fine Gael minister officially reprimanded in the Dail the previous week following the Moriarty Tribunal report, and Mr Fingleton, the former Irish Nationwide chief."

The Croke Park Agreement is being opposed by senior executives in both the public and private sectors. In exchange for no reduction in pay and no compulsory redundancies, the Unions have agreed to a change in working practices and an acceptance of a reduction in staff through voluntary redundancies and natural wastage. These measures need active organisation at the top. This has not been forthcoming because the executives are attempting to sabotage the process. Here is what Foreign Affairs Minister, Labour's Pat Rabbitte, had to say about the matter:

"There have been opportunities during the boom—even opportunities when the unions were proffering changes that might profitably be made—and management in the public service were backward in coming forward. If they didn't come to the table and do their job in terms of devising smarter ways of working, devising changes that ought to be implemented, restructuring the working week, all that kind of thing, it would be very difficult for any minister to effect the changes that quite frankly we need" (Irish Times, 12th April).

Anti-Union. The same issue of the paper reported on the anti-union stance of local and foreign employers:

"Multinational companies and some of the country's largest indigenous employers will be forced to recognise unions under planned legislation. But employers' group IBEC claimed last night that thousands of jobs would be lost if the Government pushed through with the laws to make engaging with unions compulsory. Major multinational employers, such as Intel, prefer to deal directly with employees on staffing issues through employee representative associations, made up of employees rather than union officials.

"More than 140,000 workers are employed in foreign companies operating here and a further 100,000 workers are employed in jobs supporting these firms. An internal IBEC document, seen by the *Irish Independent*, has been drawn up in opposition to a measure in the new Programme for Government that could transform workplace negotiation. In the message, the employer's group warns that a 'rush towards the radical and dangerous direction' of collective bargaining with unions would turn foreign investors away and cost jobs." ♦

Editorial Digest

The South

Corporate donations to political parties and candidates are to be banned, according to the Kenny Coalition. After this announcement several people in the Labour Party were saying that this wouldn't and shouldn't apply to the Trade Unions. Then, on 7th April, Labour Leader Eamon Gilmore announced, it would seem unilaterally, that: "*Donations from trade unions will be included in that legislation. They will be treated as corporate donations. At the moment they account for only 5% of the Labour Party's income, though donations of about €2,500 to the campaign funds of union members standing can be a great help.*"

From now on, only individual donations will be allowed. But at least both Trade Union and corporate donations were traceable to definite interests. This is impossible with individual donations. In America, corporations give individual executives money to donate and no one knows where it is coming from. **A note on Gilmore.** He got where he is today partly through monies raised first by the Official IRA (many of whose members languished for years in jail as a result), and

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giving economic considerations determining weight in granting approval confers direct accountability on the decision making process.

Other recent approvals which have been taken in the Lisburn area contrary to strict planning policy—such as the Dobbins garden centre on the Saintfield Road and the hotel approval in the Green Belt at Hillhall Road—further emphasise how economic considerations are being given determining weight and further question any need for PPS 23 and PPS24.

CONCLUSION

The Labour Party contends that there is no need for these policies and that they will simply be used to override established planning policy as the norm, rather than the exception.

If determining economic weight is given to socially unacceptable and environmentally damaging developments, like some of those mentioned above, they will become more prevalent and more readily acceptable.

These proposed new policies will dilute standards of spatial planning, design and environmental protection. They will be used to strengthen the argument to retain damaging unauthorised developments where enforcement would otherwise have been appropriate and will introduce further inconsistency and lack of accountability into the decision making process.

The recently launched initiative to ensure the viability of ailing town centres —“*The Regional Manifesto for NI: Ulster Towns Speak with One Voice*”—will be immediately undermined if economic considerations become the decisive (and divisive) factor in allowing out of town shopping centres.

Ultimately the adoption of these unnecessary policies will further tip the balance in favour of the private developer and away from objectors, local communities, the wider public interest and the environment, particularly as there remains no right of third party appeal.

Please ensure that this submission is brought to the attention of the incoming Environment Committee.

Pat Muldowney

Naval Warfare

concluded

sador, “*we have a sick man on our hands, a man who is seriously ill; it will be a great misfortune if he escapes us one of these days, especially before all the arrangements are made*”.

The “*arrangements*” the Czar had in mind were for the sharing out of the Ottoman Empire by the European Powers, with Constantinople going to himself. But England was most unwilling to see the Russians down at Constantinople and, instead of a sharing of Ottoman spoils, they went to war in the Crimea with Russia.

Urquhart thought that the Turks were more than a match for the Russians, both on land and sea, but he felt that the Turkish Navy had been prevented by the British from rescuing a fleet of Turkish ships at Sinope, which was subsequently destroyed by the Imperial Russian Navy in the Black Sea.

This event had the effect of justifying British intervention in the conflict and led to British and French occupation of the Gallipoli peninsula. Urquhart wondered why, if there was really a war with Russia being fought, the main concentration of forces was not directed at Sevastopol. And he saw the subsequent conflict that developed in the Crimea as something of an afterthought and a *charade*.

Urquhart pointed to the fact that Britain refused to deploy its naval might against Russia to end the war quickly—as it had always done in the past. Considerable damage could have been done to Russia, and she would have been bankrupted very quickly if the Royal Navy had been given its steam. However, inexplicably, trade was allowed to persist between English merchants and Russia and Russian commerce went about its business through its own and neutral shipping unhindered by the British Fleet.

Urquhart believed that England and France combined to establish a foothold at Constantinople using the Russian threat as an excuse. But, in combining, they signed the Declaration of Paris to protect themselves against each other and maintain their lucrative trades with Russia. This was because, both realised that this was a war of convenience and that either party might suddenly desert the other and ally with the Russians instead. This prompted Lord Hebbert to say “*we were in accord with our enemy but not with our ally*”.

For Urquhart this desire to protect their lucrative commerce was the real reason behind the betrayal at Paris of maritime power that was disastrous for France in 1871 and would be disastrous to England in the future.

Pat Walsh

REPORT

Sinn Fein pulled off something of a coup by having the following motion debated in the Dáil on 17th May, the day the Queen of England arrived in Ireland. The motion repeated an earlier motion which the Dáil passed in July 2008, and it was again passed unanimously

Dáil Motion on Dublin-Monaghan bombings

MOTION

That Dáil Éireann, recalling the motion it adopted unanimously on 10 July 2008 which

- noted “the interim and final reports of the sub-Committee of the Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women’s Rights on the report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry into the Dublin-Monaghan Bombings and the three related Barron Reports, including the Inquiry into the Bombing of Kay’s Tavern, Dundalk, and commends the sub-Committee for its work”;

- urged “the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to allow access by an independent, international judicial figure to all original documents held by the British Government relating to the atrocities that occurred in this jurisdiction and which were inquired into by Judge Barron, for the purposes of assessing said documents with the aim of assisting in the resolution of these crimes”;

- and directed “the Clerk of the Dáil to communicate the text of this Resolution, together with copies of the aforementioned reports, to the House of Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, with a request that the matter be considered by the House of

Commons”;

- notes that no action has been taken on this matter by the British Government and calls directly upon the British Government to comply with the request of Dáil Éireann and mandates An Taoiseach Enda Kenny to press this matter with the British Prime Minister David Cameron.

Gerry Adams, Michael Colreavy, Seán Crowe, Pearse Doherty, Dessie Ellis, Martin Ferris, Pádraig Mac Lochlainn, Mary Lou McDonald, Sandra McLellan, Jonathan O’Brien, Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, Aengus Ó Snodaigh, Brian Stanley, Peadar Tóibín.

Ó SNOIDAIGH

Releasing news on the motion on 13th May, Aengus Ó Snodaigh said:

“...This motion reiterates the all-party resolution of 10th July 2008 which called on the British Government to release all files relating to the Dublin and Monaghan bombings. It is widely believed that this attack, involving the greatest loss of life of any incident in the conflict, was carried out with the involvement of British intelligence.

“To date no action has been taken despite the motion receiving unanimous backing from all parties and it is for this reason that we are taking the opportunity to restate that call and are urging An Taoiseach Enda Kenny to press this matter directly with British Prime Minister David Cameron.

“With the Queen of England having been invited to visit the State on the anniversary of the bombings it will be rightly seen by many to be insensitive and offensive. The Government were very quick to issue the invitation which we would see as premature. However they must now use the opportunity to speak directly to the British Queen and David Cameron when he arrives on Wednesday and urge them to release the files relating to the bombings....”

NICC MOTION

PRESS RELEASE

Private Agenda In Northern Economy

The Northern Ireland Constituency Council approved the following motion, to be submitted to the 64th Conference of the Labour Party, to be held on April 16-18 at Galway University

MOTION

Conference notes with concern, the fact that despite the Northern Ireland Assembly having the opportunity to use the 10 year Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2008-2018 (ISNI), with planned expenditure of £20bn for infrastructure projects, to tackle the damage done by the economic recession, it has ceded its democratic role, to the unelected Strategic Investment Board. This body, established as a company limited by guarantee and sponsored by the Office of the First and Deputy First Ministers, represents the narrow interests of the private sector and remains wedded to the discredited dogma of Privatisation and the Public Finance Initiative/Public Private Partnership (PFI/PPP) approach to delivery of public services. Conference calls on the NI Assembly parties to re-examine the priorities in the Programme for Government in line with the particular demands of the current economic crisis and to implement the Investment Strategy in a manner that best benefits the local economy and which factors in the added value of elements such as ensuring sustainability by improving the skills base through apprenticeships and appropriate training.

NICC Submission

PRESS RELEASE

IRISH LABOUR PARTY RESPONSE TO DRAFT PPS 23 AND PPS 24

INTRODUCTION

NICC submission to the Northern Ireland Assembly on planning policy

The Labour Party wishes to register its strong opposition to the introduction of *PPS 23—Enabling Development and PPS24—Economic Considerations*. We contend that these proposed policies are devised solely to enable development that would normally be unacceptable in planning, social and environmental terms.

The first is a charter for developers to buy planning permission. Both of them fundamentally undermine existing planning policies aimed at ensuring orderly social and spatial development and

environmental protection.

These policies are short sighted and will pose a real threat to the longer term economic recovery of Northern Ireland by eroding our social, cultural, built and natural heritage assets. Furthermore, the facility already exists for Ministers and Planning Service to take decisions based on economic considerations, and there are many recent examples, some of which are given below and many of which represent poor planning decisions.

These factors alone should stand as a warning to the public on the dangers of introducing these new planning policies. Why are such policies actually required if the Department is already able to give determining weight to economic considerations in decision making and is actively employing this tool?

The answer clearly lies in a purely political desire to ensure that decision making will be based on prioritising economic considerations over other established planning policies. The purpose is to make these considerations the norm rather than the exception.

This should give the public and those elected and charged with looking after its interests real cause for concern.

CONTEXT

The promotion of these PPS's represents the latest step in a concerted attempt by successive DUP Ministers to undermine and unduly influence established planning policies in favour of private developers, usually at the expense of the wider public interest and environment.

The shameless lobbying of Environment Minister Wilson on behalf of private developers and his public criticism of his own Planning Service staff for daring to refuse developments such as the Aurora Building in Belfast, set the scene for the direction now being actively pursued by his successor, Minister Poots.

It was widely acknowledged that the Aurora development, if approved, would have had a damaging impact on the socially deprived local community of Sandy Row, failed to respect the setting of the adjoining listed building, and failed to meet the standard of accommodation set by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Yet the Minister of the Environment still attempted to bully his staff into granting permission.

Setting aside the fact that NIHE would not have been able to house any of its clients in the building because the level of accommodation to be provided did not meet its standards, we understand that the developer refused point blank to recognise that there was an identified housing need in the area.

We understand too that, with the support of the Minister, he attempted to shirk his obligations under *PPS 12—Housing in Settlements* by placing economic argu-

ments above achieving balanced communities, not to mention all the other serious breaches of planning policy and damage which approval of this development would have caused.

First Minister Robinson's active support for permitting development of the Knock Golf Club site, a protected Green Belt, further demonstrates this party's eagerness to set aside strict planning and environmental controls in favour of development irrespective of the long term consequences.

The introduction of these proposed planning policies, PPS23 and PPS24, would make it much easier to force through such development and its questionable public benefits upon a community clearly and vehemently opposed to such a proposal. The fact that the Department was pushing ahead with this approval further emphasises that the facility already exists to give economic considerations determining weight, without having to introduce new policies to make it easier to undermine established planning policy and the public's voice.

In May 2009, when lobbying failed, Minister Wilson railroaded through an ill-conceived Ministerial Statement aimed at giving economic considerations precedence over established planning policies. However, embarrassingly for the Minister, a subsequent legal challenge quashed this Statement, declaring it illegal, and once again thwarting the DUP's attempts to ensure that private economic interests could ride rough shod over wider public and environmental concerns.

No doubt the costs of the ensuing judicial review, which went against the DOE, were picked up by the Northern Ireland tax payer!

Recently Minister Poots rashly claimed that it was no secret he was "*the developers' friend*" and his avid promotion of PPS23 and PPS24 would seem to indicate that this is indeed the case. However, as mentioned above, there has always been and there continues to be scope for either the Minister or the Planning Service to overturn a planning decision if he/it is persuaded that the economy is the determining factor in allowing established planning policy to be set aside.

Just as Minister Wilson, if only he had the courage of his own convictions, could have taken the decision to approve the Aurora Building rather than attempt to coerce his staff into a measure that would have had significant adverse repercussions for the local area and for Belfast as a whole.

The Minister's very recent decision to allow the largest ever Tesco supermarket outside Banbridge underlines the fact that economic considerations can be used to determine planning applications without the need for new planning policy. Without going into the planning argument surrounding this case, at least the current method of

continued on page 30



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Comment

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Ulster, the next *Paradis fiscal*

by

Mark Langhammer

Thirty years ago, living in La Rochelle, I came across the quaint French term '*Paradis Fiscal*'. Loosely translated, it means *Tax Haven*. The next Assembly aims to provide the Ulster business sector's '*silver bullet*' of reduced, 12.5% Corporation Tax rates. Under the nomenclature "*Enterprise Zone*" this provides for *Paradis Fiscal* status, supported by all Executive parties including, oddly, Martin McGuinness's Sinn Fein.

The world contains several main tax haven 'blocs'. First, a European zone including Switzerland, Monaco, Luxembourg, Lichtenstein, Andorra, Portuguese Madeira and the Netherlands, where Bono — whilst berating western taxpayers to boost African aid—shifted his tax affairs. America conducts a second sphere of influence, operating at Federal and wider levels. Delaware, Nevada and Wyoming are all low-cost secrecy havens. Florida traditionally offers banking shelter to Latin America's oligarchs and financial elites. From the US Virgin Islands, Marshall Islands and Liberia reaching to Panama forms an outer ring under US protection.

The third, and main, tax haven bloc radiates from the City of London.

For many years, the City's financiers have facilitated industrial scale tax evasion. Barack Obama identified the 34 worst offending tax havens in sponsoring the 2008 Stop Tax Haven Abuse Bill presented to US Congress. Nine are under direct British control, such as Anguilla, Bermuda, Virgin Islands, Cayman, Gibraltar, Isle of Man and Jersey. A further fifteen are former colonies where British influence remains strong such as Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cyprus, Malta, Dominica, Grenada, Hong Kong and Singapore. The City remains the true epicentre of empire. Northern Ireland will be next to join. The surprise is that McGuinness, who knows this in his bones, has been seduced by such economic Redmondism.

The UK tax gap tops £120 billion per annum in tax evaded, avoided and uncollected. Most is by super-wealthy individuals and global corporations. Some avoidance is legal, but only in the sense that slavery, or apartheid, were legal. Retrieving even half this tax would, alone, transform the UK deficit problem.

The evidence of low Irish Corporation Tax is that "*brass plate*" companies are enticed, but simply to do behind Dublin Georgian doors what they can't do at home. "*Lichtenstein on the Liffey*", Vince Cable called it. The ICTU's research document "*Pot of Gold or Fools Gold*" demonstrates that financial or "*portfolio*" investment in the Republic vastly outweighed productive inward investment.

Our '*Enterprise Zone*' may artificially induce transactions to Belfast. It is less likely to assist indigenous growth. Fly-by-night companies, with no intention of creating real jobs, may set up glass suites in Titanic Quarter. They will solely park profits before moving them swiftly to other tax havens. Head Offices may

transfer here, but with no employment other than for jobbing solicitors and accountants. Artificial transactions, like 'repackaging of goods' (with minimal labour content) will shift profit to and from Northern Ireland. The tax avoiding companies likely to locate here are risky businesses, beside which de-Lorean would seem innocent.

And the evidence? The Varney Report has rubbished the notion, as has Tax Research UK. Only 4% of Northern Ireland companies pay the current 28% rate. The Azores judgement makes implementation high-risk for the Executive. No job creation arguments or criteria have been articulated for the policy. The Economic Reform Group is the main strong supporter. Likewise, the large accountancy firms, all implicated in the 'legal' tax avoidance game, have voiced strong support. As Mandy Rice-Davies might have said, "*They would say that, wouldn't they?*".

And if the tax take reduces, who pays? The PAYE sector, the "*squeezed middle*", including those whom I represent—teachers, classroom assistants, librarians, and technicians.

The most important feature of tax secrecy jurisdictions is always the same—that local politics is captured by financial services. Our politicians should concentrate on closing loopholes—not opening new avenues for evasion. It's time for Martin McGuinness and colleagues to reconsider *Paradis Fiscal* status for the North.

Mark Langhammer is a member of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

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