

# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

May 2017

Vol.32, No.5 ISSN 0790-7672

and **Northern Star** incorporating **Workers' Weekly** Vol.31 No.5 ISSN 954-5891

## May's June Election!

It is evident that Mark Durkan dearly wished to be a British politician. He has the style of a *House of Commons Man*—as had his great predecessor, Joe Devlin. But, although he has been sitting in the Commons for many years, and has occasionally been called on to make a thoughtful intervention as if he belonged, he did not belong. He has always been politely marginalised as an outsider.

A precondition for being a British politician is to be a member of a British political party—Tory, Labour, Liberal, or SNP. If you hold a seat which one of those parties might win from you, that makes you a British politician. If you don't, that makes your Westminsterism futile from the viewpoint of your constituency.

Westminsterism has been a fetish of 'Constitutional nationalism'—which, in fact, has never been Constitutional in the sense of participating in the political life of the Constitution. It has only been pacifist. It has pursued an anti-Constitutional aim—that of removing the Six Counties from the sphere of the British Constitution and transferring them to the Republic—by means of debating points. Its fundamentalist commitment to pacifism, regardless of circumstances, meant that the politicians of the Constitution needed to pay no heed to it.

Brexit appears to have had the effect of bringing this point home to the guardian of Constitutional nationalism, the *Irish News*. It anticipates, in a most relaxed manner, that the surprise Westminster Election will bring gains to Sinn Fein and losses to the SDLP. Abstentionism is no longer a great issue for it in the Brexit era.

The same cannot be said for Fianna Fail, however which, under instruction from Stickie Eoghan Harris, continues to brandish Sinn Fein's unConstitutionalism as a stick. A spokesman had accused Sinn Fein of being powerless over Brexit. He notes the strong opposition to Brexit of Michaelle O'Neill, Sinn Fein's Northern leader, and asks whether her candidates will—

"actually show up and speak and vote against these measures or continue to simply claim expenses from Westminster and use the facilities there?"

*continued on page 2*

## Marian Finucane On The British Wavelength

For anyone following the Brexit Irish angle the two-hour Marion Finucane radio programme on Sunday 2nd April was interesting. Finucane is very pro-British and is now critical of the EU,

There were two parts to the Brexit discussion: one with a panel talking about topical issues and one with Declan Kelleher, Ireland's permanent representative to the EU, and two other guests.

In the first part I found the contribution

of Patricia King (General Secretary Irish Congress of Trade Unions) most interesting. She questioned the term '*Brexit ready*' and said that not enough was being done regarding employment that would be under threat. Investment Funds would need to be set up so that those losing their jobs could be re-skilled. That was what you would expect from a Trade Unionist but later she said that the EU's future was uncertain, that it might fall apart. That line suited the Finucane agenda very well. If

## Brexit And Michael Collins!

Fintan O'Toole writes that—

"Brexit is England's Easter Rising—an unlikely event that allows a zealous minority to change the course of a nation's history. But who, then, will be England's Michael Collins? The grand gesture of national self-assertion must be followed, eventually, by a painful reconciliation with reality. After the rapture comes the reckoning. After their glorious resurrections, nation states do not actually ascend into heaven—they come back to Earth. Guiding that descent is the greatest test of political skill, of moral courage and of genuine patriotism... Michael Collins had to come down from the mountaintop of nationalist fervour and say: sorry, but this is the best deal we can get in the real world. He had to face down men with guns who could—and did—kill him" (Irish Times, 28.3.'17).

As Fintan might know, timing is everything in politics. When and how something is done is just as important as what is done. Things happen only in real time. Journalists and commentators tend to be oblivious to this because they have an inherent problem with it. Things have to have happened to be reported and they

*continued on page 4*

political action is to be on the basis that the EU is falling apart, that will place Ireland back in the UK camp.

Another panelist on the show, Lord Henry Mountcharles, tried to be diplomatic but was careful to say that an Irish exit from the EU should not be ruled out. At another point in the discussion *Irish Times* Political Correspondent Harry McGee referred to the long-standing anti EU stance of Anthony Coughlan to loud support from Finucane. Marion Finucane

*continued on page 2*

## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>May's June Election!</b> . Editorial	1
<b>Brexit And Michael Collins.</b> Jack Lane on Fintan O'Toole's strange notion	1
<b>Marian Finucane On The British Wavelength.</b> Dave Alvey	1
<b>Readers' Letters: Casement Diaries: Archival Realities.</b> Tim O'Sullivan	3
<b>North Korea Offensive.</b> Editorial	3
<b>Stakeknife: Under Cover!</b> . Wilson John Haire (Book Review)	6
<b>A Seminar On Haughey.</b> Dave Alvey	7
<b>The Remaking Of Hubert Butler.</b> Julianne Herlihy (Part One)	9
<b>Doing Without A National Identity.</b> Desmond Fennell	10
<b>Brexit: Supermac's vs McDonalds.</b> Editorial	10
<b>Getting Casement backwards.</b> Tim O'Sullivan (Part Two)	11
<b>A Second Round Of The Irish Brexit Debate.</b> Dave Alvey	12
<b>Trois: Ah! Ne me brouillez pas avec la République!</b> Pat Walsh (Part 3 of series on Andre Siegfried)	15
<b>Biteback: Brexit And A Snap Election.</b> Dave Alvey, <i>Irish Political Review Group</i>	19
<b>Shite And Onions.</b> Donal Kennedy	19
<b>Does It Stack Up?</b> Michael Stack (Electric Cars; Flooding; Mediaeval Ireland and Religion; Cork Cranes in \$130m Puerto Rico venture)	20
<b><i>Labour Comment</i>, edited by Pat Maloney:</b>	
<u>Democracy v. The Dollar!</u> (back page)	
<u>What Happened At Glen?</u> (page 22)	
<u>Reflections On Irish Labour Party Conference</u> (page 21)	

He goes on to suggest that—

"The SNP does not want Scotland to be ruled from London and opposes a hard Brexit and Conservative austerity policies, but is far more effective by putting forward its views in the chamber of the House of Commons."

And concludes:

"Given that Sinn Féin has changed its attitude to the European Union, surely a similar change to actually voting and being counted when decisions affecting this island at Westminster are being taken is now warranted?" (Cllr. Malcolm Byrne, *Irish Times* 22.4.17).

The jury is still out as to whether a majority in Scotland is serious about independence. The country is part of not only the British body politic—with both Tory and Labour serious about winning representation there—but also of the essential Britain in a way that Ireland never was: there was no equivalent to Balmoral, at which the Royals Christmas-ed ever year, in Ireland.

But, apart from that, it is hard to see all

the "effective" opposition to Brexit by the Scots Nats and others making the slightest difference to Britain's intentions in that regard. Certainly, the few extra anti-Brexit MPs from Northern Ireland are of no consequence.

Fianna Fail has long skated around organising in Northern Ireland. It established a couple of branches but has baulked at contesting elections. It is our view that a major disincentive to doing so is that a successful intervention would bring Fianna Fail up against the issue of taking their seats in Westminster.

The Party has gone dodgy over when the Irish Constitution came into force, taking the Treaty Dail as the starting point—as opposed to the views of its founders who would have looked back to 1916 and the 1918 Election. Could it also renege on the basic policy of the founders of the Irish state—abstention from the British Parliament: the policy of Sinn Fein in the 1918 Election.

One wonders why De Valera, Arthur Griffith, Cosgrave, Collins and the other

MPs elected in 1918 on an Abstentionist platform did not realise the value of, as Councillor Byrne says, "*actually voting and being counted when decisions affecting this island at Westminster are being taken!*"

\*

During the month Kieran Conway of Dublin, formerly an active Provo, latterly a dissident from the Peace Process, who has now purportedly retired to private life and given up interest in all that kind of thing, appeared on BBC Radio Four's *Today* programme to say that the Provos were defeated in the War. That was on the morning of April 11th. In the evening BBC's *Panorama* was all about Stakeknife and the success of the British Army in penetrating the IRA and disrupting it from the inside.

Officialdom in the South denies that there was any Northern Ireland War—or, alternatively, if there was, it says that the IRA was defeated. That is the anti-Treaty viewpoint. And also the Treaty viewpoint. If the War was about the Treaty, the IRA did not win. And, from a Southern viewpoint, what else could it have been about but the Treaty? What else was there for it to be about?

This journal originated in West Belfast just as the War was about to begin in 1970. It began out of the defensive insurrection of 1969 that had nothing to do with the Treaty or Pearse's ghost. It was all about the communal suppression of the nationalist community under the Northern Ireland arrangement. What was said about Partition was that it was irrelevant.

At a later stage, there was intervention by anti-Treaty politics from the South. It was a useful intervention, because the particularity of the Northern situation had never been clearly articulated—except perhaps on a couple of occasions by the *Capuchin Annual*. Rory O'Brady provided political orientation of a general kind while the forces generated directly out of the Northern situation were gaining coherence. Around the mid-1980s those forces took command of themselves and felt their way towards an interim settlement on the ground on which the insurrection had begun.

So the anti-Treaties can say that the War was lost because Northern Ireland still exists. But anti-Treatyism could never have given rise to the War that was latent in the Northern Ireland situation from the start. And the community that sustained the War knows that it won—that the terms of the Northern Ireland system have been changed fundamentally in its favour. And

this has been done without prejudice to united Ireland ambitions.

The prospects for an ending of Partition on Irish terms are indisputably much better now than they were before the War.

Northern Ireland is not a viable state. It is not a state at all. It was, and remains, an undemocratically governed region of the British state.

Unionism repudiates British politics.  
Sinn Fein pioneers Irish politics.

Northern Ireland, inherently unstable in itself, can only find stability within the democratic life of either the British or the Irish state.

Since Unionism refused to contemplate a British political existence, the only other way to go is Irish.

The *Irish Times*, under new Editor Paul O'Neill, says (18.4.17):

"Sinn Fein and the DUP have only a few weeks left to prove to the Irish and British governments and indeed to the voters of Northern Ireland that they deserve to be taken seriously as grown-up politicians"

—which is an infantile comment.

Northern Ireland can never settle down to be something in itself. It was set up to be a front organisation within the British state serving a British purpose against nationalist Ireland. Nationalist politicians within it who take it to be a stable and substantial political entity in which "normal politics" might develop, demonstrate that they are not grown up.

It has always been governed in substance by Britain, behind the local political facade. Anyone who has lived in the North for an appreciable length of time must know that.

The mischievous facade has served British interests well as a disruptive element in the political life of nationalist Ireland. Whether it will continue to serve it well in the Brexit situation remains to be determined.

Sinn Fein is fighting the June election on an anti-Hard Brexit ticket and hopes to bring in votes from outside its traditional hinterland.

Its stance as the leading force in the North which is opposed to the departure from the EU has already brought it new friends, North and South—including in the Irish Establishment. The question in the June election will be how much its position will be strengthened.

## Casement Diaries: Archival Realities

In his latest response (*Irish Political Review*, April 2017) Paul Hyde fails to faithfully represent the position I outlined in my letter (*Irish Political Review*, Mar 2017). Let interested readers of the *Irish Political Review* make their own judgements.

That a typescript copy was shown to Rev. Harris in 1916 (something nobody contests), does not exclude the possibility other material was put before his gaze in addition to it.

In passing it is worth noting that archives are not immutable but change over time as what was classified or lost or forgotten becomes available. Private collections and old attics can conceal startling revelations. This is one reason why basing a historical thesis on what is currently *NOT* in the known archives can be unwise, as well as reckless. If valid negating material comes to light, one ends up as the tabloids describe it; 'red-faced'.

Hyde in his letter goes on to claim (no quotation cited) that an internal 1950s British Civil Service document "confirms that the photographs made and shown were also of typescript materials"

He further claims: "Nor has he (or anyone else) produced any evidence of the existence of the volumes at that time."

Yet, as mentioned already (*Irish Political Review*, Jan. 2017) a telegram to Washington naval attaché, Captain Gaunt, dated 29 June 1916 stated: "Photographic facsimile & transcript of Casement's diary of which you have, no doubt, already heard is being sent to America by today's mail..." (Foreign Office Archive: TNA FO 395/43)

After the execution, John Quinn, an Irish-American lawyer and friend of Casement, viewed the photographic facsimile at the Embassy. On August 22nd Gaunt wrote to London describing his reaction. He quoted Quinn: "I declare this to be the handwriting of the late Roger Casement" (Scotland Yard MEPO 2/10664). Quinn went on to write to Gavan Duffy (Casement's trial solicitor) describing how "the handwriting looked like" Casement's (National Library of Ireland MS 17603).

Enough said.

Tim O'Sullivan

## North Korea Offensive

North Korea is the last of the Cold War states—that is, the last of the states left behind by Britain's Second World War: that is, the war on Germany that Britain declared in 1939, expanded into a World War by use of its Navy when defeated in battle in 1940, and then left to others to fight.

The war that began as a war on Germany by Britain and France was changed into a war by Russia and the United States against Germany, and against each other when they had defeated Germany.

The American war on Russia could not be fought head-on. The American war on Japan was, in its concluding phase, a war of mass annihilation waged on the Japanese civilian population with nuclear weapons. It was unable to practice that mode of warfare against Russia, as many eminent lovers of freedom desired, because Russia quickly became capable of making its own nuclear weapons. The world was

therefore stabilised in 1948 in the form it took when the American and Russian Armies met in their wars against Germany and Japan in the Summer of 1945.

The line where the two Armies met in their wars against Germany and Japan became the Cease-fire lines in the war that American did not dare to launch on Russia. One part of that line ran through Korea. That is why there were two German states for 45 years and why there are still two Korean states.

The Cold War ended when the Soviet regime in Russia turned against itself in the Gorbachov era and rejected the principles on which it was based. The states east of the 1945 Ceasefire line, which were maintained by Soviet power, then crumbled and the Western system took over in them. Yugoslavia did not crumble because it was Communist under its own power, and not as a Soviet dependency. It was destroyed by the fostering of extreme nationalism within it by the EU and NATO.

It was expected that North Korea would crumble as East Germany had crumbled. It was depicted as a barren territory, incompetently governed, in which a lunatic minority kept itself in power by means of Stalinist terror, and that it would collapse when all around it changed. But it hasn't collapsed. And now America is threatening to destroy it because it has developed nuclear weapons—but is fearful of attacking it for the same reason.

We have no inside knowledge of North Korea. Maybe the Irish Labour Party has. It was run for a generation by the Official IRA which had/has North Korean connections.

But, as to "*Stalinist terror*" being the means by which the North Korean regime sustains itself: that terror was operated by the masses rather than against them. It was a medium of mass cultural and economic development. That fact is now being half-acknowledged by academic 'social science' in which the term "*mass dictatorship*" has been noticeable in recent years.

The notion that the masses were passive victims of a system of terror operated against them by a small minority with guns, and that they were frightened by that masterful handful of terrorists into doing the remarkable things that they did in the Soviet Union, is too childish to pass muster, now that the Western Cold War mobilisation of a kindergarten mentality for an Apocalypse no longer has a point.

The World War that Britain brought about, but failed to direct towards any settlement that was in accordance with its origins, brought about a division of the world into two fundamentalist systems. The fundamentalism of the West was absolute, unconditional. Its watchword at the critical moment, in 1963 was *Better dead than Red*. It was apparently willing to launch nuclear war if Russia placed nuclear weapons close to its borders—as it had done to Russian borders.

Its view was that life would not be worth living unless its own way of life prevailed. And this view was entirely in accordance with the value system by which the United States had established itself over three centuries. That value system was frankly asserted by Jefferson over two centuries ago. It was re-asserted bluntly by Obama in his testament. The USA is the only indispensable nation.

The brief moment when a mere businessman won the White House on a policy of abrogating the *Manifest Destiny*,

and seemed intent on letting the world be, has passed.

The existence of North Korea is being called into question on the ground that it has been developing the means of defending itself and is therefore dangerous. Voltaire's satirical remark is now the simple truth: "*This animal is dangerous. When attacked it defends itself*".

In 1963 China, with its superabundant population, wanted to put the USA to the test and discover if it really would prefer to be dead than make a deal with the Reds. Chinese civilisation was there before Europe was thought of, and would still be there when the nuclear dust settled. But it was Russia that was calling the shots in 1963.

If the Manifest Destiny requires war on North Korea, it will be a war with China. And that war will have nothing to do with the inescapable conflict of fundamentally antagonistic world systems brought about by the World War. It will just be a working out of the New England colonisation—whose victims have never been counted.

North Korea is generally referred to as a Stalinist hold-out whose survival defies reason. One book about it is called *The Impossible State*.

It is not Stalinist: that ideology was a working out of Leninism. Leninism had no belief-content for the masses. It was a means of handling the masses in a process of capitalist modernisation without a capitalist class. It did not, in the first instance, represent a Russian working class. It created a working class, and involved it in its own further creation after a start was made.

But its distinctive culture was social analysis—and objective analysis, which may be satisfying in struggle within capitalist society, loses much of its effectiveness as culture when there is no longer a capitalist class to be struggled against.

It appears that Stalin saw this and discreetly allowed considerable freedom to the Orthodox Church.

In North Korea there seems to have been an effective combination of elements of the Stalin system with Confucianism and local Korean traditions, under a general commitment to comprehensive self-sufficiency.

There also seems to have been an extensive development of an internal market which is disconnected from the world market. An arrangement of this kind was envisaged in the early 19th century by Johann Gottlieb Fichte, the philosopher of both human rights and

German nationalism, in *The Closed Commercial State*.

Life as a consumer within the world market is the only life worth living—that is not only an American conviction. It has been played back from America to Europe. It was not a conviction of the EU in its origins but it became so under British tuition. The EU is now having serious problems as a consequence—If the impending European elections go strongly in the nationalist direction, it might be that it will not seem necessary to reduce North Korea to chaos. But that seems unlikely.

## Brexit And Collins

continued

try to report them in such a way as to indicate that they always knew what was going to happen because of what has just happened. Then they are all-knowing. They even seem to convince themselves and give the impression that they can predict events.

But the timing of their knowledge makes such impressions just plain silly. They report, others do. Somebody has pointed out that our economic journalists have predicted nine of the last three recessions.

Fintan does not tell us when exactly Collins had his 'road to Damascus' experience, coming down from his "*mountaintop*" about what was possible and not possible and how he then acted on this experience. And these are the crucial facts when judging him. Many people led by de Valera realised that independence could take different forms, based on his concept of External Association, which occurred to him one morning "*while putting on his bootlaces*" and which he put forward at the beginning of the negotiations on 27th July 1921.

To use Fintan's parlance, De V had come down from his "*mountaintop*" when the Truce and talks were arranged, and even before that in the USA when he referred to the Cuba model. But this never involved an abandonment of independence.

The Dáil that accepted the so-called '*Treaty*' thereby abolished itself and its independence, as the terms of those "*Articles of Agreement*" made perfectly clear. Insofar as pure 'rights' matter the TDs had no right to do that. No more than the present Dáil has the right to abolish itself. As de Valera quite rightly said of such situations: "*The majority has no right to do wrong*".

The moment when Collins showed his hand—by *not* showing his hand—was the Cabinet meeting of Saturday, 3rd December 1921. Griffith made the case for accepting what was on offer—Dominion status. But Collins did not support him. This was the moment when he should have said "sorry, but this is the best deal we can get in the real world" but he did not and never did—despite Fintan's bland assertion. That left the Cabinet with no alternative but to order continuation of negotiations to seek a better deal and to report back to the Cabinet on what was offered. All agreed on that, as all seemed to accept that Cabinet unity was essential to get the best deal possible and avoid any split.

But Collins by his actions—in not joining the Irish delegation when they met the British the next day, Sunday, and instead having a separate meeting with Lloyd George on Monday, the 5th, at which he did his own deal—thereby betrayed his Cabinet. What he agreed with Lloyd George is what he should have proposed two days earlier at the Cabinet meeting—and there had been no earth-shattering developments over the weekend to justify his change of stance. And, even if there had been such a thing, and if he had any appreciation at all of the concept of *Cabinet responsibility*, he should have informed the Cabinet of his new agreement with Lloyd George and thereby forced it to implicate itself with him in accepting or rejecting it.

Whatever position the Cabinet took would have avoided the type of split that occurred. Come what may, its members would be 'all in it together'—to coin a phrase. But he did not involve the Cabinet, and instead maximised any possible split by his behaviour—and the rest is history.

Ronan Fanning in his pompous silliness puts the consequences down to de Valera's 'petulance' and a myriad hacks have duly followed him in this. This shows no appreciation of the reality that Collins had created.

Why did Collins act like this? There can be a host of reasons proposed from the benign to the despicable but there is no doubt about the outcome—a split in the Cabinet when its members had to learn from the press of the agreement he had made and signed.

Fintan is right to mention '*moral courage*': he credits Collins with it, but it is precisely what he did *not* have when and where it mattered—in his role as a leading member of the Cabinet.

Lloyd George would not have got where he got to—starting from nowhere—

without being a shrewd judge of people, their strengths and weaknesses. Their weaknesses being his well-developed speciality. And it is noteworthy that he pinpointed the same issue regarding Collins.

Between delivering his ultimatum and the signing of the so-called '*Treaty*' he celebrated his victory by dining with his Private Secretary, Geoffrey Shakespeare, who recorded him being—

"...in a mood of suppressed excitement... one significant remark made by Lloyd George as he was leaving I shall always remember. 'If only Michael Collins' he said, 'has as much moral courage as he has physical courage, we shall get a settlement. But moral courage is a much higher quality than physical courage, and it is a quality brave men often lack' ("*Let the candles be brought in*", 1949).

Lloyd George's test of Collins's moral courage at that point was whether he would succeed in browbeating the members of the delegation who were reluctant to sign. (The British insisted on unanimity.) In the circumstances, it did not entail much moral courage to bow to the threats of the most powerful person in the world. That is the kind of moral courage that Fintan credits Collins with. He is damning Collins, if he only realised it, by praising him for immoral courage.

Collins did not have "*to face down men with guns who could—and did—kill him*" at Cabinet meetings. But he could not or would not deign to try to persuade them of what he actually believed and from this duplicity all else followed.

Fintan gives us a Collins and a history for simpletons or the nursery—with no disrespect to the latter. A morality play that does not tax the brain too much. Such indeed is his view of life in general, given a weekly outing in the *Irish Times*. But real life is much more interesting.

The only good thing that has come out of the Collins débâcle is that Adams and McGuinness learned the right lessons. In other words, Collins is a good example of how *not* to do things in government.

As for the fantasy of a Michael Collins appearing to save Britain from itself, there has first to be the emergence of a European Lloyd George whom he could help to whip Britain into line. Angela Merkel is hardly a candidate for that role—even Fintan's fantasising could not reach to that.

Jack Lane

## Marian Finucane

continued

is a very experienced and skilful broadcaster. Her approach was subtle. "*Ireland shouldn't be afraid to break the EU rules. We've been saints in Europe for too long and look where that got us during the crash. We should be brave enough to step out of line*". That is exactly the approach that Britain would like Ireland to be taking.

Later on, when Declan Kelleher was being questioned he was mostly all things to all men but at one point he made it clear that the EU should not be seen as an alien institution. Finucane became quite strident in impressing on the diplomat that it is not in Ireland's interest that the EU should be hostile to the UK. When Kelleher said something about us having a good relationship with the EU she interrupted him to say we had a good relationship with Britain.

The other guests in that part of the show, Lucinda Creighton and Lisa O'Carroll, were also interesting. O'Carroll was quite skilled at putting a line that her employer would have approved of, that Ireland should cherry pick and be a 'unique cherry picker'.

Marion Finucane's carefully contrived anti-EU agenda is of a piece with her support for a close relationship with Britain, historical revisionism, anti-Sinn Feinism, and her Ireland-a-failed-state line. The West British brigade in the Irish media are not giving up but fighting a rearguard action over Brexit.

Dave Alvey

On-line sales of books, pamphlets and magazines:

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

**Look Up the  
Athol Books  
archive on the Internet  
[www.atholbooks.org](http://www.atholbooks.org)  
for free back issues**

## Under Cover!

Martin Ingram was once a member of the notorious British Army's Forces Research Unit, which had little to do with research and everything to do with counter-insurgency. Greg Harkin is a journalist. This book was first published in 2004 and its last reprint was in 2016 without it being updated. It is mainly about Frederick Scappaticci who for a time handled inner security within the Provisional IRA, and Brian Nelson who worked for the FRU.

Martin Ingram (a pseudonym) protests that the FRU let agents within PIRA, especially Scappaticci, have informers tortured and killed in order to hide his role in working for the FRU.

There is still a mystery surrounding Scappaticci. PIRA stood him down in 1996 after 22 years in the Republican movement. That is about the same length of service which is the maximum in the British Army. But somehow that retirement draws Ingram's suspicion that it was forced by PIRA.

Certainly informers in PIRA acted for many reasons which Ingram tries to explain—from fear, for protection, for financial reasons, for revenge reasons, and—those not members of PIRA—for SDLP reasons, though he seems unconscious of this.

He also doesn't like to think that an informer could be a double-agent.

When you read the book the deaths sanctioned by PIRA were of proven informers, though there can be the odd mistake, as in a war. Ingram thinks of this as an own-goal. Today, when it happens within the British Armed Forces, it's called *friendly fire*.

Ingram is incensed, on moral grounds, at the idea that FRU aided and abetted the killing of informers. He seems to see the British Army in NI as having been on some holy pilgrimage. Did he not study previous episodes of British Military Intelligence in, for example, Cyprus—where EOKA suspects were buried up to their necks in the sand on a beach so that, if they didn't give information or were not *turned*, the tide came in to cover the heads?

Some of the most brutal bodies in the world have had *research* embedded in the name of their Intelligence Service.

You also have the British Army's SAS,

very close to the SS. Labels used to drive fear into people.

Ingram's views do waver from having respect for PIRA to being totally anti-violence. He does admit to former inequality and gerrymandering being a problem in Northern Ireland but doesn't have any answers as to how this injustice could have been solved, yet, as a military man, he is there trying prevent people solving it. I think if you ask what good came out of the almost thirty year war you can safely say a lot of good.

The book is certainly a terrifying story of wartime disturbances. Ingram admits it is a War but goes on to call it '*The Troubles*'. throughout the book. He has had all sorts of threats from the British MOD but I doubt if any real secrets have been revealed in this book.

He records the verbatim statement of Scappaticci which he made for the TV's *Cook Report* in 2003. In it Scappaticci displays his fierce hatred for Martin McGuinness, calling him a hypocrite, sneering at his religious devotion, saying how cold a person he is—Mass followed by orders to kill a suspect informer—bringing up the execution (Ingram calls it *murder*) of Frank Hegarty, a Derry man, who had given away the location of some arms dumps, down South, filled with weapons from Libya. McGuinness was supposed to have enticed Hegarty out of England with the promise nothing would happen to him. McGuinness himself said he told Hegarty to stay where he was, for to return home meant the end of him.

After McGuinness's death recently I noticed the media of both the UK and Ireland have raided this book for quotes. Ingram has spoken of *War*: yet he expects the rules that exist in peacetime cities like London or Liverpool. Even if it was true that McGuinness enticed Hegarty home with deception, it would have been under whatever rules exists for war and the survival of it.

Scappaticci rants on about McGuinness, I'm not too sure why, and there is no proper explanation, except that he seems to be having a nervous breakdown. He forgets facts like that the Army Council (PIRA) has seven members and not five and that Northern Command has eleven Counties and not nine.

Ingram does mention early on in the book that Scappaticci seems to have developed mental problems due to his job in the *Nutting Squad*, yet he quickly forgets this in order to hammer home his work as an informer.

He emphasises this too much for my liking and keeps up the same denial that no double agents existed. How was he to know? They do exist in every theatre of war and you do get the sense from this book that PIRA has gained a lot of experience. Ingram does admit it is a very disciplined organisation.

Ingram is of the belief that Irish Sovereignty is of little interest to Britain, that FRU covered the 32 Counties. He also feels there was little cooperation between the Irish and British Governments but considers that having agents in the Garda Síochána could be a better solution. He acknowledged that there could also have been PIRA agents in that police force. He says a quarter of all agents reporting to the FRU came from South of the Border.

He strongly disapproves of Brian Nelson. He begins with a look at Nelson's early character. Nelson's father worked in the shipyard of Harland & Wolff so he was able to get his son an apprenticeship at woodworking. The lad was not interested and left after 14 months: an appalling and destructive thing to do considering the then Protestant monopoly on jobs in Belfast, especially in the shipyard and the general lack of opportunities throughout NI for young people. I know because I was lucky myself to get a similar apprenticeship but back then it was an indentured affair with a deposit of £5 and no leaving without your father's presence in the shipyard main offices, and his signature.

Nelson then joined the Black Watch, a Scottish regiment. Ingram says Nelson was small and weedy and says he is surprised he has joined such a tough bunch. His theory is that, when Nelson goes AWOL eventually, he remained absent-without-leave but was still in the British Army right through to when he joined the UDA in Belfast and began giving information to the FRU or its equivalent in the earlier days.

This is where, as he implies, Scappaticci is made to look like something out of Jackanory (a children's TV programme)—though he later decides Scappaticci is number one in the torturing and killing stakes. That is despite Nelson setting up innocent Catholics with the aid of FRU files and files from MI5, and targeting the

solicitor Pat Finucane for defending PIRA suspects in court. It is claimed elements in the RUC give the hint that Finucane should be *whacked*. Sir Jack Hermon, Chief Constable of the RUC, also had an opinion about Finucane as did Douglas Hogg in the British Parliament. So enough top people were to sanction Pat Finucane's death. Ingram says there should be a public enquiry but I don't think he is optimistic.

Nelson, probably had outlasted his usefulness, got 10 years in prison, and did four. He was later found by a journalist, living in Cardiff under the name of Brian Thompson and dying from lung-cancers at the age of 56. His death certificate describes him as an retired army officer. At least he died in his bed in a safe house and possibly kept in style by his puppet-masters.

On the other side, numbers of informers within PIRA are thrown on the scrapheap without a safe house or financial help and could have had their identities leaked to Scappaticci. He was known as Stakeknife or Steakknife (by the more literate). And sometimes just Stake or Steak.

Ingram doesn't think much of the RUC

and describes it as running death squads in the manner of the authorities in Columbia. But again he seems to change his mind about that in the end when he records what a grieving RUC widow has to say about the changing of the name of the force to the *Police Service of Northern Ireland* (PSNI). She says: "*They changed the name of the RUC as if they did something wrong.*" This chapter about the RUC is the most maudlin' and sentimental in his book.

People are usually still able to laugh under the grimmest situation but some try not to.

Scappaticci describes a situation in which he is arrested by the RUC in the early days and brought to the Castlereagh Holding Centre for interrogation. Remembering his anti-interrogation training, he says nothing and keeps the same composure, no changing facial expressions included I would think. One of his interrogators then begins telling jokes, and he keeps this up for two hours in an endeavour to change Scappaticci's composure. Scappaticci admits he almost cracked.

**Wilson John Haire**  
18 April, 2017

ship only to be quickly reminded by the Professor that the relevant time frame was twenty years.

When the Haughey Papers were given to DCU in February 2009 the importance of Social Partnership to the former Taoiseach was highlighted by his son, Sean Haughey. An article in the *Irish Examiner* (4 Feb 2009) stated:

"The files indicate the precise origins of social partnership came from a discussion with Chancellor Schmidt in 1982. Schmidt made a remark to Haughey about an upcoming meeting with employers and trade unionists to reach agreement on pay and salaries. 'My father was immediately struck by the pragmatic, common-sense approach of involving social partners', said Sean Haughey."

On Haughey's role during the Falklands War the speaker said that the eminent civil servant Dermot Nally considered his criticism of the sinking of the *Belgrano* to have been a major mistake that disadvantaged Haughey in his later dealings with Margaret Thatcher. He also referred to the importance of the document, *The Way Forward* which Haughey worked on with Padraig O'hUiginn and the economist, Kieran Kennedy, in advance of the 1982 General Election. Professor Murphy argued that contrary to the conventional wisdom, *The Way Forward* did not die following that election defeat but was re-used in the 1987 election campaign and formed the basis of the strategy that put the Irish economy on a sound footing.

On the Peace Process Professor Murphy was of the opinion that Haughey's role was more important than is generally believed. This was questioned by Deaglán de Bréadún in the discussion who claimed that Albert Reynolds and Bertie Ahern were the key figures.

Among those who contributed to the discussion were: Martin Mansergh (former adviser to Haughey on the North), Manus O'Riordan (former head of research at SIPTU and a regular contributor to *Irish Political Review*), Deaglán de Bréadún (a columnist with the *Irish News* and former news editor with the *Irish Times*), Finola Kennedy (the biographer of Frank Duff and wife of economist Kieran Kennedy. She is described on the Veritas website as "*an economist, writer, wife and mother of six children. She is a regular contributor to The Sunday Business Post and Irish Independent. She is a Lecturer in Economics at the Institute of Public Administration at UCD and a Member of The Review Group on the Irish Constitution. She is the author of two books, Cottage to Creche: Family Change in Ireland and*

## A Seminar on Haughey

A Trinity College public seminar on March 29th on the subject, '*Charles Haughey reconsidered*' was the occasion of a compelling talk and discussion.

The speaker was Professor Gary Murphy from Dublin City University (DCU). The venue was the Arts and Humanities Research Institute at Trinity, and there were about one hundred people present, some of them well known in the public domain as became clear in the course of the discussion.

Professor Murphy said he had been granted access to the Haughey Papers in DCU by the Haughey family, without strings attached, and had spent about three years working on a biography of the former Taoiseach. He needed a further two years at least to finish the project. Unlike the many Haughey biographies already available, his biography would be '*cradle to the grave*'; he would try to portray Haughey in the round and place more emphasis on his positive achievements than previous biographers; he considered it impossible to deal with the political aspect of his

subject without grappling with Haughey's personal character and background.

In the talk he wanted to concentrate on two aspects: the nature of the leadership contest that brought Haughey to power in 1979; and Social Partnership. Regarding the leadership contest he was inclined to be sceptical of the prevailing view that the Haughey camp had engaged in strong-arm tactics compared to a gentlemanly decorum on the George Colley side. He had interviewed a number of the participants and the invariable response was that it was a fair contest—he opined that the Lynch leadership, with which Colley was associated, had not covered itself in glory, either in Opposition or in making extravagant promises in the 1977 General Election.

On Social Partnership, a subject on which the Professor has expert knowledge, he described how Haughey had become interested in the subject following a conversation with German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. In the discussion later a speaker referred to the ten years of Social Partner-

Family, Economy and Government in Ireland"), Declan O'Donovan (former Department of Foreign Affairs official who had been Garret Fitzgerald's Private Secretary and who worked in the Maryfield Secretariat in Belfast in furtherance of the 1985 Anglo Irish Agreement), Declan O'Donovan (former Department of Foreign Affairs official who had been Garret Fitzgerald's private secretary and who worked in the Maryfield secretariat in Belfast in furtherance of the 1985 Anglo Irish Agreement), Professor Frank Barry (Trinity College Economics Department) and myself. Patrick Maume who wrote the Haughey entry in the *Irish Dictionary of Biography* was present, as were a group of republicans.

During the discussion I said that Irish politics had been the loser and Irish society had suffered because the media and the academic community had got it wrong by being over-critical of Haughey. Taking one example, I said that in the matter of Irish engagement with the EU, a vital matter following Brexit, Haughey had demonstrated how Ireland could participate on a relatively equal footing with the powerful member states like France and Germany. He could do this because he had a clear sense of the Irish national tradition. In the Government that followed Haughey, Ethna Fitzgerald described herself as the Minister for £8 billion; in other words the engagement with the EU had deteriorated to the level of extracting the maximum amount of money and little else.

Prompted to finish up by the chair, Eunan O'Halpin, I said I had two further brief points. Professor Murphy had earlier made the point that the biographer of Haughey needed to be conversant with the literatures of a long list of disciplines. I said he should add political philosophy to the list. Haughey's nemesis, Conor Cruise O'Brien, had written about Edmund Burke but shown no capacity while in Government to practise Burkean principles, while Haughey, who probably never read Burke, was one of the few politicians in Ireland or Britain who could be described as a Burkean. (I had intended to say that this point was developed in the introduction to John Morley's biography of Burke, published in 1995 by Athol Books, but time didn't allow.)

My final point was on the question of corruption. I said that Garret Fitzgerald had once described Churchill as the greatest statesman of the twentieth century yet it was well known that Churchill's debts were paid by British business interests. The same thing happened the previous

century with Lord John Russell's debts. We are constantly lectured about a lack of maturity in public discourse but it seemed impossible to objectively assess Irish public figures once they were known to have character flaws.

In response Eunan O'Halpin said that Garret Fitzgerald's debts were also written off and, Deaglán de Bréadún later added Parnell to a now burgeoning list of political leaders who had received financial assistance from wealthy businessmen.

Professor Murphy said he took my point about the Minister for £8 billion and about Haughey having demonstrated good practice in EU dealings and that this was most apparent in the way he had championed the cause of German re-unification.

Manus O'Riordan recounted how he had argued with Ruaidhri Roberts, the General Secretary of ICTU, who had resisted the idea of broadening Social Partnership Agreements to include matters of economic policy as was advocated by Haughey. Manus also picked up on a point that Haughey had burned a Union Jack beside the front entrance to Trinity on the day World War II ended. He said that the tricolour had been disrespected just prior to Haughey's action. Hubert Butler wrote to the Irish Times saying that the flying of the Union Jack had been provocative, that it was comparable to flying a German flag in Czechoslovakia, but this was an intervention of Butler's that was not widely publicised.

Martin Mansergh, Finola Kennedy and Frank O'Donovan all spoke on Haughey's manner of dealing with civil servants. They were agreed that he was a good listener and could master a brief incisively. While he liked to be challenged and was open to changing his chosen line of action if a counter-argument was strong enough, he could also be brusque. Frank O'Donovan testified that he was fairly treated by Haughey, despite having worked closely with Garret Fitzgerald; and, despite Haughey's opposition to the Anglo Irish Agreement, he instructed O'Donovan to work the Agreement fully in the Maryfield Secretariat.

Finola Kennedy said that her late husband, Kieran Kennedy, who was a former Director of the Economic and Social Research Institute and had worked in the Department of Finance under Haughey in the period before the Arms Trial controversy, viewed Haughey as the best Minister for Finance to have served the State.

-A discordant note was sounded by Frank Barry, who argued that Haughey deliberately intimidated subordinates and that this gave rise to a culture of diffidence in the civil service, a practice that had contributed to the economic crash. This provoked a guffaw from Finola Kennedy, an appropriate response in my view. For at least ten years before the 2008 crash, thinking in the upper echelons of the civil service was heavily predisposed towards liberal economics and the sanctity of the market. That ideological predisposition, propagated by Frank Barry's own department in Trinity, was the main cause of officials' reluctance to challenge Government Ministers during the boom, but that is an argument for another day.

A question that was not teased out was the efficacy of Haughey's decision to condemn the sinking of the Belgrano. When it was struck, the cruiser was heading away from the Falklands and was outside the total exclusion zone that the British had delineated as the combat zone. Haughey had supported British requests for sanctions against Argentina by the EU in the early stage of the crisis. However, Irish public opinion was divided on the issue, and some Fianna Fail TDs wanted the Government to be more critical of the British. When the Belgrano was torpedoed, with the loss of 323 lives, Haughey condemned it. Perhaps the most famous critic of the Belgrano sinking was the British Labour MP, Tam Dalyell, whose persistence in exposing its wantonness was eventually vindicated. There is clearly a case for rejecting the Dermot Nally position, which seems preoccupied with diplomatic relationships at the expense of Ireland's independent foreign policy.

The mythology, misrepresentation and hostile prejudice that surrounds Charles Haughey's name is so entrenched that undoing all of it may pose an impossible task for a biographer. Professor Murphy deserves credit for taking it on.

**Dave Alvey**

Edmund Burke by *John Morley*.

*Reprint of a Biography of an  
Aristocratic Liberal  
by a Democratic Liberal.*

**Introduction by *Brendan Clifford*,  
and Epilogue on modern application  
of Burke's political thought.**

**168pp.**    ₤15, £12

## The Remaking of Hubert Butler

"He became a terrorist revolutionary in 1918. His *guru* was present at his wedding night and he never lived with his wife for ten years until her death in 1928. It was an iron rule for the revolutionaries that they should keep aloof from women... He used to tell me how India would become free by fighting the way the Irish fought. It was when I was with him that I read Dan Breen's 'My fight for Irish Freedom'. Dan Breen was Masterda's ideal. He named his organisation the Indian 'Republican Army, Chittagong branch' after the Irish Republican Army"

**Kalpna Dutt. 1945. (pp 16-17).**

"Although the earthly ideal of Socialism -Communism has collapsed, the problems it purported to solve remain: the brazen use of social advantage and the inordinate power of money, which often directs the very course of events. And if the global lesson of the twentieth century does not serve as a healing inoculation, then the vast red whirlwind may repeat itself in entirety."

**Alexander Solzhenitsyn in New York Times, 28th November 1993.**

After reviewing the contents of the DVD about Hubert Butler with its title "*Witness to the Future ... but silenced in his own country*", I can say now with absolute clarity that I never came across such a mish-mash of *raméis* where even the editing was so bad that one contributor was completely contradicting the other and the whole thing was left stand. Did Johnny Gogan, who "*Filmed, Directed and Produced*", think no-one really would actually watch it with any kind of critical faculty? Probably what shocked me the most was that, when we were present in Kilkenny for "*The Hubert Butler Centenary Celebration—20-22nd October 2000*", there was much ado about the then Mayor of Kilkenny, Mr. Paul Cuddihy, Fine Gael, giving a full public apologia to the now deceased writer over the way he was treated over the Papal Nuncio affair.

He made sure to state that it was not a "*pardon*" and in response Julia Crampton—Butler's daughter—thanked the Mayor and said that the *Kilkenny People* had put a headline saying "*Hubert Butler was to be pardoned*" but she was now delighted to see that the Mayor had rectified this erroneous impression—there was definite-

ly a slight edge to her voice I thought, so perhaps the Mayor had been taken aside earlier and been made aware of the misunderstanding. (*The Irish Political Review* and *Church & State* at the time covered the whole saga.)

But now it appears we were all taken in—there was never any ejection of Butler from the Kilkenny Archaeological Society. According to Butler himself in his 1985-published '*Escape from the Anthill*' he states:

"..My friends and neighbours were memorably kind and supporting... but it was difficult for me to return to a Society which I had myself founded, *so I never after attended a meeting.*"

This is conveyed too as the truth by none other than Olivia O'Leary, Author & Broadcaster, who appears in the DVD and says her grandfather John O'Leary, a baker in Graiguenamanagh, was the President of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society.

She makes the point that while they were colleagues, they could not be friends due to their social positions as Butler was "*part of the Anglo-Irish landed gentry*"—though we all know he was just a market gardener with 7 acres! O'Leary states that while "there was a motion put forward to expel HB from the KAS as a result of the Papal Nuncio incident, the motion was not carried—it was defeated. People forget that—it was defeated". So, basically, Butler being the kind of man he was—took umbrage and flounced out of the Society giving everyone outside of Kilkenny the notion that he was victimised and indeed we were all brought into the fiction in 2000.

Here is what I think happened—Butler used the *notoriety*: because he writes in the above-quoted book the following:

"Although my friends put up a fight, I was forced to give up the honorary secretaryship of an archaeological society which I myself had founded and guided through seven difficult years. My opponents hoped that my liquidation would be decorous and quickly forgotten, but my friends and myself were little inclined to oblige them, and for a time our small society enjoyed in the metropolitan press a blaze of publicity which its archaeological activities had never won for it."

We now know from the testimony of

none other than Olivia O'Leary that this was untrue. And, what is more, many in that audience in 2000 had to know this also, including the Butler family and their acolytes, but they went along with the travesty of the Mayor's *apologia* because doesn't it neatly tie in with their narrative of the old dark days of Catholic oppression? Indeed Butler went one better and told the untruth to none other than that most fierce opponent of Catholic Ireland—Paul Blanshard—for his book '*The Irish and Catholic Power*'. In the latter, Blanshard "described" according to Butler—

"the measures taken against Skeffington in Dublin and myself in Kilkenny. *The persecution* was of a familiar pattern, and I try to see in it not a personal hard-luck story, but material for a study in the modern indifference to evidence, but I think both of us knew that had we been less fortunate in our backgrounds we would have been *ruined...* For myself, I am grateful for the few inherited acres which have helped me to survive the disapproval of my neighbours..."

(Francis Sheehy-Skeffington was of course an Irish Senator and very well known writer and activist. I don't know what Butler is alluding to here—maybe some reader will let me know but do not use HB as a source!)

Various people, like Roy Foster, Fintan O'Toole, Rev. Robert Tobin *et al*, allude to Butler's great achievement of scholarship in Oxford's St. John's College but evidently nothing came of it. His mother Rita, we are told by Joseph Hone, Butler's foster-son "*had the bright idea of writing to her cousin who of course was Lord Grey the British Foreign Secretary at the time pleading with him to get Hubert into the Diplomatic Service. ...Hubert didn't get a diplomatic posting.*" We do know that he returned to Ireland and worked with the Co-operative movement and also the Carnegie Library Service but he seemed not to have settled down at either. Butler had met Tyrone (Tony) Guthrie as an undergraduate in Oxford and they became fast friends and later on he met his sister Peggy in Annaghmakerrig—latter on to be turned into the *Tyrone Guthrie Artists Centre*, Monaghan and they fell in love and married.

Butler and his wife did a lot of travelling around Europe about this time, though they certainly came back to London where they stayed for a while. For an author about whom a lot is now being written, there are these huge gaps in our knowledge and obviously there has to be a reason for this.

What can be ascertained is that Butler went to the School of Slavonic Studies in London where it is suggested he was awarded a Travelling Scholarship to Yugoslavia. Now, as I made clear in the *Irish Political Review* (September 2016 edition), Neal Ascherson (who was present in Kilkenny in 2000 and who came off the worse with Brendan Clifford regarding his knowledge of Yugoslavia) in the *London Review of Books* Vol. 22, No.5, 8th March 2011 outed the Slavonic School as "the school of English intelligence" and, coming from this source of someone certainly in the know like the *Observer's* Ascherson, I have no difficulty in accepting

this to be true.

It accounts for the fact that an impecunious Butler had to have some means to be travelling round Europe at a time of widening crisis—what he is really doing other than observing things is hard to know. But one can surely suggest he didn't get this money without some strings attached—though I am not going to speculate as to what these might have been!

**Julianne Herlihy ©**

**To be continued in next issue of *Irish Political Review***

## Doing without a National Identity

In 1985, the Irish-Australian writer Vincent Buckley, after spending some time in Ireland, wrote in his book *Memory Ireland*:

"Ireland has been asked to lose its national memory by a kind of policy, in which politicians of almost all parties, ecclesiastics of all religions, media operators, and revisionist historians cooperate to create (and let us hope they do not need to enforce, for if they need to, they will) a new sense of corporate identity. This sense contradicts the immediately preceding one (the one based on the rising of Easter 1916 and its aftermath), which proved first so exhilarating and then so wearying to its generations, some of whom had fought to realise it. Ireland is not a nation, once again or ever, so the new story runs, but two nations; maybe several; it does not have its characteristic religion—or if it does, it ought not; it does not have its characteristic language, as anyone can see or hear; it has no particular race or ethnic integrity. Ireland is nothing—a no-thing—an interesting nothing, to be sure, composed of colourful parts, a nothing mosaic. It is advertising prose and Muzak."

Buckley was saying in effect that Ireland had lost its national identity: the fact of being a nation distinguished from other nations by a combination of language, history, culture and values and the sense of being that. Since 1985, the collective condition that Buckley depicted—that of being together nothing in particular—has intensified.

At the centre of Ireland's capital city a tall monument, designed in London, has been erected which honours and signifies literally Nothing. (A joke says it was meant to be delivered to the other Blackpool, the seaside resort across the Irish

Sea.) Ireland's distinctive religious culture—women blessing themselves as they pass a church; traffic jams at city churches on Sunday mornings; fasting during Lent; May and Corpus Christi processions; the family Rosary; paying Christmas and Easter parish dues—has withered almost to vanishing point; and with it a set of moral values, forceful because they pointed towards a happy eternal life and gave security against punishment there.

With the study of Irish history made unnecessary for the Leaving Cert, and RTE television, blind to that history beyond the Famine, knowledge of Irish history by most Irish university graduates reaches no further back than that national tragedy. Journalists, instead of writing or saying 'in Ireland' or 'in the Republic' commonly make do with "here" or "in this state". The only still habitual demonstration of Irish nationhood is not everyday but occasional: everyone cheering for Ireland when an Irish football team is playing a foreign team or celebrating together on St. Patrick's Day.

A nation can lack a national identity for either of two reasons. It can, like Ireland, have lost the national identity which it previously had. (Ireland had a well-known distinct identity from the sixth century to the eighteenth when it began to fade to the shadow of itself it was still in 1916.) Or it can, like, say Zambia, never have had one. Formerly Northern Rhodesia and named after the river Zambezi, it was created in 1964. With English as the official language, Zambians belong to about 70 ethnic groups, speak a similar number of languages, and adhere to many religions.

It is widely believed that a national

identity is an important thing for a nation to have—that it favours national wellbeing; creates, when needed, a national collective effort; generally urges the nation towards success and buttresses it in bad times. If one googles "national identity" one finds at least 25 pages—I gave up counting—filled with items dealing with it. (Denmark, a small country like Ireland, seems to be particularly interested in the matter.)

It is, of course, entirely possible to get along without a national identity, as Ireland and Zambia have been doing; living from day to day. Even with collective zest lacking, it is not catastrophic. But when, after the Breivik massacres in Norway a few years ago, the Norwegian Prime Minister told his people "This must strengthen our resolve to make our Norwegian values prevail", some old-fashioned Irishman might have felt a pang of regret that no Irish Taoiseach could speak of "our Irish values", because no such thing exists. National values indicate that at least something is there rather than nothing. They suggest that in that nation some aspiring minds are at work.

**Desmond Fennell**

***Dr. Fennell's autobiography About Being Normal: My Life in Abnormal Circumstances has recently been published by Somerville Press.***

## Brexit: Supermac's V McDonalds

Pat McDonagh, the Galway entrepreneur who started his Supermac's fast food chain in Ballinasloe in 1998 has been forced to do battle with McDonald's, the US giant, over trade mark rights. His dispute with McDonald's could be a taste of things to come when Brexit finally happens.

McDonagh, whose most famous products are the Mighty Mac Double Burger and the Chicken Snack Box and who currently pulls in over 100 million in revenue, wants to expand his brand into the EU, the UK and Australia, but he is being blocked by McDonald's who have trademarked 'SnackBox' even though they don't offer the product. In response McDonagh has formally submitted a request to the European Union Property Office (EUIPO) to cancel the use of the Big Mac and Mc trademarks that McDonald's has registered in certain classes.

"McDonald's has literally registered the McWorld. It is trying to make sure that every word in the English language belongs to them if there is a prefix of Mc

or Mac put in front of it," Mr McDonagh said.

"They have trademarked words like McKids, McFamily, McCountry, McWorld, McJob and McInternet in order to, over time, squeeze out smaller family based businesses" he said. (Irish Independent, 11 April 2017).

The Brexit angle on the story stems from McDonald's decision in December 2016 to move their European headquarters from Luxemburg to the UK. The move is believed to have been caused by increasing pressure from the European Commission

regarding the company's tax policies. McDonald's are facing tax investigations in both Luxemburg and France, and are clearly not enamoured with the EU.

McDonagh is confident that he will receive a fair hearing from the EU authorities, although the legal process may take as long as a year. Who knows, maybe being an alternative McDonald's and having crossed swords with the US company may give him a market advantage if he wins the right to trade on the Continent.

The procedure involved the victim left suspended for an hour after the drop. The pooling of blood in the corpse, after the heart has stopped beating, known as *hypostasis*, will have a significant effect. Due to gravity the blood will collect in the limbs and the lower part of the trunk. This blood will cause engorgement of the tissue and veins leading to a ballooning effect upon the already flaccid rectum and anal sphincters.

So, the bodily features Dr Mander referred to were inevitable given the subject had recently died and were exacerbated by the method of execution. As evidence of the idiosyncrasies or otherwise of Casement's personal life they counted for little.

## Part Two. (Part One appeared in the February issue)

### Getting Casement backwards

A *Wake for Roger Casement* event was held on 5th August 2016. A highlight of the night was the reading out by English actor and gay man Simon Callow of the text of the alleged autopsy report on Casement's body from the prison medical officer Dr. Mander. This was the *leitmotiv* or keynote of the *Casement Project*, which kept recurring again and again. Here is the key part of the text:

"I made the examination which was the subject of our conversation at the Home Office on Tuesday, after the conclusion of the inquest today, and found unmistakable evidence of the practices to which it was alleged the prisoner in question had been addicted. The anus was at a glance seen to be dilated and on making a digital examination (rubber gloves) I found that the lower part of the bowel was dilated as far as the fingers could reach."

This was read out in the *Butterflies and Bones* dance piece I mentioned in Part One. It began the quarter hour film by Derbhla Walsh, which was based on it and called *I'm Roger Casement*, broadcast on RTE television 17th January 2017. It was referred to by Fearghus O Conchúir, who had performed a dance routine, in his contribution to the *Body of Evidence* discussion in Kilkenny. It is referred to on the projects website. In an entry for 17th December 2015 he describes a visit to the British National Archives at Kew during which he saw this letter and accepted it as literally true and describes how the doctor "examined Casement's body after his hanging to probe whether he could have had the sex he wrote about."

But how much confidence can we place

upon this short letter? Let us go back to a few hours before the alleged autopsy and let us examine the execution procedure that Casement's body had undergone.

#### 'LONG DROP' HANGING

So called 'long drop' hanging had been developed in Britain in the 19th century. It was seen then as a humane form of execution. The prisoner was placed standing over a trapdoor and had a hood placed over the head and the noose placed around the neck. The trapdoor was then released. The length of the rope gave the victim approximately 6 feet to fall before the neck bones were caught abruptly by the noose. The aim was to dislocate the spine at the neck resulting in catastrophic damage to the spinal cord. It was thought at the time that this brought about instantaneous death. Modern science sees this as causing a loss of consciousness but sees death as occurring in stages. After a number of minutes, depending on the state of health of the victim, the heart stops beating.

The sphincter muscles control the flow of matter internally through the body. There are a number these. The best known, for obvious reasons are the anal sphincters at the end of the digestive tract. Sphincter muscles operate in the opposite way to how muscles usually work: they are normally in a state of constriction but are opened briefly to allow matter pass through the body. With death, oxygen dissipates from the tissues. This process also will cause the sphincters to gradually become relaxed. This process happens in mammalian species irrespective of cause of death.

At the time of the execution Mander was already an experienced prison physician. The doctor his note was addressed to, Sir Herbert Smalley, was yet more experienced. As, according to Mander, the examination took place "after the conclusion of the inquest" and no witnesses are mentioned he may have undertaken it while alone with the remains. Then again, it may never have happened at all.

What is striking is the report's brevity and lack of physiological detail. There are no recorded witnesses. There are no photographs. It lacks the comprehensiveness that goes with forensic seriousness.

As he made clear, he produced the communication at the behest of his superior, Dr. Smalley. It was not a legally provided for action. It was the carrying out of an order. What purpose then did it have?

#### MAKING SENSE

It makes sense if it is realized there was a felt need to further discredit Casement and to try to prevent him attaining martyrdom. Mander was under orders. In addition he may have felt bound by a patriotic duty, considering he was an actor in a public drama in time of war. The note had usefulness as a propaganda tool to be read out to press reporters. Indeed, some press reports of the time did mention the discovery of physical evidence on Casement's remains of an alleged degenerate lifestyle.

What is also noteworthy is the cautiousness of the language. Mander refers to "evidence". He does not use the word "proof". He refers to "practices to which it was alleged the prisoner was addicted". The word "alleged" is interesting.

It appears Mander fulfilled a

requirement from a superior with the minimum of commitment on his own part.

The note also makes sense in that it provides an appearance of corroboration of the contents of the controversial Diaries. Physical evidence, even a shadowy hint of physical evidence, as in this case, always makes a strong impression. This is especially so when it comes packaged in the remarks of a professional man.

That, a hundred years after Casement's execution, a hoax designed to blight his memory in the public mind should become the keynote text of *"The Casement Project"*, an alleged centenary celebration of his life, serves to pose questions for Ireland's cultural Establishment. It poses questions for the *Arts Council* and *Culture Ireland*, both which supported the project.

The *Casement Project* made no mention of Casement's views on the Great War. It did not mention how, in his writings, he had predicted that War before it began. It did not mention his published book *The Crime against Europe*. It did not treat him as a man of ideas.

Casement's mind and brain were ignored in favour of his anus. *The Casement Project* got Casement back to front. It got him backwards.

#### SPONSORS

The list of sponsors for the project appeared impressive; from Ireland: *Arts Council*, *Culture Ireland*, *The 1916-2016 Centenary Programme*, *Dance Ireland*, *Maynooth University*, *Project Arts Centre*, and *Belfast Arts Festival*. Britain provided: *First World War Centenary, 14-18 Now*: the WWI Centenary Art Commissions, *Department for Culture, Media and Sport*, *Heritage Lottery Fund*, *British Library* and *the Place*.

The project was as much part of Britain's WWI centenary commemoration as it was part of the Irish 1916 centenary. In fact it was more of a British event. The perspective was that of so-called *"Irish historical revisionism"*, which is in essence the provincial Irish version of official British historiography. Thus Casement's deep concern with and well worked out views on the Great War were not engaged with. His memory remained attached to the contempt due a condemned traitor even as his legacy was, so to say, being celebrated.

Tim O'Sullivan

## A second round of the Irish Brexit debate

#### OVERVIEW

In the first round we saw how Ray Bassett's proposal that Ireland should threaten to leave the EU was dismissed by the Minister for European Affairs, Dara Murphy, as *'taking yourself hostage'*. Bassett never replied to that point nor has he had anything to say about a statement from another Junior Minister, Eoghan Murphy who works under Michael Noonan at the Department of Finance, that the key message that needs to be communicated to foreign investors, especially in Asia, is that Ireland will not be following the UK out of Europe. Eoghan Murphy's contention has been backed up by IDA managers; before everything else foreign investors require confirmation that Ireland's will remain in the EU.

The absence of any reply to these points belies the claims of the pro-Britain lobby that economic interests are their primary concern. Economic interests in the agri-food, forestry and other sectors are indeed threatened by Brexit and the pro-Britain side has been careful to focus on these concerns, but the motivating factor behind the contributions to the debate from Ray Bassett, Michael McDowell, Eamon Delaney, the Editor of the *Sunday Business Post* (SBP) Ian Kehoe, and others has been an ideological mindset. They have become wedded to the notion of Ireland as West Britain and they are determined to keep alive that vision.

Losing the intellectual argument is never a problem when you have powerful interests behind you, and so it is with Ray Bassett and his friends at the *Sunday Business Post*. In the current phase of the debate they have rallied and their work has borne fruit in an announcement on April 15th that Enda Kenny will be attending a meeting in the Hague in the Netherlands in mid-April with his counterparts from Denmark and the Netherlands. The initiative is described as follows in the *Irish Times*:

"Taoiseach Enda Kenny is to meet the leaders of like-minded EU countries to ensure that upcoming Brexit talks move swiftly on to trade and do not get delayed by the UK's so-called divorce settlement.

Mr Kenny will hold a mini-summit next week in The Hague with the prime

ministers of the Netherlands and Denmark, the other two countries most affected by Brexit" (*Irish Times*, 15 April 2017).

These three member states are of course undermining EU solidarity and initiating a process that complies exactly with what the UK wants. From media coverage it seems that Enda Kenny has been the prime mover behind the initiative but we may need to await the historical record for confirmation of that. In any case the Irish Brexit debate can now be seen as an exchange that reflects an important power play, an exchange that has consequences on the international stage.

#### KEY EXTRACTS FROM THE DEBATE

*Sunday Business Post*, 2 April '17, editorial: *'We must take an active role in Brexit process'*

"What Ireland ought to do in such uncertain times is hard to predict, but it makes the coming months and years vitally important to Ireland's interests.

Already, there are suggestions in Ireland that our future lies with Britain and not Europe.

Many people find themselves angry at the EU's role as part of the much-hated troika of the European Commission, IMF and European Central Bank, which inflicted a brutal series of austerity measures on Ireland and forced Ireland to repay all the senior bondholders of the banks—at a cost of around 9 billion.

And even the EU's biggest advocates cannot argue that it is perfect; it is far too opaque and untransparent, and when faced with its sternest tests—the financial collapse, war in the Balkans, and the current migrant crisis—it was found seriously wanting.

However, Ireland has been a major beneficiary of the European Union since Irish people voted by a majority of 83 per cent to join what was then the European Economic Community.

Since then, EU membership has been a measurable boon to Ireland and has raised general living standards across the country.

Ireland's net gain from EU budgets has been 44.6 billion since 1976, which has helped us build vital infrastructure over decades and helped to turn Ireland from a virtually bankrupt backwater of Europe into a country that has the economy and the people to compete not just for the manufacturing jobs it attracted in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, but to consider

itself a serious competitor with New York and London for high-level finance jobs.

...  
This newspaper has been critical—to date—of how Ireland has handled the Brexit fallout.

Our opening negotiating position has been too passive. Our unfettered loyalty to Europe has been too apparent. Our public voice has been too weak.

In January, we published an article by Ray Bassett, a former Irish diplomat who has served as an ambassador and a negotiator of the Good Friday Agreement.

By questioning Ireland's tactics, Bassett broke official consensus. He wrote:

'Ireland should not shrink from claiming the mantle of Britain's strongest ally within the EU.

'Instead of bleating about a common EU position, we should be convening meetings in Dublin at heads of government level with like-minded countries such as the Nordics, Netherlands etc, that have a powerful self-interest in Britain getting as good a deal as possible.'

It started a debate that many participated in through these pages. The response of Official Ireland was to call the coverage Eurosceptic. It was nothing of the sort."

#### Comment:

If there was any doubt about the degree of support being given by the SBP to Ray Bassett, this editorial dispels it. The Editor, Ian Kehoe, has decided to make a campaign out of Bassett's pro-Britain stance. Kehoe takes a couple of side swipes at the EU and then describes the greatest of the gains from EU membership as being that Ireland is now considered '*a serious competitor with New York and London for high-level finance jobs*', a turn of phrase that seems to betray a banker's perspective on the EU. So, a newspaper that was and remains an ardent champion of free market economics, the ideology that largely caused the crash, is adopting anti-austerity language to disparage the EU, the entity that, with the Irish Government, was left to sort out the mess following the Irish bust!

Equally rich is the boast about breaking the "*official consensus*". Before the Brexit vote the Irish official consensus was close alignment with Britain. Brexit has made that alignment problematic but the supporters of the old consensus have rallied and are determined to preserve the connection with Britain, even if it means disrupting Ireland's relationship with the EU. There are powerful pro-British elements within the Dublin media; breaking the official consensus has meant pushing an open door, probably receiving lucrative advertising contracts into the bargain.

The SBP editor speaks about having starting a debate but his paper has recently decided to discontinue its Letters Page

and there has been no invitation to the public to join the discussion. On learning from the paper's receptionist that they no longer had a Letters Page I emailed the Editor to ask about the possibility of submitting a pro-EU article. Despite a follow up phone call I received no reply from Ian Kehoe. So much for debate.

**Michael McDowell, *Sunday Business Post*, 2 April '17, article: 'After Brexit, we need to decide what kind of Europe we want.'**

"We will be at a loss of our strongest ally at the EU Council table. That is very serious, as I know from my days at the justice and home affairs council meetings.

The Irish interest in the entire EU project has been radically affected by Brexit. It was easy to claim that we were enthusiastic Europeans while we had our bigger, stronger British buddy at our side to resist the integrationist urges of the federalists. Now our interests are quite different.

While a few EU wonks will still blather about the need to be at the centre of the European project, the adoption by the Brussels establishment of a two-speed Europe as a future path for the Union is probably best for Ireland. We do not want to be integrated as a tiny province of an EU super-state. We want and need to retain the maximum scope for the unanimity rule in EU affairs.

If some member states are really serious about enhanced political, defence and fiscal integration (which I very much doubt), I say let them go ahead. The newer member states are in no mood to build a German-dominated sovereign Europe. The French will never admit that their relations with Germany are other than on the basis of equality. But it suits both France and Germany to pose as equals, even if the rest of us are not fooled.

Trump's attitude to the EU is already deflating, as is his attitude to Nato. There is no brooding menace to us that justifies our huddling together in an integrated EU super-state.

We need a far more realistic and honest national debate than heretofore on the type of Europe we aspire to now. I can see the opportunity to develop that debate, and I hope we can all contribute to it."

#### Comment:

Clearly, in McDowell's mind Ireland's support for European integration in the past was a mere posture, only possible while "*our big, stronger British buddy*" was at our side. Given McDowell's connections, through his own and his wife's family, to the struggle for national independence he might be expected to have a firmer grasp of history but, being an erstwhile Thatcherite, he is blind to the connection between history and current politics. Ireland achieved a greater measure

of independence, from Britain and generally, by embracing the Delors Plan for Europe during the nineties, but Michael McDowell can only see the EU through English eyes. He is less clued in to the British need for Irish support in the Brexit negotiations than Bassett *et al* but more useful for all that. McDowell's call for an honest and realistic debate is rhetorical; he is writing for the only Irish newspaper without a Letters Page.

**Ray Bassett, *Sunday Business Post*, 9 April '17, article: 'We need to step up our game on Brexit'**

"Yet, still there has been no comment from the Irish government publicly as to whether it supports the EU line of insisting that it will not open talks on trade matters until satisfactory progress [not defined!] on the terms of departure are worked out.

As the country with the most at stake among the remaining 27, it would have been expected that the Taoiseach would have, by now, strongly indicated Irish unhappiness at the EU refusal to prioritise a trade deal. Our national interest demands that we settle any uncertainty about our trading arrangements with our most important bilateral trading partner as a matter of urgency. Hopefully, that silence will be broken soon.

...  
The recent spat over Gibraltar clearly illustrates that Britain is determined to uphold its guarantees and promises to areas such as the North, Gibraltar etc. People should not glibly speculate that they are about to abandon their stated positions. The granting to Spain of a veto over Gibraltar's future trade relations with the EU threatens to complicate already difficult negotiations and raise passions. Elsewhere, the EU is insisting that the 27 negotiate as a unit, yet on Gibraltar it is proposing that Spain will be different from the rest. Could Ireland have a veto over border arrangements on this island?

The level of jingoism in both London and Brussels at the moment is unhelpful and Theresa May's not so veiled, and later disowned, threat to use security cooperation as a bargaining chip was completely counterproductive.

Also in this category were the reported comments in the Daily Express by Irish MEP Brian Hayes that Britain could end up as 'road kill', along the lines of Greece, if it decided to play chicken and stubbornly resist EU demands. There should be a moratorium on such statements."

#### Comment:

Ray Bassett's articles are the authoritative voice of the British interest in the Irish Brexit debate and for that reason are required reading. In this article he expresses impatience with Enda Kenny for not opposing the EU's refusal to prioritise a

trade deal (his prediction was right on that score) and later warns that Britain's guarantees to Gibraltar and the North will not be abandoned and should not be the subject of glib speculation. So far so predictable, you might say, but he then proceeds to break new ground by advising a fellow Irish supporter of close Irish-British alignment how to suck up to the British. The full *Daily Express* article about Brian Hayes follows this.

That many people should dismiss Ray Bassett as a loose cannon is understandable but doing so underestimates the prevalence of the West British mentality among the higher ups of the Irish political class. The facts speak volumes: in January Bassett advised that the Irish Government should be proactive in building an alliance of EU states who favoured a soft deal with Britain; that alliance has since come to pass.

**Brian Hayes MEP, *Daily Express*, 1 April '17, article: 'Irish MEP warns UK will end up as 'ROADKILL' as EU ready to 'Brit bash' in negotiations'**

"Britain has been handed a stark warning not to try and call the bluff of the European Union (EU) during Brexit negotiations.

Dublin MEP Brian Hayes said Britain should not be punished for leaving the EU, but will get burnt if negotiators don't pay Brussels some respect.

While the UK deserves a good Brexit deal, he said, it would be in danger if the country goes into negotiations without a degree of humility.

Mr Hayes said: 'If they try to play chicken with the European Union in these negotiations they will end up as roadkill. Greece tried to do this during their bailout talks and they learned their lesson the hard way.

'While the UK does have some cards to play, the EU clearly holds the upper hand in these talks. It is the EU that holds the keys to a transitional deal, single market access, customs union, equivalence and any sort of bespoke deal that the UK wants.

'If the UK wants to play brinkmanship, they will be facing a very stern opponent.'

But the MEP also said the Republic of Ireland should resist the urge to attempt to exploit uncertainty in Britain for their own good.

Ireland has been carrying out a charm offensive in the UK in an attempt to convince financial sector leaders to swap London for Dublin.

Mr Hayes said: 'It is in the DNA of Irish nationalism to see Britain's difficulties as Ireland's opportunities. There are some who cannot avoid the temptation for a little Brit bashing.

'Amidst all this uncertainty, it's the task of mainstream politicians and mainstream parties to calm things down.'

Mr Hayes added: 'The UK must never

be regarded as some third country in its new relationship with the EU. It's not like Brazil or Mexico, its importance to the financing and the economy of Europe must be recognised.

'We have to find a solution that works for the EU and the UK.'

He urged for calm on both sides of the divide, appealing for an end to nationalism—no matter the country involved.

Mr Hayes said: 'The great success of the EU has been to keep a lid on the ever present nationalism that has caused such chaos in the first half of the last century.

'The drumbeat of nationalism is once again being heard across the continent.'

**Comment:**

As can be seen from this article Brian Hayes did not engage in EU jingoism, quite the contrary: he was doing his best as an Irish Anglophile to minimise the friction that Brexit may generate. But Bassett is right. Comparing the British to the Greeks and using the word 'roadkill' to describe them is not the way to influence British public opinion. An even greater *faux pas* by Hayes was to advise the British, in this interview with the *Daily Express*, to show respect and humility in their dealings with the EU. Is the man for real? A recent editorial in *Church and State* magazine entitled, *Brexit: The Real England and The Anglophile Mirage* shows how the view of Britain shared by Irish Anglophiles like John Bruton has no basis in reality. Hayes suffers from the same delusion.

**Eamon Delaney, *Sunday Business Post*, 9 April '17, article: 'Ireland should return to the Commonwealth'**

Referring to a function at the residence of the Pakistani Ambassador on Commonwealth Day, Delaney says:

"There were also many business people and former Irish diplomats worried about Ireland's place in the world, post Brexit. And so they should be. And all of them were wondering why Ireland is not a member of this global body of former British colonies.

...

The reality is that we are overwhelmingly connected to Britain—economically, culturally and legally—and we need to think nimbly and radically to stay close to our nearest neighbour now that it has left the EU. And especially now that the EU threatens us in terms of our corporate tax and FDI policies.

Last month, for example, saw the annual conference in Dublin of the British Irish Chamber of Commerce, set up in 2011 by John McGrane to focus on the crucial trading relationship between our two countries. It was a fascinating, well-attended gathering which showed just how important and deep this relationship is, with imports as well as exports.

Effectively, Ireland is an economic region of the British Isles whether we like this or not, and generally we like it!"

**Comment:**

It is interesting to learn from this article that many former Irish diplomats and business people want Ireland to join the British Commonwealth and that the British Irish Chamber of Commerce held a well-attended gathering in March which showed the depth of the Anglo-Irish relationship. It is also interesting to learn that the British Irish Chamber of Commerce was only formed in 2011. British influence among the Dublin elite is undoubtedly high but it is also a relatively recent phenomenon.

**John O'Brennan, *Sunday Business Post*, 9 April '17, article: 'Ireland would be folly'**

"Former Irish diplomat Ray Bassett has suggested in these pages that Ireland has few allies in the European Union at this critical juncture. This is simply untrue.

Far from being viewed as a surrogate of Britain, Ireland has charted a completely autonomous course in the Council of Ministers in Brussels through co-operating with our nearest neighbour on a range of (though far from all) policy issues.

In a diplomatic setting where there are no permanent alliances, Irish officials have sought determinedly to pursue purely Irish positions independent of Britain. They will continue to do so during the Brexit negotiations and after Britain leaves the EU.

Mr Bassett has gone further in suggesting, as David McWilliams has, that Ireland should consider leaving the EU if Britain 'crashes out' of the Customs Union without a deal. This seems like an extraordinary overreaction to the challenges presented by Brexit."

**Comment:**

Professor O'Brennan's viewpoint is reproduced here to show the weakness of the case being argued by pro-EU elements in the Irish Establishment. In this article he repeats the argument that I quoted from him in the first round of the Irish Brexit debate. His hobby horse is that Ireland has always acted independently of the UK in the EU. If that is the case, why is the Sunday newspaper in which his article is published conducting a campaign for Ireland to support the UK in the Brexit negotiations?

**Noel Dorr, *Irish Times*, 10 April '17, article: 'Arguments for Ireland leaving EU do not add up'**

"The decision of the United Kingdom to withdraw from the European Union could mean that the two most important external relationships of this State, which

reinforced each other for 44 years, will now pull us in opposite directions. As one of many people who worked years ago in foreign affairs to promote both sets of relationships, I find this deeply disturbing.

...

All in all, it is right not to approach a major negotiation with a closed mind. But a country should understand, too, where its interest lies and not put it at risk without fully assessing the consequences."

**Comment:**

Noel Dorr's intervention in the debate was significant because of his reputation and standing in the world of professional diplomacy. Dorr retired in 1995 but since then has been frequently re-employed by the State for his expertise. He was at different times Irish Ambassador to the United Nations and the UK, and between 1987 and 1995 was head of the Department of Foreign Affairs. As with Professor O'Brennan his way of making a case fails to inspire much confidence; nonetheless within the world of Irish diplomacy his is an important voice from the past.

**CONCLUSION**

The main development in this round of

the Brexit debate is that the pro-Britain lobbyists in Ireland have upped their game significantly. They will now have been buoyed by the news on April 15th that Ireland, Denmark and the Netherlands are to cooperate in pressing the EU to go easy on Britain. Otherwise the quality of the case being made by Irish pro-EU elements has deteriorated and dried up to some extent. The *Sunday Business Post*, notwithstanding the declaration of its Editor on the need for a Brexit debate, has closed its Letters Page; it's possible that the Irish media will restrict the expression of opinion critical of the Government from a pro-EU perspective.

An interesting side development is that an Irish Anglophile, Brian Hayes MEP, has been taken to task by Ray Bassett for speaking too plainly to an English newspaper. Bassett is undoubtedly right; the Irish Anglophiles should stick to their allotted task of undermining the Irish national tradition; the British have no need of tactical advice from Irish representatives or ideologues in retreat from their political heritage.

**Dave Alvey**

**Andre Siegfried, Part Three**

## **Trois: Ah! Ne me brouillez pas avec la République!**

Andre Siegfried noticed the peculiar relationship between Britain and the United States which was developing after the Great War victory over Germany.

England, which had always fought to establish and defend its supremacy in the world, was now seeking collaboration with another Power in its post-War world. It was doing so through a tacit accord with the US rather than a formal alliance. This, it was imagined, might impose a *Pax Anglo-Saxonia* on the world like the *Pax Romano* of Augustus, through the power of two great navies.

Siegfried noted that the US was suspicious of being taken in tow by Britain and was reluctant to engage in the project England was mooted. The US had become a World Power in the course of World War One through its activity in relation to Britain and the latter's failure to defeat Germany through its original allies. But after the War the US had reverted to its original isolationist foreign policy, that of George Washington, presumably judging the moment to be premature to take hold of the world at that point. It was seemingly content to let Britain remain Top Dog for

now, to blunder on and to weaken more, before the US finally made its move.

Siegfried suggested that, even if Washington was willing to engage in a *Pax Anglo-Saxonia*, England was less likely to predominate in such a partnership and much more likely to become a junior party to the US in any relationship that might be established under it.

Germany and the United States had arisen around the same time, to complicate the world Britain had become mastery of. The US emerged from its Civil War at the moment when Germany became a state through uniting itself against French aggression. In the last quarter of the 19th Century both Germany and the US appeared on the horizon as potential challengers to British supremacy over the world. As the Century turned, both loomed much larger as potentially threats to the unipolar world that had been established in the Hundred Years Peace.

Siegfried pointed out that Britain was behaving very differently toward one of her new rivals for world predominance than she had to her former rivals:

"Britain sees with growing clearness that her supremacy is again contested, and now by the very power she is ready to associate herself. Since the U.S. became a world force, a logical and irresistible evolution has tended to shape its international policy on the same lines as England's. Both are pursuing the same three-cornered programme: control of raw materials international finance, and maritime communications... This medley of interests and aspirations results in a maritime policy which endangers Britain's supremacy. England can no longer institute a blockade except in agreement and active collaboration with America. Meanwhile the American Navy in turn is striving to control communications, or at any rate certain international routes. England is seeking an ally, but she may find a rival" (*England's Crisis*, pp. 237-8).

Britain had a habit of cutting any emerging rival down to size, and in other countries—including France and America itself—there was a presumption that sooner or later there would be a conflict between the old master and the young up-start. The United States was becoming the major obstacle to Britain's world-wide domination and the biggest long-term threat to its Empire. The United States potentially represented a far stronger industrial and commercial competitor than the country England had chosen to wage a Great War on and had shown its ambitions in the world with the construction of the Panama Canal.

Germany was the British Empire's best customer in the world and was the only country that bought from England nearly as much as she sold to the Empire. When Britain destroyed Germany commercially in 1919 it debilitated itself economically.

It also owed much to German philosophy, which it had demonised during the Great War in its propaganda effort, and therefore deprived itself of an important intellectual prop.

The Great War on Germany seemed illogical from a purely British strategic point of view. Whilst Admiral Mahan was conceiving America as a worldwide naval Power and Imperial force, Germany did not even have a credible navy and was merely a federation of states with a few small scattered colonies. But, whilst Britain had developed a very aggressive attitude to its other Imperialist rivals, it shirked a conflict with its strong young Anglo-Saxon cousin and neatly side-stepped the incidents and disputes which would have been made occasions for war with other nations.

Two serious territorial disputes had arisen between Britain and America during the Unionist Government's term of Office. In 1895 Venezuela occupied a piece of British Guiana and when Britain threatened action, President Cleveland invoked the Monroe Doctrine to warn off the Royal Navy. Although Lord Salisbury rejected Cleveland's right to do this, he backed away from conflict and accepted the referral of the dispute to arbitration. In 1903, Balfour accepted arbitration again in a dispute over the frontier between Alaska and British Columbia. Astonishingly, the British arbiter decided in favour of the United States and against Canada—a decision that was very badly received by the Canadians, who, from then on, determined on getting more extensive Dominion powers so that they could look after their own interests in the future.

It seems to have been instinctively realised in British ruling circles that the Empire was destined ultimately to give way to its younger Anglo-Saxon cousin as master of the world. That is the only explanation for the attitude of inferiority that British Statesmen—including Arthur Balfour, Philosopher and Prime Minister—began adopting towards the United States at the turn of the century.

Joseph Chamberlain did not believe that the Empire would give way to the United States without conflict, and so determined on an Anglo-Saxon Alliance to prevent it. If the British Empire and the United States did not combine to dominate the world, their divergent interests would surely bring them into conflict when America, following Admiral Mahan's vision, could only expand at the expense of the British Empire.

It was probably decided to indirectly capture the United States, rather than attempt to defeat it in war. And the building of an Anglo-American Establishment, so that the British Empire could live on *within* its great Anglo-Saxon cousin—the future master of the world—became a significant project for the most advanced Imperialists in England, centred around Lionel Curtis and the *Round Table/Chatham House* group.

So it was determined to deal with America peacefully and to go to Great War with Germany. And, if it were ever contemplated to destroy America after Germany had been dealt with, the exhausting war with Germany—as a result of which the United States profited because of England's difficulty—put paid to that notion. And a Second World War brought the US to complete dominance.

Britain bungled its Great War on Germany and it was heavily in debt to the Power that had bailed it out, both financially and militarily. In January 1923 an agreement settled Britain's debts with the US securing some independence for it, warding off the threat of an immediate move by the US into the saddle. If this agreement had not been achieved, the British economy could be devastated by any decision in Washington to call in its debts. But the debt was fixed at 33 million pounds per annum for 10 years and 37 million for the following 50 years—a price England was willing to pay to maintain its prestige and illusion of supremacy. (Note: at that time the British Pound counted for nearly 5 Dollars).

At the close of the Great War the Royal Navy was the largest and most powerful navy in the world by a long way. It had 400,000 men and a post-War budget of 344 million pounds—seven times what it had been in 1912 at the height of the Naval scare and cries of extravagance by Liberals. Winston Churchill announced at the time of the Armistice that the Britain would not accept "any fettering restrictions which will prevent the British Navy maintaining its well-trying and well-deserved supremacy."

But in 1919-20 hundreds of ships went out of commission and the manpower of the Navy was reduced by three-quarters. The British Government voluntarily invoked the *Ten Year Rule* saying there would be no World War for another decade, to save it money to pay off Washington.

In 1921, with the President Harding administration taking Office and the Anglophile President Wilson gone, Lloyd George realised he had to come to terms with the Americans.

The American historian, Charles Callan Tansill, described the effect the changing power relations between Britain and the US had on the conflict that was raging in Ireland between the democracy, which had emerged in the 1918 Election, and Britain's attempts to subdue it. This led to a forced retreat for British power in Ireland in early 1921 (footnotes included are Tansill's):

"In London it was felt to be imperative that better relations be established with Washington. Lloyd George realized only too clearly that England was at the greatest crossroads in history. America had emerged from the World War as a great naval power that would soon successfully challenge British supremacy on the high seas. This war had seriously imperiled the financial structure of the British

Empire, and it was obviously impossible for the British Government to enter upon an arms race with the United States. The best that Britain could hope to achieve was naval parity, and this could be arranged only if cordial relations were maintained with America. American naval construction had been curtailed by President Wilson in 1919 after his 'deal' with Lloyd George, under the terms of which America would reduce the rate of naval construction in return for British support of Wilson's project of a League of Nations (*Harold and Margaret Sprout, Towards a New Order of Sea Power, Princeton, 1940, pp. 59-68*).

"On March 4, 1921, the Harding Administration assumed office, and the British Government could no longer count upon the pro-British policy that President Wilson had consistently followed. It was imperatively necessary for Lloyd George to conciliate this new Administration in Washington. Large loans from the American treasury had enabled Britain to maintain financial solvency, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer ardently hoped that arrangements could be made with Washington that would ease the burden upon the British taxpayer. Heavy expenditures for new naval construction were out of the question, even though Winston Churchill in his most sonorous rhetoric announced that the British would not accept 'any fettering restrictions which will prevent the British Navy maintaining its well-trying and well-deserved supremacy'. (*New York Times, November 27, December 6, 10, 1918; R. A. Chaput, Disarmament in British Foreign Policy, London, 1935, pp. 70-72.*)

"Most British statesmen accepted the fact that British naval supremacy was a thing of the past, and soon even naval experts swung around to this viewpoint. On March 16, 1921, Lord Lee, newly inducted First Lord of the Admiralty, made a speech before the Institute of Naval Architects in which he proposed a naval agreement with the United States based upon the principle of parity (*E. J. Young, Powerful America, New York, 1936, pp. 47, 53-54.*)

"A month later, Lloyd George courted favorable American press opinion by inviting Adolph Ochs, publisher of *The New York Times*, to breakfast at 10 Downing Street. (*ibid.*, pp. 49-50).

"The Prime Minister was beginning an active campaign to establish a close Anglo-American understanding. He soon discovered that the price of such an understanding would be the scrapping of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance that had existed since January 30, 1902. At first he was very reluctant to pay this price.

"On June 20, 1921, an imperial conference convened in London. It was an unusually important imperial conference, because for the first time the Dominions were permitted to play a role in the formulation of British foreign policy. The role of Canada was particularly

significant. Thanks to the support of Arthur Meighen, Prime Minister of Canada, the American Government had its wish gratified the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was formally abandoned by Britain. (John B. Brebner, "Canada, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Washington Conference," *Political Science Quarterly*, March 1935, 45-59).

"The stage was thus set for an Anglo-American naval accord. On July 8 Secretary Hughes sent a cablegram to Ambassador Harvey inquiring 'whether it would be agreeable to the British Government to be invited by this Government to participate in a conference on limitation of armaments, the conference to be held in Washington'." (Secretary Hughes to Ambassador Harvey, July 8, 1921, *Foreign Relations*, 1921, I, 18.)

"Cablegrams were also sent to Tokyo, Paris, and Rome with similar invitations. Acceptance meant that a disarmament conference would begin its sessions in Washington on November 12, and Lloyd George believed that the fate of England was closely tied to the results of the conference. Conciliation of America became the keynote of his policy, and success in this regard was gravely menaced by the situation in Ireland. He could not afford to have this reign of terror excite American public opinion to the point where Anglo-American amity was reduced almost to the vanishing point. This is the reason why he swallowed his resentment against De Valera and arranged for the conference in London that was to convene on October 11. He made this decision because he thought it was expedient to do so. Humanitarian motives are seldom basic considerations in the formulation of British foreign policy" (America and the Fight for Ireland's Freedom 1866-1922, pp.423-6).

The negotiations with the Sinn Fein "murder gang" were the first sign of the weakening British supremacy in the world that forced it to behave itself, within US toleration. But Irish America, despite supporting Michael Collins's decision to sign the Treaty at the end of 1921, rejected his suggestion that the US enter into arrangements with the British Empire that could enhance the autonomy of its members, like the Irish Free State. John Devoy replied to Collins in February 1922 setting out the reasons why a return to the policy of George Washington was the safest course for the US at that moment:

"In re-suggestion that United States might enter Association of Nations of whose *bona fides* she was satisfied, American-Irish and many millions of other citizens are unalterably opposed to any Old World entanglements under any name whatsoever, knowing that highly-trained, unscrupulous British diplomats will overreach and hoodwink American

amateurs... America's only security lies in strict adherence to Washington's policy..." (letter of 16.2.1922, in Tansill, p.439)

In 1922 the British signed the Washington Naval Treaty. In doing this England agreed to something it had gone to World War to prevent—naval parity with a foreign power. Admiral Beatty described it as abject surrender to the United States but he was forced to swallow the bitter pill. Beatty was conscious that England now had a vastly extended far-flung Empire to defend with a much reduced navy and one the same size as the US which was still largely a continental/island power. The Americans also insisted on Britain ending their Treaty with Japan, which looked after British concerns in its area of influence, aggravating relations with dangerous consequences. Singapore, the giant naval base, looked vulnerable.

In a controversial and very perceptive later book Siegfried wrote about the United States in the 1950s. Siegfried described the American as being continental/isolationist but also—

"... this same American's interests are universal, and this is shown in different ways. In the first place by his Protestant moralizing, which is characteristically British, he looks at all problems from the moral angle and reserves for himself a privilege which gives him great satisfaction, that of passing judgment on others. If other people do not comport themselves according to his ethical standards, he reproves them as if they had committed a sin. It is a legal type of moralizing which shows the American's sincere attachment to certain principles handed down from the eighteenth century; they include an optimistic conception of human nature, faith in democracy, respect for international law, condemnation of conquest and particularly colonial conquest carried out overseas; if it is carried out on land, it is merely expansion... It is not that the United States was not, before 1914, imperialist in her own manner, for indeed she was and did not attempt to hide it; but her expansion was limited to her own continent. When the Americans found themselves faced with world domination, they sincerely recoiled before the encumbrance of an empire; if destiny has finally imposed this responsibility upon them, it is against their wishes, unless, as the old saying goes, 'L'appetit vient en mangeant'..." (*America at Mid-Century*, p. 337 and p.340)

Despite being orientated at the beginning to avoid foreign entanglements and to oppose colonialism, what would happen when America conquered its continent? Would its British Protestant instinct take

it further, moralising on its merry way? By 1955 the question was answered. It was becoming the "*indispensable nation*" that saw itself as "*exceptional*" in the world.

The British Government signed the Washington Treaty in 1922 because it feared the Big Navy men in the US, inspired by Admiral Mahan, would build a force that the British could no longer afford to build and it shied away from the other possibility—war—to settle the issue.

Siegfried put it like this in 1931:

"In order to preserve her supremacy on the seas, England has waged two great wars, one against the France of Napoleon, and the other against Germany under William II. In each case she was all but exhausted. To-day, in a mere decade, without a war, without a struggle, without seeming to care, this same England—is she the same?—has renounced her supremacy, at least in principle, at the request of the United States. We are forced to regard this renunciation as a loss of prestige. The English would have you believe that it is simply common sense, and that it had to be done. If they feel humiliated they certainly do not show it. Furthermore, Balfour and MacDonald, the two men who in 1921 and 1929 negotiated the agreements which led to the present solution, both returned home from Washington in triumph. How do the British really feel about it in their innermost hearts?

"Since the beginning of the century the British Government seems to have made up its mind never to oppose the United States. It invariably gives way, as if it had decided always to do so. One recalls the line of Corneille: '*Ah, ne me brouillez pas avec la République!*' (Don't mess with the Republic!)

"England finds that she is faced with a growing force against which frontal resistance counts but little. She also knows that in the case of conflict between the two nations, it would be difficult for Canada to take the side of the Mother Country... Little by little this reasoning is being applied not only to Canada, but to all British possessions lying within the American zone... In the whole zone covered by the Monroe Doctrine, the fiction of sovereignty persists, although it is no longer complete—simply, it must not be mentioned. The vase is cracked. Do not touch it.

"England feels that she is confronted by a sort of elemental force, and has therefore put to one side all thoughts of competition in armaments... In what spirit have the British people received this new attitude, so little in keeping with their traditional pride? It has not affected the masses, and in the upper classes an important section, probably the most important, has accepted the *fait accompli* without grumbling. We would be perhaps right in saying that in this matter England

tolerates from the United States what she would never tolerate from any other power. 'Needs must...' the English seem to say...

"Perhaps they simply consider that the Empire must eventually dissolve into a greater Anglo-Saxon ensemble... If the Empire is destined to disappear, it could be replaced, to a certain extent, by a union of English-speaking peoples, which would bring the Anglo-Saxon race still more powerfully together..."

"This reaction is difficult for the French to understand but... it represents a rooted conviction... The American of the Middle West, moulded by the Ku-Klux-Klan, and the Orangeman of Belfast, will often react in the same way, but both will always be incomprehensible to the French. This reaction to the United States partially explains Britain's lassitude in not striving to retain by force her political control of the world. She is beginning to feel old. She naturally makes way for youth, especially since the youth is a member of her own family... By paying this price, the Empire can exist indefinitely in its present form, and British commerce can prosper" (*England's Crisis*, pp.238-43).

It seems to have been understood at the higher levels of the British State that the supremacy it had fought for in 1914 and achieved in 1918-19 was really an illusion. Britain had increased its Empire drastically in size but it was incapable of governing it as before or influencing the hinterlands around it (and these hinterlands were global). After expending so much blood and treasure in the pursuit of supremacy, England lacked the will to be the master of the world.

Britain realised its supremacy was an illusion—it was conditional on US toleration. This was a result of its refusal to negotiate a settlement with Germany on good terms during 1915-16. The terms Germany was willing to accept were generous, given its military performance, but England could not accept a draw at the conclusion of a Great War declared for world supremacy. A draw would be a defeat so only victory was tolerable. But victory turned out to be *pyrrhic*—Germany was beaten but Britain lost out to the US in beating the Hun into the ground.

So in the 1920s and 1930s Britain was the World Superpower under the sufferance of Washington. And Washington refused to aid it in running the world it had won.

Siegfried, seeing England gravitating toward the Atlantic, did not believe that England could ever really escape Europe:

"England cannot cut herself entirely adrift from the Continent which lies so

close to her, any more than Europe can consider herself complete without those two little islands which lie at her gates. Neither politically, economically, nor intellectually, can one long admit the thesis of a non-European England, out of touch with the Old World... Europe... is an irreplaceable market, and England realises that her prosperity rises and falls in sympathy with that of the Old World. It is sheer folly to think she can disentangle herself from Europe" (pp.245-6).

He believed that rather than choose between the Anglo-Saxon world and Europe—

"England will not choose at all. Faithful to her tradition and her genius, she will hover between the two groups, without giving herself completely either to one or the other. A European England is a dream... Vitality and flexibility have always been the strongest traits of the British nation... The Empire, and the spirit on which it thrives, have unlimited powers of adaption and life" (p.251).

Andre Siegfried saw Britain, despite its volatile position, as a fundamentally positive force for Europe. And yet England proceeded to flounder about the world it had won in its First Great War of the 20th Century, before declaring another—a Second World War—a few years later, with Continental Europe as its main battleground. Siegfried's France was an early victim.

R.W. Thompson's 1960 book *The Price of Victory* is an interesting read. It is about how D-Day marked the end of British power and the ascension of the US. It was preceded by a significant deal in mid-1940 in which the US broke its neutrality in the war by illegally supplying Britain with a couple of hundred redundant, reconditioned destroyers in return for the surrender of British sovereignty to the US in a number of territories, the first action of its kind since 1776:

"This day, the 6th June, was Britain's Swan song. It had been implicit after the Arcadia Conference, when the United States turned her back upon George Washington and put 'Germany first'. And steadily the 'Bill' had grown as it was bound to do, as Britain must have known it would. The 'Destroyer deal' hammered home the facts... The last British foothold on the Latin American Continent was threatened. Britain was not 'side-by-side' or 'hand-in-hand' with her great ally, but under her wing, finally under her thumb.

"General Marshall was not a semi-tone behind Stalin in clamouring for the 'Second Front' in 1942, in 1943. Perfidious Albion!

"In the Mediterranean, Britain fought a

rearguard action for time, but time was not on her side. With the agreement on 'Anvil' her Balkan and Mediterranean strategy was in ruins; at Teheran the coup de grace', 'Uncle Joe' and 'The President' keeping an eye on the wily old British with their 'Imperial' designs, their shocking 'Colonialism', their ridiculous delusions that their grandeur might survive.

"There was always a chance that the Germans might reach a point of near collapse to make 'Rankin' possible, but 'Unconditional Surrender' made that unlikely, and ruined the hope that the Germans might begin to put their own house in order, and deal with their maniac themselves. But 'Rankin' had not come off, and nothing had 'turned up.' No enemy is more ruthless than a friend.

"On D-Day Britain had paid, stripped to her uttermost farthing.' But there was still a slender hope that a miracle might happen, that Britain might be 'in at the death', and have a hand in the shape of victory. A miracle might happen at Caen... if Caen had fallen, if the armour could have rolled out into the open countryside beyond, Britain might have prevailed before the American build up overtook her..."

"It was, in the light of history, inevitable. On D-Day' Britain ceased to be a major power in the world, no longer even to shape her own ends. The new Europe would not be hers, or of her making. George Washington might have trembled in his grave!" (pp.257-8).

This is the true story of Britain's Second World War, stripped of its Churchillian salvage narrative. It describes a war being fought by allies for entirely differing reasons and a victory over Germany that was a triumph for the USSR and US and an utter defeat for British power over the world.

Thompson argued that, having put the whole of her overseas financial assets into the bungled World War Britain declared on Germany, she had, by 1944, 'shot her bolt'. The New World arrived late to save the old, but its objective was not the maintenance of the old order.

Thompson pointed out that for Britain the *Price of Victory* was the loss of accumulated wealth and her reduction to Second-Class Power status. For more than a year after the entry of the US into the war Britain had to bear the brunt of the expansive War she had declared, in the Middle East, Malaya, the Atlantic and at home. It was thereafter inevitable that the initiative and the key decisions on grand strategy would pass into the hands of the United States and Russia.

Thompson saw the two decisive events in the struggle for power as being Roose-

velt's spontaneous decision to demand "Unconditional Surrender" of Germany, and D-Day, when Europe was invaded by an army under American leadership, with the military object of a pure defeat of the German armies, rather than a situation like 1918. But the corollary of this is the German willingness to fight for Hitler to the bitter end.

Operation Rankin was a series of contingencies made in Britain for an occupation of continental Europe in the event of a premature German collapse, presumably under the effects of Britain's main offensive weapon of war, the strategic bombing of civilian areas. It was hoped that this would lead to the overthrow of Hitler and a second "stab in the back", giving Britain the opportunity to win the war without the hard ground fighting it was incapable of performing.

A writer in the British *Naval Review* of 1960-1 assessing the book noted;

"Though the author does not say so, this divergence between the U.S.A. and British world aims has been made abundantly clear since the end of the war, and the book gives some understanding of how the United States have done more to bring about the downfall of the British Empire as such than ever the Germans did in two wars."

*Operation Anvil (Dragoon)* is forgotten today. It was a very significant landing of US and French armies on the southern Mediterranean French coast two months after D-Day. It was originally supposed to have been simultaneous with the Normandy landings but was cancelled and only took place when the Germans halted the advance in Northern France. The US and French forces liberated Southern France and linked up with the Normandy landers, with minimal casualties in only four weeks, to form the 6th Army for an advance into Germany.

*Anvil/Dragoon* had the effect of rendering the Italian diversion (the British strategy for preventing General Marshall assaulting France in 1942 or 1943) meaningless. It also lengthened the American Front in the West, meaning a more substantial and collective force pressed the Germans, preventing British solo runs through the gaps created by US fighting. Britain was not allowed to determine the Peace this time, by piggy-backing on US effort.

Andre Siegfried wrote of none of this. But the fact he gave up writing about Britain and put his efforts into explaining the great Republic to the world says everything that needs to be said.

**Pat Walsh**

## Brexit And A Snap Election

Referring to communications between Irish and British officials over Brexit, John Callinan, Ireland's top Brexit official, is quoted by Ruadhán Mac Cormaic as saying "we're unrepentant about the level of close engagement and discussion" ("British government realises Brexit is a mistake, official says", April 14th).

Given the scale of the challenge to Irish interests represented by Brexit, it is legitimate to question the purpose of this close engagement. Is it as the article suggests "to push key Dublin concerns to the top of the Brexit agenda" or does it reflect a conviction that Ireland should be the UK's strongest ally in the EU?

In reality both aims are inextricable elements of the Anglo-Irish relationship of recent years. By continuing the close alignment with the UK that obtained pre-Brexit, the Government is allowing Ireland to be cast in the role of the UK's proxy in Brussels.

Is that a stance that is likely to win us support within the EU? Is it compatible with the solidarity now expected between EU member states?

As the Brexit negotiations are about to commence we suggest that close engagement on matters pertaining to the negotiations between Irish officials and their UK counterparts are wholly inappropriate.

**Dave Alvey,**

*Irish Political Review Group*

*Irish Times, 19.4.17*

## Shite, Onions And 'The Times' Of London

A letter (March 23) from Professor Craig Sharp of Birmingham, a former veterinary surgeon, takes issue with one Andrew Ellison, who, (Mar 18) in *The Times* was quoted as saying the word "shite" was by far the favourite swear word of Britons, and who in turn quoted one Professor Simon Horobin in dating its earliest use as an expletive to James Joyce's "*Ulysses*" in 1922.

I'm perhaps less travelled in the realms of shite than a former veterinary surgeon and in language and literature than Professor Horobin, but I'm sure the latter scholar is mistaken. For James Joyce himself in 1912 wrote an angry poem—"Gas From A Burner" containing the expression, "*Shite And Onions*", which was published in Trieste that year.

Joyce was a Dubliner but borrowed the expression from his Corkonian father. Some reader familiar with "*How They Brought The Good News From Aix To Ghent*" might write lines inspired by the traffic of Shite from Cork to Trieste via Dublin. They might even earn a Gong—if they can stand the Pent!).

My guess is that shite is a variant of *scheisse* and arrived in England before Prince Albert, before the Hanoverians and most probably with the Angles, Saxons and Jutes and other rude forebears of today's Englishmen. Indeed it's what their forebears did in the woods when they were still Papists.

Professor Sharp, the former veterinary surgeon, traces literary shite to Scotland, long before James Joyce and even William McGonagle whose *oeuvre* was replete

with it, to Robert Burns and his poem "*Grim Grizzel*" of 1795.

Grizzel was the wife of a dairy farmer and she demanded that the cow drop her dung just where she wanted it. Her herdsman, John o'Clods, presumably a yokel was less simple than her and told her cows did not perform to order, so she took to instructing the beast herself-

"Shite, shite ye bitch" Grim Grizzel roar'd,  
Till hill and valley rang;  
"Shite, shite ye bitch," the echoes roar'd.  
LIncluden wa's Amang

A priest uncle of mine in West Cork used tell a story of a Parish Priest scandalised on hearing a maid remarking that the butter was soft as shite. He told the cook who said "*I wouldn't worry, Father, that wan's as ignorant as my arse*".

Seriously, though, there's no limit to shite in "*The Times*" as regular readers of my blogs will have gathered. The same day as the letter quoted (Thursday, March 23 2017), the paper had an editorial headed "*War and Peace*", sub-headed "*The life of Martin McGuinness, the former IRA leader, shows that it is right to talk to your enemies and right not to give in to them*."

It goes on to assert that "*Mr McGuinness was once a leader of an organisation committed to the use of violence to achieve objectives that were democratically impossible*". Really? In 1918 Sinn Fein took 73 of Ireland's 105 Parliamentary seats and the Nationalists a further 6 in an election "*considered on all sides as a plebiscite*" according to one London newspaper. If I'm not mistaken it was "*The Times*" of London. Nobody who knows their onions can trust that paper. It has long been criminally dishonest.

**Donal Kennedy**

Does  
It  
Up

Stack  
?

#### ELECTRIC CARS

An Taisce recently “called on” Fine Gael Minister Michael Noonan to change Vehicle Registration Tax (VRT) so as to encourage consumers to buy electric cars!

An Taisce is a body which is supposed to be protecting Ireland’s natural heritage and I suppose “*natural heritage*” includes clean air. But An Taisce is actually proposing that electric cars are cleaner than diesel-fuelled cars! An Taisce must surely be receiving invoices for electricity usage at its Taylor’s Hall Headquarters in Dublin and, if the invoice is studied, it will show that electricity is one of the more environmentally “dirty” ways to fuel anything. Electricity Ireland invoices state that each Kilowatt-hour, i.e. unit, of electricity, produces 476 grams of Carbon Dioxide emissions.

This is a lot of Carbon Dioxide and one unit of electricity does not take you very far in a car.

The reason why Electric Ireland’s electricity necessarily produces so much Carbon Dioxide—and many other gases also—is because there are huge losses of energy in the friction generated in the generating plants and losses in transmission over long distances. One tonne of coal or oil used directly to heat your home may heat you for a year or more whereas one tonne of coal or oil used in a Power Station may heat your home for two or three months.

But of course, the Carbon Dioxide and Sulphur fumes are emitted far away from your home or your car when you use electricity. The effect on the overall environment is more severe using electricity.

And enormous, truly enormous, volumes of carbon dioxide, as well as sulphurous and nitrous gases, are emitted in the manufacture of cement, steel, copper and plastics—all used in the manufacture of electricity generating plants, whether they be fuelled by coal, oil, peat, wind or waves. But we’re not aware of all of that because it takes place elsewhere.

No! Electricity is not as clean as it looks. As generated at present it is just as dirty as any other energy source. And extremely dangerous too in countries such

as the UK and France where it is generated from Nuclear Power. To say electricity is “clean” does not stack up unless it is generated from Solar power at the location at which it is used. For example, by the installation of solar panels on the roofs of houses, cars or trains. But of course there is huge advertisement in all the media about how electricity is a “green energy”. Politicians especially have reacted to industry inducements to put policies in place that make it look as if by using such “green energy” one is being responsible about the environment.

All this is pure hokum, and nothing more than propaganda. Recently we were treated to the ludicrous sight of the media/elite fawning over the American actor Leonardo de Caprio being given an award for being one of the environment biggest supporters—but, as he was in Cannes, he flew back to New York by his private jet—picked up his award and speechified about how we plebs should be more forward looking by going green—and then that night he flew back to continue his partying in Cannes, France—yes again by private jet, issuing huge volumes of Carbon Dioxide. Who is coddling whom?

#### FLOODING.

Now is the time of year when remedial works should be done to prevent Winter flooding on the River Shannon. However, nothing meaningful is being done. The Office of Public Works (OPW) does a great job with things such as the restoration of castles and notable houses but when it comes to big engineering and construction work, the OPW is not provided with sufficient funding, which is a national disgrace.

What a real leader of Ireland would do about Shannon flooding is to build a capacious canal from Shannonbridge (near Clonmacnoise) to Galway Bay. Such a canal could then be used to drain off surplus water from the Shannon at times of flooding and in Summer such a canal would be a major tourist asset. The building of it would greatly benefit the economy and, as a by-product, it would provide a much-needed educational resource for engineering students and geologists. Is it too much to hope for that this common-sense solution to the Shannon flooding problem might be adopted by our Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Fine Gael?

It never ceases to amaze me that the media for some time now are seeking a change of leadership of the Government.

They mention two names in particular as being up for the job—the very ambitious

Dubliner Leo Varadkar, Minister for Social Protection and his supposed opponent Cork man Simon Coveney, Minister for Housing. But the thing is, not one of the three have different policy agendas—they literally are all the same when it comes to politics. If one of them were advocating leaving the EU for example—well now that would really give us all a chance to engage in real policy issues. But such is simply not the case! It seems to be that the media are a bit sick of Enda and want a change simply for that reason. Overall, the present Taoiseach has been a good leader and why can’t he remain? Oh but that will not sell papers and there always has to be some excitement in this 24 hour media cycle.

I really do despair that instead of looking at real issues like flooding which costs so much to so many that the click bait instead has to be about who has a more typical (?) lifestyle than someone else. Really?

#### MEDIAEVAL IRELAND AND RELIGION

On 19th April a most interesting lecture was delivered by Fr. Colmán O Clabaig OSB to the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society on the subject of “*Religion and Society in Mediaeval Youghal*” which was very well attended. On the aspects of the English Reformation as it affected Ireland, Fr. O Clabaig said it was pursued with particular savagery—destroying great works of religious art such as stained glass windows, beautiful gold-embroidered vestments, sculptures and altar-plate. Only six mediaeval chalices for example survive in Ireland today. Illuminated manuscripts were burned as a result of which—with the notable exception of the Book of Kells—nearly all the surviving Irish manuscripts today are in libraries such as Milan, Regensburg, Berlin, St.Gall and the Bodleian in Oxford.

High Altars in the intentionally ruined churches were targeted and destroyed. These usually had notable sculpted features. Painted Rood Screens were burned and we now depend on examples from France and other parts of Europe to show us what we have lost here in Ireland.

Fr. O Clabaig had his truly outstanding scholarly and very beautiful book published by Four Courts Press. It is called ‘*The Friars in Ireland 1224-1540*’. As he said himself, the work—

“surveys the history, lifestyle and impact of the friars in Ireland from the arrival of the Dominicans in 1224 to the Henrician campaign to dissolve the religious houses in 1540. It constitutes the first attempt to examine the mendicant phenomenon as a whole rather than

focusing on individual orders and friaries."

In response to a question from me about the monasteries that went before the Norman Invasion, he replied that the Orders were introduced to Ireland only then as before that, the old Irish had their own monasteries around local figures such as St. Kieran, St. Brendan and St. Brigid for example.

It would be great if more such gifted scholarship were allowed a wider audience—not just to the general public but to those studying in academia, as our univer-

sities are now very cold and chilling (to paraphrase former Minister Alan Shatter on a totally different topic!) places for such scholars as these.

#### CORK CRANES IN

#### \$130M PUERTO RICO VENTURE

Tom MacSweeney, in his much admired 'Sea Echoes' column (see *Evening Echo* 5 April 2017), had some very good news that went almost unnoticed nationally:

"Three massive container cranes built at Cork Dockyard by the German Liebherr Killarney-based company have arrived in Puerto Rico where they will be part of

a \$130million dollar development of the San Juan Terminal by the international Crowley Maritime Corporation of San Francisco. They created huge public interest [in Cork] when they were shipped from Cork Harbour by the heavy-lift vessel, Albatross. The Crowley Company was started by the son of Irish immigrants to the United States in 1872. Tom Crowley began by rowing passengers and freight from the San Francisco quayside to tall ships anchored in the Bay."

Now that is the kind of story that we need more of in this country.

Michael Stack ©

## Reflections On Irish Labour Party Conference

The Labour Party Conference was held in Wexford on 21st to 23rd April. The pre-Conference propaganda said there would be 1000 present. Those that thought there would be 300 at most were surprised to see about 500.

In 2014 and 2015 annual state funding of of nearly 3 million was received by the party, most of which was spent on staff and admin. Presumably that is now much reduced. In comparison, only peanuts is received from membership. It is not clear what the Trade Union contribution is.

By contrast to previous conferences the SDLP (Colm Eastwood) and the British Labour Party (Jeremy Corbyn) were not in evidence.

The motions etc were sensible enough as far as they went, as were the speeches and debate, though the range of motions was much reduced.

There were strong contributions on the restoration of a tier of Local Government (Town Councils, Corporations) which was removed by the Fine Gael/Labour Coalition.

As far as the actual mechanics of a Labour Party presence in politics goes, this must be the single determining factor. Without a core of local reps attending to local needs, where can a contingent of Dáil reps come from? Labour is not like SF or some other parties whose primary energy comes from somewhere else, and who are only too ready and eager to add the local rep function to their electoral armoury.

The Labour Party was actually in government with arch-Blueshirt Phil Hogan and must have consented to his removal of this key source of local Labour Party activity. Talk about turkeys voting for Christmas! Maybe they thought the liberal agenda was the way of the future!

As to the future, it appears that they now want to return to their historic Trade Union

roots—officially at least. Jack O'Connor, ex-SIPTU, was appointed Chairman without challenge. SIPTU's George Cummins ran for Treasurer. Whether this new departure will work, or whether it is now too late to salvage anything, hangs in the balance. The liberal agenda wing of the party may be down, but it is far from out.

The party has a publication on Work, emphasising rights, representation, the gig economy etc. But nothing on training. If the party is banking on employment and investment continuing to come from pharmaceutical companies and Internet Technology, with 'training' provided in universities/colleges, this is short-sighted. It would be more to the point to take a take a lead from Singapore which always tries to keep at least one step ahead, with one foot in the present and the other one in the future.

The elephant in the room was the Irish Water issue. The party is heavily compromised by involvement in this fiasco, but the subject was avoided. Same with Brexit, though there some inconsequential publication which referred to the loss of "our UK ally in Europe".

Likewise, in a world teetering on the brink of war, there was not a mention of Neutrality. However, there was an Executive motion on Palestine independence.

The Northern Ireland issue was also evaded, just at the moment when Brexit has thrown everything into the melting pot. Is this down to lack of interest, lack of imagination, or merely lack of balls?

Free State-ism appears to be deeply embedded in the LP remnant. But the more successful forms of politics in the South seem to be able to tack and weave between Free State-ism and Republicanism. Even the Provisionals, as unorthodox Republicans, seem to be acquiring this capacity.

\*

Wexford is a shabby little County town, absolutely laden with history, and probably on its way to high-value boutique/museum tourism standing. It is the gateway to Rosslare Harbour. With its motorway/rail links all the way down from Larne, the latter must surely become the primary post-Brexit EU/Ireland port.

The south coast had thriving trade links with France and Spain until it was reduced to smuggling by the 18th century. Why shouldn't these trade routes be resuscitated for the Brexit era? Only for dyed-in-the-wool West Brits does "Fog over the Channel mean that the Continent is cut off"!

The present LP leader Brendan Howlin comes from Wexford. He was a school-teacher who came into politics on an environmental issue—when a nuclear plant was proposed for Carnsore in the County. Historically there was a Labour movement there, based on a farm machinery engineering industry (Pierces, Doyles, maybe others), now long gone. There were big strikes there at the beginning of 20th century, comparable to Dublin Lockout etc. The last remnant of this Wexford political heritage was Brendan Corish, LP leader in 1960s, who was very Free State-ist, or at least very Catholic anyway.

The nearby town of Enniscorthy was taken over and occupied by republicans throughout Easter Week 1916, and only surrendered on orders after the Dublin surrender. Presumably the British Army just left the place alone. Of the numerous historic monuments in Wexford town itself, one of the most impressive is the Republican Garden of Remembrance which looks like it is the responsibility of Republican Sinn Féin.

The whole County is chock-a-block with monuments of hardy-looking guys with pikes. (Liberal shudders!)

Actually Wexford has salutary lessons

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22,  
COLUMN 2

## DEMOCRACY continued

Unrivalled? A miserly \$390,000 compared to the €25 million received by the same-sex marriage brigade: of which not a mention in the *Irish Independent!* To quote an "*Independent*" slogan: *Before you make up your mind, open it—Aye, Indeed!*

### INDIVIDUALISM v. COMMUNITY

These developments appear to be part of a series of campaigns for individual rights that are backed by the modern State.

But there is one right which is suffering as a result of the onward march of individual rights—the right to freedom of conscience—and it is no coincidence that, with every advance of the rights of individuals, comes an commensurate undermining of communities. We can see this in the way in which Christians are increasingly compelled to adapt to things like gay and feminist rights and the rights of individual workers emphasised as a means of undermining the communal expression of workers through their Trade Unions and community organisations.

manages the Health Service) is suspending disbursement of 200,000 Euro which it had agreed to give the organisation. (The grant of public money to campaigning groups is a separate issue, which cannot be examined at this time, but there are questions to be answered as to why public funds are diverted to 'Charities' in general; the value of the work that they do; and on the management costs of such bodies.)

Anyone who missed RTE's interview with Ms Duggan and relied on press reports would not have got a full picture of the extent of her allegations. Even the RTE website only spoke of financial irregularities, failing to mention the crucial issue of use of charitable resources for political purposes. Paul Cullen in the *Irish Times* did mention the "*breach of rules on political campaigning and financial management*" and did refer to Kieran Rose's Seanad campaign, but failed to do justice to the extent of Ms Duggan's revelations. He also provided 'balance' by quoting former Minister for Health Leo Varadkar stressing the "*really important work*" done by Glen (17.4.17). There was no 'in-depth' follow-up, as might have been expected.

This approach can be contrasted with how a Catholic institution would have been treated in a similar situation. The attitudes of the new Establishment have changed: but the group-think remains. Áine Duggan, though guarded in what she said, has breached this code, and for that she must be given credit.

## What Happened At GLEN?

It seems that there has been the use of funds for political purposes by a registered Charity, in breach of its obligations, but the media has given only limited coverage of allegations made—omitting or playing down salient facts.

Áine Duggan took up her role as Chief Executive of the *Gay and Lesbian Equality Network* in October 2016, replacing Brian Sheehan who had held the position since 2007. The organisation was founded in 1988. She had previously been President of *Re:Gender*, a United States group. She is a strong campaigner for homosexual equality and has promoted the idea that story books introduce children to gender issues at a very young age.

Despite her credentials, Ms Duggan has been forced out of GLEN by "*internal discord*" (RTE 17.4.17) after reporting governance irregularities and possible financial misappropriation to the Charities Regulator. In particular she found that the Charity's resources had been used for political purposes.

Interviewed on RTE's *Morning Ireland*, Ms Duggan gave an account of what she found when taking up her position. She spoke of "*grave issues*" being at stake—of a "*lack of budget controls*", with parallel sets of accounts (the Board being shown Management Accounts but denied knowledge of a detailed Debtor Page which set out where money actually went); resources used for political campaigning; and of multiple Credit Cards being used. There was a failure to ensure that public money granted for one purpose was not spent on another. She declared that she could not say that there was no misappropriation. The practices went back a decade. She thought upwards of 60,000 Euro was in question.

The political campaigning, in breach of charitable status, which she mentioned on *Morning Ireland* was the attempt to win a Senate seat by Glen's co-Chairman, Kieran Rose: Glen resources, offices and staff were used for this. (She mentioned that there had been two reimbursements to the organisation on this account. Rose has resigned his Chairmanship.)

Ms Duggan did not mention Glen expenditure on other campaigns, such as Marriage Equality or for repeal of the 8th Amendment.

As a result of these issues being raised, the Health Services Executive (which

## Irish Labour Party Report continued

for Free Staters in understanding Northern Ireland, if they were prepared to look at it honestly. These pike-Provos took it out on the Prods. They burned, shot and piked 100 or so civilian prisoners to death in a single

### Manipulating Public Opinion?

"In 2015, I raised issues about the enormous amounts of money that Atlantic Philanthropies was pouring into Glen. On its website, Atlantic Philanthropies details how it gave \$4,727,861 in a period from 2005 to 2010.

As a result, Glen went from a tiny organisation to a well-oiled lobbying machine virtually overnight, boasting about how it had access to successive ministers and how easy it was to gain their support. No one in the media was interested in establishing how that happened, or what impact it had on democracy in Ireland..." (Breda O'Brien, *Irish Times* 22.4.17).

incident. But, prior to the six-week 1798 rebellion, there had been a year or two of mad Orangemen burning and hanging all around them, culminating in whole parishes sleeping out in the ditches at night in fear of Orange attacks on them in their houses. In the hours before the Scullabogue burning/piking massacre by rebels, a "hospital" full of wounded rebels was burned in nearby New Ross by Government forces.

The same thing happened when Wexford was recaptured by the Government afterwards. This incident is commemorated by a plaque erected on the site last year, with the assistance of French Embassy. The graves of executed rebel leaders contain only heads, which were mounted on spikes as a terror-display when their bodies were trashed. The next step was a merciless campaign of murder, arson and rape across the defeated and defenceless county.

The land and sea forces deployed against County Wexford in May-June 1798 were numerically larger than the forces sent to Iraq by Tony Blair in 2003.

## DEMOCRACY continued

### THE LEGAL FRATERNITY

"At the end of last year, an alliance of barristers, solicitors and academics emerged under the banner of Justice Initiative. This group, which turns out to be supported by Open Society Foundation, has held seminars across the country and has been directly linked to some recent High Court rulings. Elsewhere, OSF has funded an initiative promoted by Merchant's Quay Project and the Ana Liffey Trust to facilitate the opening of so-called supervised injection facilities. This strategy has recently been green-lighted by Cabinet and the first pilot drug-injecting centre is to open in Dublin later this year" (*Phoenix*, 7.4.2017).

### WHO IS SIPO?

The Standards in Public Office Commission is an independent body established in December 2001 by the *Standards in Public Office Act 2001*. It has six members and is chaired by a former Judge of the High Court. It has supervisory roles under four separate pieces of legislation. Its functions include supervising the disclosure of interests and compliance with tax clearance requirements, the disclosure of donations and election expenditure, the expenditure of State funding received by political parties and the registration of lobbying.

There are six members of the Standards Commission. It is chaired by a former Judge of the High Court, Mr Justice Daniel O'Keefe. The other members are Jim O'Keefe, former Fine Gael Deputy for Cork South-West, who during his 33 year political career served as Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State at the Department of Finance and the Public Service; Martin Groves, Clerk Assistant of Seanad Eireann; Seamus McCarthy, Comptroller and Auditor General; Peter Tyndall, Ombudsman; Peter Finnegan, Clerk of Dail Eireann; and Deirdre Lane, who is a Dail Eireann administrator, is also mentioned on the Standards in Public Office Commission Web site.

### AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

"That an organisation calling itself the Abortion Rights Campaign (ARC) should ever have denied that it was engaged in political activities seems, on the face of it, absurd... What's more interesting, in some ways, is that Amnesty International Ireland escaped the same fate" (*The Irish Catholic*, 30.3.2017).

In August, 2016, *The Irish Independent* ran a story that the Open Society Founda-

tion (OSF), a grant-making network established and funded by the Hungarian-American billionaire George Soros, was providing financial backing to organisations campaigning to widen abortion access worldwide. Among these, according to a leaked document, were three Irish-based groups:

"A strategy document for the OSF's Women's Rights Programme stated that among the foundation's strategic aims for the period 2016-2019 was work to 'advance sexual and reproductive rights', adding, as though Ireland's constitutional protections for the unborn had been a recent addition to our law, 'Specifically, we will challenge the wave of legislation valuing a foetus "equally" or more highly than a pregnant woman, like in Ireland's constitutional amendment.

"The three groups were the Abortion Rights Campaign, Amnesty International Ireland, and the Irish Family Planning Association to work collectively on a campaign to repeal Ireland's constitutional amendment granting equal rights to an implanted embryo as the pregnant woman (referred to as 'foetal personhood')..." (*Irish Catholic*, 30.3.2017).

### POLITICAL DONATIONS

Assuming the leaked document was genuine and reflected reality, it would seem, therefore, that three Irish-based bodies had at the very least put themselves into a difficult position in terms of Irish electoral law, working as they had allegedly done with a foreign body and with foreign money to change Ireland's Constitution.

Under the terms of the *Electoral Act 1997*, a "third party" is defined as someone who accepts for political purposes a donation exceeding €100 in value, with all such third parties being obliged to register with the Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPO).

The Act bars third parties from receiving such donations from individuals—other than Irish citizens—who reside outside the island of Ireland or an institution which does not maintain on the island of Ireland an office from which it carries on one or more of its main activities.

The Act understands 'political purposes' in four different ways, one of which is the direct or indirect promotion or opposition of—

"the interests of a third party in connection with the conduct or management of any campaign conducted with a view to promoting or procuring a particular outcome in relation to a policy or policies or functions of the Government or any public authority."

### 2015 REFERENDUM

Prior to the 2015 Same-Sex Marriage

Referendum, The magazine *Phoenix* (22.5.2015) gave a breakdown of the distribution of billionaire Chuck Feeney's 20 million dollars donations (17.6 million Euros):

GLEN (Gay and Lesbian Equality Network), 4.7 million dollars.

ICCL (Irish Council for Civil Liberties) 11.5 million dollars.

Marriage Equality, just under half a million.

LINC (Lesbians In Cork) 1.6 million dollars.

NLGF (National Lesbian, Gay Federation) 1.3 million dollars.

Joan Burton (then Tanaiste and Leader of the Labour Party) was questioned, briefly, about the buying of an Irish Constitutional Referendum by a US billionaire. She was particularly active in the campaign, and she brushed aside the question by saying that none of Feeney's millions were spent on the campaign.

All that meant was that the money was disbursed before the official three weeks of the campaign began. It may be argued that none of this money bought votes and that young people were genuinely enthused about the Equality message that went out. But that is not how things work in real life.

This is not Atlantic Philanthropies funding a hospital or school. This is foreign money being systematically invested to change public opinion, to deliver seamlessly a Yes in a referendum that had enormous consequences for family law for generations.

\*\*\*\*\*

"Tom McGurk: A referendum Yes campaign funded by €25 million from the U.S. and complex arguments reduced to marketing slogans says little for the integrity and dignity of our democracy" (*Sunday Business Post*, 24.5.2015).

\*\*\*\*\*

### MEDIA COVERAGE

Coverage of the *Irish Catholic* account received little or no attention in the Irish print media: the *Irish Times* relegated the story to a few paragraphs and didn't even mention that the Standards in Public Office Commission had threatened to report Abortion Rights Campaign to the Gardai if the money was not returned to the Open Society Foundation forthwith.

Compare the focus the Irish media concentrated on Sinn Fein: "*Gerry Adams's party is unrivalled in its capacity to generate huge sums of cash in the U.S.*" (*Irish Independent*, 9.6.2015).

continued on page 22



**LABOUR**

# Comment

ISSN 0790-1712

VOLUME 35 No. 5

CORK

ISSN 0790-1712

**"All the while soothing us by spinning it as just 'seventeen little words'%. Can American money buy an Irish referendum? Let's wait and see." (Breda O'Brien, *Irish Times*, 9.5.2015).**

We found the answer to that on 22nd May 2015 in the Same-Sex Marriage Referendum!

## Democracy v The Dollar!

"A group campaigning for the abolition of Ireland's constitutional protections for the unborn returned a grant of \$24,999 to the US-based Open Societies Foundation after being directed to do so by the Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPO), *The Irish Catholic* (30.3.2017) has learned.

"According to documents released under the Freedom of Information Act, the Abortion Rights Campaign (ARC) returned the grant, originally worth almost €23,000, maintaining it was doing so 'without prejudice' to the findings of the commission, which it rejected.

"A.R.C. are a leading campaign group in support of the repeal of the Eighth Amendment of the Irish Constitution".

The group received the grant in January 2016 and said: "*The grant was received to fund educational and stigma-busting projects*" (ibid.)

Documents leaked in August 2016 claimed that *Open Society Foundation* (OSF), which is bankrolled by Hungarian-American billionaire George Soros, intended to challenge Ireland's constitutional protections for the unborn by funding the Abortion Rights Campaign, Amnesty International Ireland, and the Irish Family Planning Association to work collectively on a campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland.

Despite this, when the Standards In Public Office Commission asked Abortion Rights Campaign last August to submit copies of correspondence with the US-based Foundation, including its funding application, it said funding received from the U.S. had not been used for political purposes and was exempt from SIPO oversight.

Claiming that SIPO's approach was "*draconian*" and impinged their right to

freedom of association, the group only furnished the watchdog with the requested documentation after SIPO's head of Ethics and Lobbying Regulation, Sherry Perrault, informed them that if this did not happen they would refer the matter to An Garda Síochána.

In its response of 25th November 2016, S.I.P.O. reiterated the law and noted that ARC's application letter could hardly have been more specific.

In responding to the question, "*What are you applying for?*", ARC had stated: "Purpose of project—to engage, energise, mobilise and provide self-education opportunities on issues of sexual health, reproductive rights and abortion in Ireland with a strategic goal of garnering support for repeal of the Eighth Amendment of the Irish Constitution, reducing abortion stigma, and increasing grass roots engagement."

The Standards In Public Office Commission subsequently informed the group

that their application showed that, as they had sought overseas funding for a campaign with a domestic political purpose, they were in breach of the law, and that An Garda Síochána would have to be informed if the donation were not returned. While rejecting this verdict, the group returned the donation in November 2016.

Faced with similar requests from SIPO last Autumn, the Irish Family Planning Association said it was not a campaigning body and had used the €132,000 it had received for charitable and educational purposes—the Commission did not pursue the matter further.

Amnesty International Ireland, meanwhile, said the €137,000 it received was used to campaign for Ireland to "*bring its law on abortion into compliance with international human rights law and standards*". Amnesty Ireland's Executive Director Colm O'Gorman said Amnesty does not generally consider itself to come under SIPO's jurisdiction as work for the "*protection and promotion of human rights as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments*" does not constitute work for "*political purposes*".

This claim was, however, rejected by the Pro Life Campaign, with spokesperson Cora Sherlock accusing Amnesty of—

"hiding behind 'human rights' language instead of openly accepting that they are running a highly political campaign to dismantle the Eighth Amendment" (*The Irish Catholic*-30.3.2017).

What is not clear, however, is why the other two investigated bodies did not ultimately face the same treatment.

Subscribers to the magazine are regularly offered special rates on other publications

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

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

**33 Athol Street, Belfast BT12 4GX or  
2 Newington Green Mansions, London N16 9BT**

or ***Labour Comment***, TEL: 021-4676029  
C/O Shandon St. P.O., Cork

**Subscription by Post:**

**12 issues:** Euro-zone & World Surface: €40;  
Sterling-zone: £25

**Electronic Subscription:**

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

You can also order from:

**<https://www.atholbooks-sales.org>**

continued on page 23