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Biological Politics
(Senator Mansergh and others)

Says Collins To De Valera . . .

Story Of ILDA
(back page: *Labour Comment*)

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Northern Ireland

Statecraft

When Gerry Adams suggested the disbanding of the IRA in order to deprive the Unionists of an excuse for not working the Agreement, Peter Robinson responded by confirming that the existence of the IRA was only an excuse. The *Irish News* headline on 11th August was *Robinson: End To IRA Not Enough*:

"The DUP, he said, simply will not sign up to go back to the kind of political institutions that exist in the Good Friday Agreement just because the IRA does what it should have done years ago".

Disbanding the IRA is a necessary precondition to the negotiation of further concessions by the nationalist side which would lead to the re-establishment of devolved institutions. The disbanding would have to be done in public: "*Unionists want to weigh the decommissioned semtex*".

Robinson did not spell out the further concessions in this statement, but it has various other ways in mind of humiliating the republican movement. But, more important, the DUP statement of its strategic position following its electoral victory over Trimble's party made it clear that its object was a form of devolution which operated by majority rule, with the Ministers of the various departments acting under the authority of the Assembly.

This means that its rejection of the Agreement in 1998, before the IRA had the opportunity of disbanding under it, still holds. It will not agree to the restoration of

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The Secret Cult Of *The Irish Times*

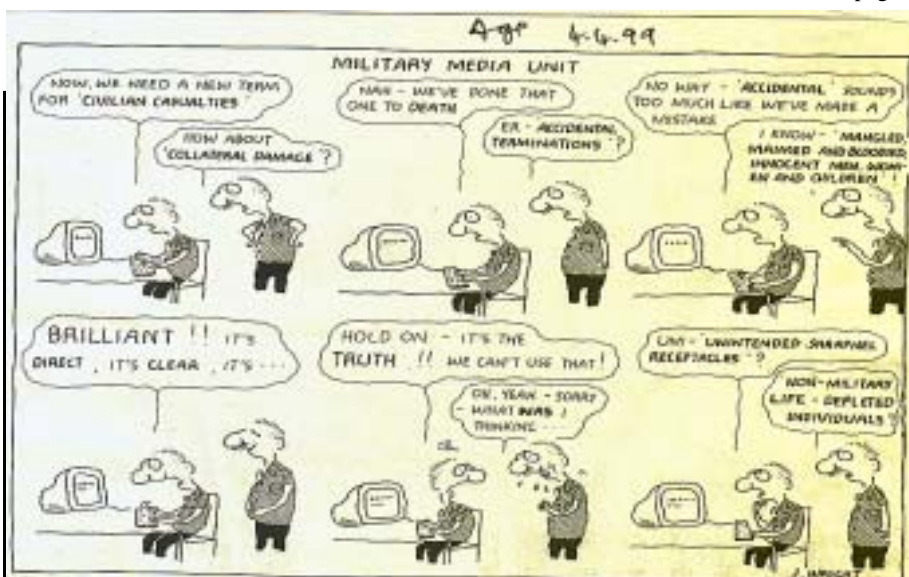
In the July 2004 issue of the *Irish Political Review* I revealed that Article 50 of the 1974 Articles of Association of The Irish Times Ltd required all Directors to swear an oath. The relevant article and oath ran to three pages and included a paragraph on secrecy and a requirement not to be active in politics or to be a clergyman.

At the time I wrote my review of the 1974 Articles I was aware that such an oath had been in force for at least five years after 1974. But I assumed that Article 50 had been deleted some time in the 1980s. I couldn't believe that any self respecting Director who was not a member of the Freemasons or some other secret organisation could swear such an oath year after year without kicking up about it.

Also a lot has happened since 1974. The first Catholic, Conor Brady, was appointed Editor and Director in December 1985. He was succeeded by another Catholic, Geraldine Kennedy, the current Editor. I can't remember whether swearing such secret oaths was a venial or mortal sin but I know that it was generally frowned upon by the Catholic Religion. But maybe in these "enlightened" times such obscurantism is perfectly acceptable. (Incidentally, the oath requires Directors to affirm Christian values, which sits strangely in this modern multi-cultural era.)

The other reason why I had assumed that it had been deleted was that around 2001 the affairs of *The Irish Times* came

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

Off The Rails: ILDA

devolved institutions under the Agreement, regardless of what the IRA does.

Trimble appears to be a spent force. We described his position from the start as that of *saboteur* of the Agreement from within, and we see no reason to revise that opinion. He signed the Agreement under duress. Blair cornered him personally and threatened that the alternative for Unionism would be worse if he did not sign. So he signed. And within minutes he gave a press conference which was essentially an anti-Agreement speech. And so he continued for four years. And then, with the Agreement reduced to shreds, and Blair preoccupied with the destruction of Iraq, the way was open for a straightforward Unionist rejection of the Agreement.

In truth, the Unionist electorate never agreed to the Agreement. It was bamboozled and manoeuvred into voting for it by Tom Kelly, who was recruited from the BBC by Blair to be his Dr. Goebbels. Having gained the spurious assent of the Unionists to the Agreement, Tom Kelly was promoted to Downing Street where he deployed his black arts against Dr. Kelly, who had blurred out the truth about Blair and Iraqi w.m.d. to Andrew Gilligan.

Trimble sacrificed his party to the cause of fundamentalist Unionism. The cause has now been taken up by the partner with whom he danced the Orange jig at

Drumcree ten years ago.

Adams has said that the transfer of police powers to a devolved government is a condition of further progress. Robinson is in favour of the transfer of policing in the long run, which means after majority-rule devolution has been regained.

IRA Show No Signs Of Going Away Says Orde. Orde is the Chief constable of the RUC in its new guise. He is quoted as follows:

"There is nothing to say currently that the Provisional IRA have done anything to shut up shop" (Irish News, 24th August).

The IRA is of course a legal body since 1998, and the 1998 conditions under which it undertook to fade away were not met.

Orde made his statement after Gerry Kelly and his colleagues had stood between his policemen and nationalists who were attacking them in Ardoyne on the famous 11th Night, the night before July 12th. "*Thank heavens they were there*", said the Chief Constable, after Kelly had incurred injuries from police (a broken wrist) and from nationalists (bruises) while protecting the coercive apparatus of the State.

Orde has become a very political policeman. At the end of last year he fuelled a particular anti-Sinn Fein campaign with a statement that the IRA had engaged in kidnapping in central Belfast. No prosecutions followed. The

purpose was not to prosecute crime but exert political pressure. Then, in a bizarre turn of events, the alleged victim of the alleged kidnapping was arrested and charged with murderous intent. It was generally understood that he was being punished for failing to substantiate the allegation of kidnapping—an allegation over which the Minister for Justice in Dublin and the leader of the Opposition waxed eloquent. The Bobby Tohill case was very much in the news for a while. It was taken up by the Independent Monitoring Commission, a subservient group consisting of Lord Alderdice and a few other time-servers, which tried to confuse itself in the public mind with General de Chasterlaine's really independent International Monitoring Commission (which has its status under the Belfast Agreement). On 20th August the charges against Tohill were withdrawn without explanation, but the fact hardly registered in the news. Such is public life in Belfast under the suspended Agreement.

Brian Feeney, who is by far the best political commentator writing for the press in Ireland, suggests that Adams, in his remarks about disbanding the IRA, is not primarily concerned about depriving the Unionists of an excuse. (And it has been our opinion ever since Trimble's first post-Agreement press conference that one excuse would be followed by another in an infinite series.) He says in the *Irish News* of 25th August: "*If the IRA has to stand down the DUP may provide a useful excuse but the real reason is to be found in Dublin*".

Sinn Fein now has eggs in two baskets. And it is the only party in Ireland engaged in what might be called statecraft.

Aspects Of British Propaganda During The War Of Independence

A talk by

Dr. Brian Murphy OSB
on

Friday, October 15th, 8pm
at

**The Teachers Club,
36 Parnell Square, Dublin**

All welcome
Sponsored by Athol Books

The following letters failed to receive publication in the *Irish Times*

A "Get Ó Caoimh" Campaign ?

I never cease to wonder how the "Irish Times", which preens itself on its self-proclaimed journalistic standards, can condone the kind of spin-journalism practised by some of its columnists. For instance, I have consistently submitted and have been as consistently denied publication of protests against the spinning of facts and flagrant disregard of incontrovertible, refuting evidence by such columnists as Kevin Myers, which is supported by Editorial compliance in his character-assassination of the heroic men and women of our Independence struggle.

On this occasion I refer to an article in criticism of Minister Éamon Ó Cuív by your columnist Martin Wall, in your edition of 9 August, which has only now come to my notice. Although hopelessly unfocussed and demonstrably unresearched, Wall's commentary snidely infers that Ó Cuív has been guilty of improper use of the State's official guest accommodation at Farmleigh House in the Phoenix Park, allegedly using the facility on "*a more frequent basis than any of his colleagues in Government*". The stricture was penned despite the fact that it was known to the writer that the Minister's use of the Farmleigh accommodation was strictly in accordance with the Cabinet's authorisation and for Government business.

I hasten to forestall the predictable- if irrelevant - response that, by coming to the defence of Éamon Ó Cuív, I must have a Party interest in this matter. I am not a member of any political party nor have I ever made the acquaintance of Minister Ó Cuív. My motivation is the simple concept of "Cothrom na Féinne" or fair play. When my work of 35 years in defence of human rights and in promotion of reconciliation, particularly in the context of the conflict in the North of Ireland, called for criticism of Southern Parties because of their neglect of the rights of our Northern people, my public strictures of some Party colleagues of Éamon Ó Cuív were as unequivocal as my defence of the Minister is now.

If truth had been Mr. Wall's criterion, a few simple phone calls would have confirmed much of what most reasonably - informed people - especially professional journalists - should have known, anyway.

He would have learnt that there were quite a number of good reasons pertinent to Cuív's job why he had to stay in Farmleigh. Only editorial limitation on column space prevents me from detailing these at length - although Mr. Wall has, of course, direct access to that information.

The additional cost to the taxpayer for his accommodation in Farmleigh is I reckon a matter of two Euros per night.

Minimal research would also have revealed to Mr. Wall that Éamon Ó Cuív is entitled to the standard, temporary accommodation expense of E134 per night - which he has consistently refused to draw while staying in Dublin.

And the ne plus ultra in magnanimity!

Some short years ago Ó Cuív was bequeathed a house valued at E500,000. The Minister - not a rich man by any standard, I understand - investigated the circumstances of the relatives of the testator and donated the house to be divided between them. Now here was an inspirational example of almost unprecedented magnanimity and professional probity which a sensitive pen could have used to lift us, even for one brief hour, out of the quagmire which threatens to suck our society into the Slough of Despond.

The sum total of Martin Wall's article is that it is somehow beyond his understanding that Minister Éamon Ó Cuív does not doss down in his sleeping bag in his Departmental office or even in the Phoenix Park.

And, Madame Editor, may we look forward with expectation to the next exciting episode of the Irish Times "Get-Ó Cuív" project, which might be an in-depth exposé of some other newsworthy revelation of National concern - a la the Irish Times - such as the frequency of Minister Ó Cuív's visits to the Leinster House Toilets!

Meanwhile we can only continue to speculate - but gradually with clearer light - as to what is the objective of these ill-conceived sorties against the reputations of honourable men.

Is mise, Criostóir de Baróid
Corcaigh. 18 August, 2004.

Moral Outrage

The nation is in the grip of moral outrage.

Because it was recently revealed that the Irish government participated in a public ceremony to honour a Co. Mayo recruit to the Waffen SS who was awarded the Iron Cross by Hitler for his military exploits on the Eastern Front in 1942.

Far-fetched? An unfair comparison with the Irish government's participation in the commemoration of a Co. Mayo soldier who received the Victoria Cross for his role in the suppression of the 1857 Indian Mutiny?

It is well known that Hitler's unsuccessful project in Eastern Europe was based on and copied from the very successful - and hence generally uncondemned - British genocide of the native populations of several continents. The subjugation of India, the millions who died in the multiple famines caused by the British destruction of Bengali agriculture in order to substitute opium crops for the Chinese market - which Britain fought several wars to promote - further confirm the validity of the Hitler model.

Today the so-called Mutiny is remembered in India as a heroic freedom struggle.

Given the context of starvation-ridden 19th century Mayo, perhaps it is gratuitous now to take Sergeant-Major Cornelius Coughlin (Victoria Cross) to task for fighting on the side of brutal oppression in India.

(In the circumstances the charitable thing is to draw a decent veil of oblivion over the affair.

But Madam, how do you suppose Ireland would react if the Indian government were to gratuitously honour some Hindu mercenary who distinguished himself in General Lake's bloody suppression of the 1798 "Mutiny" in Ireland?)

However, no such mitigation is available to sleek, well-nourished Fianna Fail Defence Minister Michael Smith.

Pat Muldowney
Derry, 9th August 2004

Check Out the *ATHOL BOOKS* website:

www.atholbooks.org

The Secret Cult Of *The Irish Times* continued

under scrutiny because of its financial problems in the midst of the economic boom. Around this time Major McDowell the “Director for Life” and “Governor for Life” had voluntarily relinquished these titles and ascended to that metaphysical “state of grace” otherwise known as “President of *The Irish Times* for Life”.

But of all the articles on *The Irish Times* by journalists from that newspaper and other journalists written at this time there was no mention of such an oath. So naturally I assumed that the oath must have been deleted.

Nevertheless, I requested a copy of the current Memorandum and Articles of Association of The Irish Times Ltd from the Companies’ Office and discovered that, unbelievably, the oath is still in operation. The *Irish Political Review* has a transcript of the relevant Article on Page 5. It must be re-sworn by existing Directors every year before a licensed Commissioner for Oaths.

Where does one start? How could grown men and women associate themselves with such a pompous oath? The last time this writer encountered an oath (or was it just a prayer?) was in the Boy Scouts. Perhaps all good Boy scouts and Girl Guides become directors of The Irish Times Ltd when they grow up. But even Boy Scouts and Girl Guides don’t have to swear an oath of secrecy.

The other thought that occurs to me is: how could grown men and women abase themselves by swearing such an oath and by implication accept that they were not to be trusted, if they didn’t swear such an oath?

I have already reviewed the 1974 oath in the July 2004 issue of the *Irish Political Review* and very little has changed since then. As I indicated in that article, the most interesting parts are the requirement to be almost independent of society. You cannot: be a “minister of religion”; have “been an elected member of any national or regional parliament or similar body” in the last five years; and be “more than a mere member of a political party or group”.

Arguably, if a newspaper affects to be

‘independent’ or ‘unbiased’, the Board of Directors should not have people with a political axe to grind. But another way of ensuring ‘unbiased’ reporting is to have a Board consisting of a sprinkling of all substantial political tendencies within the society. In my opinion The Irish Times Ltd Articles of Association ensure that only people who are not engaged with the society can be Directors of The Irish Times Ltd. I would also think that such people are totally unrepresentative of the society.

I don’t think it would be possible to think of a more unrepresentative person in Irish society than Major McDowell, the most powerful person in The Irish Times Group during most of the last 30 years.

With all due respect to the defenders of *The Irish Times*, the oath of secrecy requires a lot of explaining in an institution “believing in the duty of society to search for truth”. In my view, it re-enforces the independence of the institution from Irish society and enables it to act with the minimum of restraint from forces within that society. Was it Aristotle who said that someone who is independent of society must be either a God or a mad man? But there is another possibility: he could be part of a different society.

Although, the current Articles are similar to the 1974 Articles there is one substantial change. The Articles, dated 20th June 2002, allow in the second part of clause 4 b a connection with a “newspaper, periodical, or other publication other than The Irish Times”. I can only think that this was put in to facilitate the appointment of the Chairman of The Irish Times Ltd, Brian Patterson, in April 2002. Patterson is a Director of Waterford Wedgwood Plc, which is associated with the O’Reilly family who, of course, are Directors and major shareholders of The Independent Newspapers Group. I can’t say whether this connection alone required a change in The Articles or if he owns more than 1% of Independent Newspapers which also would have required a change. Either way, all very cosy when it is considered that he is also Chairman of the National Competitiveness Council!

But aside from the above, the oath has not changed much in 30 years. When one

reads something that is outside the normal range of experience it can be difficult to absorb its meaning.

For instance, when the Directors are gathered together at a General Meeting every year what is the atmosphere like? While they are uttering the words “search for truth”, “strive for a better quality of life for everyone” and “the promotion of understanding of other nations and peoples and a sympathetic concern for their well being” does anyone break out laughing? Perhaps not, after all the declaration must be made “solemnly and sincerely”.

Are the words uttered in a dull monotone or with the enthusiasm implied by the words “Declaration of Commitment”? Maybe at the beginning of the ceremony the words are spoken softly and at key points the tone rises to a hysterical shriek?

And then there is the choreography. Are individual copies of the “Declaration” handed out before the meeting or are the words projected on a giant screen so that everyone’s head is raised during the ceremony? Can the words be uttered standing up or sitting down? Is it necessary to raise your right hand or have some other gesture such as the Boy Scout salute?

In what formation are the Directors? Do they stand in a row facing the Commissioner for Oaths, or is there some other arrangement? I can see that there might be some logistical problems if they are required to stand in a circle holding hands. But to avoid neck strain and other problems the words of the declaration could be projected at strategic points in the room.

This brings me to the question of the room. Is there a special room set aside for such ceremonies, maybe one with soft lighting, a giant portrait of President McDowell and ambient music to put everyone in the mood?

And finally when the ceremony is over how does everyone feel about it? Do they feel better than other members of humanity? Do they shake each other’s hands and if so how? Are they weighed down by the burden of the responsibilities imposed on them or is there that warm after-glow of satisfaction, pleasure even, that consenting adults sometimes feel when they have done something in secret together? But I suspect that in these puritanical times a post coital cigarette is definitely out of the question!

Of course, this kind of thing might not be the taste of every Director, even a Director of The Irish Times Ltd. But 'doing a bunk' from the annual ceremony is not to be recommended. Truants from the General Meeting have to go before the 'Head Master' . . . Sorry, did I say 'Head Master'? I meant "Chairman" and "one other Director". And the Commissioner for Oaths must be summoned. The Articles of Association don't say whether the bold boy or girl can expect 'six of the best'. Neither do they indicate why it's necessary to have another Director present. Maybe it's to restrain the recalcitrant individual or to make sure that he doesn't cross his fingers behind his back when he is making the oath?

I have no information on whether resigning Directors require counselling to help them re-integrate themselves back into normal society (the secrecy clause

would perhaps make such an exercise pointless) but, if a Director, such as the Editor or Managing Director, decides that he would rather not continue on the Board, Article 49 (iv) might give him or her pause for thought. On ceasing to be a Director he shall "*ipse facto cease to hold such salaried office*".

Such is the rarefied world of The Irish Times Ltd: not just a newspaper but a way of life. Not just a way of life but a new "world religion" for special people, promoting "understanding of other nations and peoples and a sympathetic concern for their well being". And how sad that all its good works are conducted in secret. Such modesty should not only be acknowledged but proclaimed from the rooftops.

Let us all join hands and praise the Secret Cult of *The Irish Times*!

John Martin

effectively to the life of the community I will use my utmost endeavour to ensure that the following principles govern the publications of *The Irish Times*:

- i) That news shall be as accurate and comprehensive as is practicable and be presented fairly;
- ii) That comment and opinion shall be informed and responsible, and shall be identifiable from fact;
- iii) That special consideration shall be given to the reasonable representation of minority interests and divergent views.

4. That

a) I am not and have not been a minister of religion and I do not hold and have not held any similar position;

b) I am not connected with any newspaper, periodical or other publication other than The Irish Times or published by the Company or broadcasting medium, whether as proprietor, director, employee, shareholder or otherwise (other than as a shareholder in respect of not more than 1% of the issued shares of any class in a company the shares of which are quoted on any recognised Stock exchange, true and complete details of which shareholding (indicating whether the holding is direct or indirect and distinguishing between legal and beneficial interests in the relevant shares) have been disclosed in writing to the Chairman);

Or

I am connected with a newspaper, periodical, or other publication other than The Irish Times or published by the Company or broadcasting medium, whether as proprietor, director, employee, shareholder or otherwise (other than as a shareholder in respect of not more than 1% of the issued shares of any class in a company the shares of which are quoted on any recognised Stock Exchange, true and complete details of which shareholding (indicating whether the holding is direct or indirect and distinguishing between legal and beneficial interests in the relevant shares) have been disclosed in writing to the Chairman) and the Board of Directors has unanimously resolved, after true and complete details of the connection as referred to above (direct or indirect, legal or beneficial) have been disclosed in full and in writing, that it is in the best interests of the Company that I be eligible to be a Director which resolution (is)/(is not) subject to (any conditions, restrictions or recommendations)/(The following conditions, restrictions or recommendations)(insert conditions);

c) I am not and have not within the last five years been an elected member of any national or regional parliament or similar body;

d) I do not represent and have not represented within the last five years in

The Irish Times

DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

Text Of Oath Sworn Annually By The Editor And Each Director

i) Every Director shall, within 42 days of appointment, and at each Annual General Meeting or within 42 days before or after such meeting, in the presence of at least the Chairman or another Director nominated by the Chairman and one other Director, declare before a Commissioner for Oaths or other person authorised to administer oaths a Statutory Declaration within the meaning of the Statutory Declarations Act 1938 in the following form:

I, being a Director of The Irish Times Limited, do solemnly and sincerely declare and say as follows:

- a) Believing in the right of the individual to liberty in his thought, in his expression and in his person, to the respect and acceptance of his fellow men, to equality of opportunity and before the law, and in his duty to exercise his rights with due regard for the rights of his fellow men,
- b) Believing in the duty of society to search for truth and to strive for a better quality of life for everyone, and
- c) Believing in the principles of a constitutional democracy,

1. that I will use my utmost powers to maintain *The Irish Times* as an independent newspaper primarily concerned with serious issues for the benefit of the community throughout the whole of

Ireland free from any form of personal or of party political, commercial, religious, or other sectional control.

2. that I will use my utmost powers to ensure in the publication of *The Irish Times* an editorial policy with the following as its principal objectives;

- a) The support of constitutional democracy expressed through governments freely elected;
- b) The progressive achievement of social justice between people and the discouragement of discrimination of all kinds;
- c) The promotion of a society where the quality of life is enriched by the standards of its education, its art, its culture and its recreational facilities, and where the quality of spirit is instinct with Christian values but free from all religious bias and discrimination;
- d) The promotion of peace and tolerance and opposition to all forms of violence and hatred so that each man may live in harmony with his neighbour considerate of his cultural, material and spiritual needs;
- e) The promotion of understanding of other nations and peoples and a sympathetic concern for their well being;

3. That in pursuance of the foregoing and to enable the readers of *The Irish Times* to reach informed and independent judgments and to contribute more

national politics a political party or group or some national political aim;

e) I have no connection of such a nature as to be capable of causing the belief that I am more than a mere member of a political party or group;

f) My views are consistent with and I am committed to the objects of the Company and I know of no reason that would make me unsuitable to be a Director of the Company by reason of my pursuing as a member of a party or group or as an individual some particular political aim.

g) I will observe a strict secrecy respecting all transactions of the Company, all opinions given at meetings of the Directors and all matters which may come to my knowledge in the discharge of my duties except when required so to do by the Directors or by a Court of Law and that I will never disclose any such matters by hint, innuendo or otherwise save as aforesaid.

5. I make this declaration pursuant to

the Articles of Association of The Irish Times Limited conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Statutory Declarations Act,

DECLARED before me by of
who is personally known to me
at
this day of 20

Commissioner of Oaths (or other
Authorised person).

ii) Any Director who shall fail to make such declaration within such period as aforesaid shall, on the expiry of such period, cease to be Director and shall not be eligible for re-appointment unless and until he shall have delivered to the Directors a signed undertaking to complete such declaration immediately if re-appointed, but shall then be eligible to be re-appointed as a Director, but shall again cease to be a Director if he shall fail to make such declaration within fourteen days of such re-appointment.

imperialism. But what message is the Minister now sending out to our friends in former colonies or to those throughout the world who look to us as a model of anti-imperialism? Is it this: that it doesn't matter if you rape, plunder, and murder for an Imperial Power so long as you are an Irishman?

It's ironic that, as Smith and the pseudo republican establishment to which he belongs, stuff their revisionism down our throats, they conveniently forget the real British Army heroes in India such as the participants in the Connaught Rangers Mutiny. These were Irishmen who protested in 1920 at the excesses committed by their fellow British soldiers in Ireland. Their leader, James Daly, was executed and his friends sentenced to long periods of imprisonment. Some years ago when a mutineer, Charles Kerrigan of Sligo, was still living, RTE was asked on several occasions to interview him. The Station and the State ignored him.

But then, the men who made this country, who believed in the Republican ideal and were prepared to die for it, mean nothing to the Smiths of contemporary Ireland. Republican history for them is more or less bunk. Their one duty, as they unload themselves of the past and babble of "*new partnerships for the next generation*", is to rewrite it. But history, particularly Irish history, is much too serious to be left to the likes of Smith and his chums and has a habit of jumping into their face to remind them of what the past is and how important it still is to Irish people. Without knowing the past, as the man said, we cannot understand the present.

Archon

HERE and THERE

Michel Smith And The Indian Mutiny

Is Defence Minister Michael Smith really such a "consummate eejit" or does he sincerely believe that British soldier Sergeant Major Cornelius Coughlan should be remembered "*with the respect given to every Irishman who died fighting for peace*"?

Smith, last week-end, made hay with his presence at a British Army military ceremony in Westport, Co Mayo (Squaddie buglers, locals dressed in British military costume, British Ambassador etc.), at which he spoke proudly of Sgt. Major Coughlan's bravery during the Indian Mutiny in 1857 and his winning of the Victoria Cross. "*That he (Sgt Major Coughlan) participated in a military campaign that many people may frown upon today should not overly concern us*", the bould Soldier of Destiny remarked, "*nor was the ceremony about 19th century politics or the rights and wrongs of the British presence in India. It is simply an acknowledgement of the bravery of a forgotten Irish soldier*".

Try telling that to the people of India, or to the people of Delhi where the soldier's regiment carried out loathsome barbarities or, indeed, to the Indian Ambassador! Does Smith know that the founder of modern India, Jawaharlal Nehru, was

steeled to resist British Imperialism after a visit to Ireland where he was inspired by the Irish national struggle?

Sgt. Major Coughlan of the 75th Regiment (later the Gordon Highlanders whose record in the Six Counties the Minister did not mention) was far from "*a man of peace*". He was a representative of murderous thugs who were let loose like crazed Black and Tans on the Indian people. His job was to put down a spontaneous revolt by Indian soldiers and people who wanted to get rid of the British Raj. (The Indian Mutiny broke out in 1857 and galvanised the Indian sense of nationalism).

Here's what historian Jan Morris says about the British response to the insurrection.

"The *Times* demanded death for every mutineer: 'every tree and gable-end in the place should have its burden in the shape of a mutineer's carcass ...When the ground in front of every cannon is strewn with rags and flesh and shattered bone, then talk of mercy. Then you may find some to listen'."

Morris points out that no British Army in history was so inflamed with "furious passion as were the Queen's regiments in India then.. It was the most horrible of Imperial wars".

Yet Smith has the gall to say the Sgt. Major's actions were nothing more than "*a common commitment to his comrades and his regiment*".

SMITH'S MESSAGE?

Ireland is much respected abroad for its struggle against oppression and

Launch of new book
by
John Minahane—
Ladislav Novomesky: *Slovak Spring*. Translation of poems and essays, 1923-1971. With a Review of his Literary and Political life by John Minahane
on
Friday, October 8th,
7.30pm
at
The Teachers Club (Room 6),
36 Parnell Square, Dublin
All welcome
**Belfast Historical &
Eduicational Society**

Planning Gone Mad

Comhairle
Chondae
Chill Dara
Planning Section
St. Mary's, Naas.
Phone (045) 873829
Fax (045) 873846



RE:/ Planning Permission is sought to erect a bungalow, domestic garage and septic tank with percolation area at [REDACTED], Co. Kildare – Timothy & Maisie Riordan – Planning Ref: [REDACTED]

1. Having regard to the nature and location of the proposed development, the relevant policies and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan 1999, the Strategic Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and Sustainable Development-A Strategy for Ireland, it is considered that the applicant has not demonstrated a functional need to reside in this rural area. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. It is a policy of the County Development Plan, 1999 under Section 2.2 "to ensure the use of resources in a sustainable and environmentally acceptable manner". The proposed development, located in a rural area, outside any designated settlement or town, is unrelated to the needs of agriculture, and the applicant has not shown a sufficient functional need to live in the area. The proposed development, if permitted, would be likely to give rise to the generation of additional traffic movements in the area, and of a demand for public services and community facilities, which it is not economic to provide, and which are not planned.

3. The proposed development would be contrary to the policy of the Planning Authority as set out in the Kildare County Development Plan 1999 to direct housing to designated settlements where public services and community facilities can be economically provided. The proposed development would be in conflict with this policy and would result in the demand for the uneconomic provision of public services and facilities and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and development of the area.

The proposed development would therefore conflict with current County Development Plan Policy on the need for sustainable development, and would contribute to the further encroachment of such development in this area, and would therefore be contrary to the proper planning and development of the area.

04 May 2004

[REDACTED]
Senior Executive Officer

Comment

Tim and Maisie Riordan have worked in London for most of their working lives and want to return and build a house in Kildare, where they come from, on a plot they have always owned and where there was once a house. Tim was a jockey when young and is now involved in training horses in the Curragh. They are the type of people who would be fully involved in whatever community they lived in and would enhance it enormously.

They have been refused planning permission several times and it is worth noting the standard letters they receive, which are masterpieces in callousness and arrogance. The latest follows. These types of letters are issued in great numbers by planning authorities who seem to believe that human beings are essentially a nuisance and that the world, and rural Ireland in particular, would be a better place with much less of them. If Holland, about the size of Munster (with a third of it reclaimed from the sea) can manage 15 million, should we not be able to manage that much, at least?

Jack Lane

An Cor Tuatail

Aigneas Oisín agus Pádraig (2)

Oisín:
Δ Πάδραϊς, το ζέλλεινν ποσ ζλόρ
σο mbead roinn comáctas Δς Όια
τά υκριλλέά liom τά ρλαίτεας,
μά roinneann σο pairsing an bia.

Πάδραϊς:
Δ Oisín, is leam do ζλόρ Δρ Όια
ní mar sin Δ criallfam ann;
nó sur ζlan ó corca úinn
ní raclam d'á úin le ceann.

O.:
Δ Πάδραϊς, níς mise má's áil
ó rinn báirr σο bonn síos seal;
má's fear duiniúil do Όια
ní coiscfió Δρ υκριλλ τά έεάς.

Δ Πάδραϊς, inis dom fá rún,
má's Δςας Δτά Δρ eolas is fearr,
an lizear mo ζάδάρ is mo éú
liom σο úin Rí na nSrás?

P.:
Δ sheanóir Δτά Δρ báois
's nac fuil ort crióc ná áiré,
ní lizear do ζάδάρ ná do éú
leac σο úin Rí na nSrás.

Ní raclad an cuil éronánac,
ná'n e-adam sa ζac zréine,
ζan fios don rí mórbálac
isteac don éclair naora.

O.:
Ní mar sin do m'ac Cumhall
do bí 'na rí Δρ na Fiannaib -
do raclaois na sluaice isteac
fána éeac ζan iarraib.

P.:
Ní raclaió Fionn ná an Fiann
fá éeac mo Ciarna σο brác;
's Δ sheanóir Δτά liac fann
ní raclair-se ann Δc mar éac.

O.:
Δ Πάδραϊς, ná bí dá lua
'na sheanmóir ζac lá
sur fear veclac do Όια
σο ζcaicimíó bia 'na páirc.

Ní zoirfead air σο lá Δ brác,
ζió mór duic Δ éáil 's Δ élú,
muna veizir liom d'áon triall
σο breasam an bfuil rial 'na úin. σο breasam an bfuil rial 'na úin.

Ní raclad an cuil éronánac,
ná'n e-adam sa ζac zréine,
ζan fios don rí mórbálac
isteac don éclair naora.

O.:
Ní mar sin do m'ac Cumhall
do bí 'na rí Δρ na Fiannaib -
do raclaois na sluaice isteac
fána éeac ζan iarraib.

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Ní raclaió Fionn ná an Fiann
fá éeac mo Ciarna σο brác;
's Δ sheanóir Δτά liac fann
ní raclair-se ann Δc mar éac.

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Δ Πάδραϊς, ná bí dá lua
'na sheanmóir ζac lá
sur fear veclac do Όια
σο ζcaicimíó bia 'na páirc.

Ní zoirfead air σο lá Δ brác,
ζió mór duic Δ éáil 's Δ élú,
muna veizir liom d'áon triall
σο breasam an bfuil rial 'na úin. σο breasam an bfuil rial 'na úin.

The contest of Oisín and Patrick (2)

Oisín:
Patrick, I would accede to your claim
that God should have a share of power
if you travel with me to his paradise
to see if he shares food generously.

Patrick:
Oisín, your claim on God is empty;
that is not how we shall travel there;
until we are purified of all sin
we shall not go to his house in pride.

O.:
Patrick, wash me if you like
from the top of my head to the soles of my feet;
if your God is a humane man
he will not bar us from his house.

Patrick, tell me the truth,
if indeed you have true knowledge,
will my dog and my hound
be allowed into the house of the King of Grace?

P.:
You old fellow in your dotage!
without means or significance
your dog and your hound will not be allowed
with you in the house of the King of Grace.

Not even a buzzing fly will go
nor the atom in a sunbeam
unknown to the king of majesty
into the holy city.

O.:
The son of Cumhall (=Fionn) was not like
that
he who was the king of the Fianna -
crowds of people would go in
to his house without asking.

P.:
Neither Fionn nor the Fianna will enter
ever the house of my Lord
and you, you feeble grey old fellow,
you will only enter it like everybody else.

O.:
O patrick, do not be declaiming
in false sermons every day
that your God is a good man
who will share food with us.

I will not call on him until doomsday
though great to you his name and fame,
unless you come with me on a journey
to see if there is hospitality in his house.

P.:
The time that is proper for you to go
to see the God of Grace
is the time your soul departs from your body
and death overcomes you.

O.:
If I get no help from God,
Patrick, until death arrives,
I will do without Him during my lifetime
and just the same for all eternity.

P.:
Your time here (on earth) is short,
old man, compared with the time after;
you would be well-advised to purify your soul
or you will go to a different place.

O.:
I care more that my body is without food
in this world of the joyless clergy
than what happens to my soul
when it departs to the other world.

P.:
You would suffer more in the torment of your
soul,
you senseless, grey old fellow,
just one day in the company of the damned
than your body to be without food forever.

Said Collins To De Valera...

Sinn Féin is as a matter of brute fact an all-Ireland party. It has not had to think about it to decide to organise on the broad ground of the nation. It has just had to remain itself to be so.

The Labour Party and Fine Gael have been organised in the past as all-Ireland parties. They had to think themselves out of that state and are now engaged in thinking to decide themselves back into it.

Fianna Fáil was never an all-Ireland party. De Valera managed his split out of Sinn Féin onto the narrow ground of the 26 Counties. In much the same years that Stalin built Socialism in one country, de Valera built nationalism in one bit of this country.

The Legion of the Rearguard came to power and held on to it as Fianna Fáil, the Partitionist Party.

There is a possible line of justification of this other matter of brute fact. De Valera founded Fianna Fáil to realise Collins' view of the Treaty settlement as 'the freedom to achieve freedom' and this could only be done within the jurisdiction established by and legitimising the Treaty. And so Fianna Fáil was founded in an immediate exclusion of northern elements whose priority was not the establishment of a 26 county Republic. That might very well justify its long refusal to organise in the counties of the continuing occupation. But there was, and remains, at least one other question.

It is now pretty well certain that Fianna Fáil, in competition with Sinn Féin for the same vote, will organise in Northern Ireland. Not by way of principle but by way of power politics. And all the more tenacious of purpose for that.

All-Ireland organisation of the Republic's governing parties and coalition partners raises fundamental if long-buried questions about the nature of the state itself. For the first time in such a long time the nation will have arrayed itself as an all-Ireland, a national, polity. How then is the twenty-six county Dáil to arrange the affairs of that national array.

The old questions which exercised

Eamon Donnelly and Charlie McGleenan to torment Taoiseachs de Valera and Costello are set to appear on the order paper once more. Should the representatives of northern nationalism have at least a right of audience in Dáil Éireann? And how can any refusal of that right be argued to a national body politic?

Those are old questions and they have a history. By way of a calm contribution to the almighty row that is now brewing here are some early pages of that history.

*

Partition was in place before ever Britain put a truce to the War of Independence or negotiated a single article of its Treaty with Griffith and Collins.

On the same day that the Partition Bill had its Third Reading at Westminster, November 11, 1920, the Sinn Féin party in Ulster held a convention in Omagh which failed to decide upon a policy towards the soon to be northern parliament. Tyrone Sinn Féin members then deputed George Murnaghan to write seeking advice from their TD, who was the Dáil Minister of Home Affairs, Arthur Griffith.

Murnaghan's letter to Griffith on January 4, 1921, expressed his own preference for an electoral boycott, a policy the TD was happy to endorse. More importantly the letter initiated a correspondence between de Valera and Michael Collins which was the first serious discussion within the Sinn Féin leadership of its northern dilemma.

On January 13, 1921, de Valera wrote to Collins:

"With regard to the Ulster Six Counties Question—I have been thinking over it again this morning—I will consider it further, but at the moment my view of it is that our decision should ultimately be determined by an analysis of our political strength in these counties, unless, for instance, we were certain of a quarter, or at least one fifth (say ten Members) of the total representation, I would be for boycotting the Election altogether, that is sending no Candidates forward. If we secured anything less it would be boomed abroad that these counties were practically a homogenius (sic) political entity, which justified partition, but if we were certain of a Quarter or over, I think we should contest

all the Seats. The analysis which will enable us to determine this can be made by an examination of the last Parliamentary and Local Elections, and I am asking O'Keefe to have it made at once.

As the matter stands now the considerations in favour of each of the alternatives appear as follows—at least to me:-

"In favour of:

(1) Contesting the elections with a view to abstention, or rather joining up with the Dail in the South:

(a) That the unity of Republican Ireland will be preserved—letting the Elections go by default would seem to be the abandonment of the North as hopeless for us, and the acceptance in a sense of Partition; it would help to kill the Republican movement in the North by throwing Sinn Feiners practically into the Camp of the Nationalists—this might produce, later, a dangerous re-actionary affect on the South.

(b) That the Republican Movement in the North will be strengthened, overshadowing and, perhaps, eliminating the other National group, which will have a certain favourable re-action, of course, on the South—just as of an opposite character to that which I have referred to in the last paragraph.

(c) The abstention of the entire National groups from the Parliament will put the Labour and Capitalist section of the Unionists struggling with each other for control in the Parliament; Unionists will understand, of course, even before the Election Campaign commences that our representatives will not enter the Parliament, and so they will be able to realise in advance, each section of them, that on the elections will depend whether Unionist Capital or Unionist Labour will have control in the Parliament—hence, we would have by this course the advantage of the contest between Capital and Labour in the Election Campaign itself as well as later in Parliament. This gives the first course, in my opinion, the advantage practically in full, which Mr. Griffith claims for (2)

"(d) This course would be the most directly in line with our past Policy, and would best be understood both at home, and in Foreign countries.

(e) A Moral Effect—Mr. G. seems to claim this in some special way for No. 2. To me the balance, as far as moral effect, is altogether in favour of No. 1, for, surely, the effect is rather in the Boycott of the Parliament, and the repudiation of its authority, than in the Boycott of the Elections, which would be engaged in by us solely for principle, and to show our numerical strength. The extent of our repudiation of the moral right of the Northern Parliament will be much clearer to the World when expressed in terms of a definite number of elected representatives, and a definitely

ascertained electorate, than in the vague statistics on which we would be forced to rely if we failed to take advantage of the Election—Our failure, despite anything we could say, would be attributed to a conviction on our part that we had no chance whatever. Hence, as I have said to me this seems a supplemental supplemental (sic) argument in favour of (2)

(f) Our going forward would prevent the going up of Nationalist Independents who could hardly be blocked otherwise, and who, if they go up are certain to attract a substantial section of the Republican or Nationalist Vote, owing to the political animosity that exists in the North, and this would undoubtedly weaken our moral position.

(2)

(a) The only argument that I can see which gives a balance in favour of this course is that our abstention from the elections will make it more clear to the average Labour-Unionist that the real struggle for power in the Parliament will be between him and the Capitalist, and that accordingly that it is between him and the Capitalist that the real struggle in the Elections should be also. It will be our business to prevent the Labour element from being confused by our entry into the elections—we ought to be able to make him see that we are contesting these elections for principle, and not for actual power in the Northern Parliament, seeing that we will not go near that Parliament.

I think further that the fact that the elections will be held under the Proportional Representation system will diminish the danger of our entry solidifying or amalgamating the two Unionist groups. I have not, so far, studied closely the P/R system, and cannot say offhand to what extent greater results can be got by the amalgamation of two groups, than by the groups separately. If the system were even approximately 'proportional' there should be but little advantage in amalgamating. In the old system what would throw the Unionist Groups together would be the fear of the results of a three cornered contest. I think the P/R system must tend to eliminate that fear, and so our entry into the contest would not materially tend to drive the Unionist groups together. If there be, of course, any analogy to the dangers of the 3 cornered contest in the P/R system, and if, never the less, the Unionist groups could be induced to keep separate, whilst our Candidates are also in the field, the result would be in our favour, as it might give us some extra representatives. This could not, of course, occur at all if the system be genuinely proportional.

President de Valera"

Collins replied on January 15, 1921:

"PARTITION ACT

1. My note to Mr. Griffith in reply to his memo which formed the starting point of the question was as follows: (This was dated 11th January, 1921. It is rather disjointed)

"It is quite possible that this Partition Act will never come into force, but I believe the wisest attitude of us to adopt is to regard it as certainly coming, and to make our dispositions accordingly. It seems to me that two conceivable positions arise from the Elections point of view:-

"(a) Elections for the Northern Parliament only. This would mean that the representatives of the rest of Ireland would remain as at present

"(b) Elections for both Parliaments

"Supposing we regard it like this, that Sinn Feiners go forward as candidates with the pledge, as already in existence, and a promise that they will ignore the Partition Act and carry on with their colleagues of the South of Ireland as a national body—in fact, as the Dail. In the event of (a) only, this position would be more difficult, because of course the very fact of the new members for the North being elected on a different basis from the existing members for the South, would unquestionably make a difference. In the event of (b), and of our being able to sweep the country—which I firmly believe we would do—we would all come together as the Dail, and we might have far greater powers than we have at present—I mean now, powers for levying

taxation, and powers generally for getting our decrees more widely known than at present. In this regard, it will not need very much foresight to see the vital importance of the Belfast Boycott. In the same way too I think the time is ripe to make a serious effort to get everybody into Sinn Fein in the North—particularly in the Counties the enemy has marked out for partition."

2. The two alternatives already set out are:-

(1) Contesting the elections with a view to forming part of the Dail in the South.

(2) Boycotting the elections and the Partition Act altogether

There is in addition:-

(3) Taking part in the elections, afterwards attending at the Northern Parliament provided such attendance gave a majority in favour of deciding for a Parliament of all Ireland—And further

(3a) Attending the Parliament of Northern Ireland as minority for obstructional tactics and with an eventual hope of realising an Irish Unity

3. It appears to me that "3" constitutes an argument of expediency, for which little can be said as a matter of tactics and nothing as a matter of principle, while "3a" is ignoble tactics, is an infringement of all principle, and is a recognition of the Partition of Ireland. They may both, I think, be ruled out.

4. Let me start dealing with the other alternatives by giving the following table, roughly compiled:-

	Total Seats	S.F.	R.L.	N	L	I.	U.
1. County Councils	169	48		18	2	1	100
2. U. Dist. Councils							
3. RI. Dist. Councils	581	142		79	17	4	339
4. Bds. of Guardians	724	178	2	93	26	6	419
(NOTE: I have not the figures of the U.D.C.'s)							
The above results were achieved by P/R—the Parliamentary contests of 1918 were (by majorities—East Down—and excluding Queens University)							
TOTAL	UNIONIST	S.F.	NAT.				
28	20	3	5				
Properly speaking, allowing for East Down and North Fermanagh, the figures should be:-							
TOTAL	UNIONIST	S.F.	NAT.				
28	19	5	3				
The proportion is not very different from the results shown in the County Councils, Rural District Councils, and in the Boards of Guardians—viz.,							
		U.	S.F.	Nat			
PARLIAMENTARY		6	2	1			
COUNTY COUNCILS		5	3	1			
U.D.	"						
R.D.	"	4	2	1			
BDS. of GUARDIANS		4	2	1			

In examining the above figures it is significant to note (apart from the Parliamentary results which were not proportional) that the most representative bodies—the County Councils—show the most favourable proportion to our cause. Outside of Belfast, the County Council figures will, I hope, form the safest basis to go on. Outside of Belfast there are 32 seats with 4 for the University of Belfast. Assuming, therefore, that candidates go forward, we should get 13 or 14 of these seats and 1 for Belfast and 1 for the University—that is to say, a third of the total representation.

5. I have gone into the figures at length, for I regard the result as an important item in deciding our attitude towards the putting forward of candidates.

6. It is my opinion that candidates should be put forward, and put forward in every division. The programme will be abstention from the Northern Parliament and assembly with their colleagues of the rest of Ireland. This is an active non recognition of Partition, and by securing a goodly representation will be of help to the rest of Ireland, and will be a hope of salvation for the North. To put forward candidates in this way is the only policy consistent with our past action of contesting every seat in Ireland. But the real importance of this course is prevention of the idea and acceptance of Partition entering into the minds and actions of the Irish people. The old Pale finds its present-day counterpart in Belfast and its surrounding country. All that must be redeemed for Ireland, and we have to keep striving in every way until that object is achieved. The North-East must not be allowed to settle down in the fallacy that it is a thing apart from the Irish Nation. The contests to restore it to Ireland will be the surest means of preventing this. In the course of subsequent policy under this idea an important consideration will be—Whether an effort should not be made to work with the Local Bodies which are Republican outside the scope of the Northern Parliament and in allegiance to Dáil (sic). At present the Tyrone and Fermanagh County Councils are Republican by a fair majority. In the new regime will it be possible to secure these for Ireland and so reduce the partitioned counties to 4? The question will extend even farther—to Derry Corporation to numerous smaller bodies, and to certain fairly large districts within Counties.

7. Having said the above, I find there is hardly anything in my mind in favour of ignoring the elections. This course is too passive for our people and our own policy. It will be counted mock-heroic,

and above all it would give rise to endless arguing among our own supporters, and will inevitably lead to (a) candidates going forward as independent republicans and/or (b) our people supporting the antagonists of the Unionists. The result might make it appear that the Republican Idea had gone down in eclipse in the six counties. From an outside point of view, I greatly fear that refusal to take part in the elections would look like an admission of defeat—would look like the skulking of a schoolboy who had got a severe drubbing and had not the grace to recover himself.

8. The simplicity of the action does certainly make an appeal but then we have to provide representatives for the people and this involves considerations that we are scarcely prepared to entertain. From a tactical point of view every advantage that we could hope to gain from ignoring the elections could, with equal certainty, be gained from entering the contests as set out above.

9. It strikes me that we need not concern ourselves with the relations between Unionist Capital and Unionist Labour, so far as the first Parliament goes at any rate. Our course would be to watch the cleavage and to encourage any elements showing leanings in our direction.

NOTE: In conversation I have already stressed the importance of keeping the Sinn Féin Organisation at a high standard of perfection in these six Counties—doing everything to improve its organisation and working incessantly to bring in every possible individual to the Cumainn. We do not want the issue complicated by the entry of Hibernian candidates at the election. The greater the strength and the efficiency of Sinn Féin, the better the position will be—and this applies whether the decision be to accept or ignore the contests. If twenty good organisers could be procured for the next four months at a cost of - say - £1700, the money would be well spent.”

In the event, following a meeting between de Valera and Joe Devlin in February 1921, Sinn Féin and the Hibernians fought the northern elections together, allied on the Sinn Féin programme of self-determination and abstentionism. De Valera did not make attendance at Dáil Éireann for successful candidates a condition of the Pact, and the Hibernians simply stayed at home waiting out their abstentionist pledges.

Though Sinn Féin secured twice the vote of the Devlinites each party to the

Pact won six seats (the Unionists won the remaining 40 of 52). Four of the Sinn Féiners (but none of the Hibernians) were elected on the first count. Those four were de Valera in Down, Collins in Armagh, Griffith in Fermanagh & Tyrone and MacNeill in Derry. The other Shinners elected were Seán Milroy and John O’Mahony in Fermanagh & Tyrone.

Collins, de Valera and Griffith were Southern blow-ins who quickly blew out. Eoin MacNeill came from the Antrim Glens and Seán Milroy was born and educated in Belfast but neither of them were locally based TDs or intended ever to become so; they both pursued careers in the Provisional Government/Executive Council and helped ensure that the Boundary Commission came to nothing. I don’t know where John O’Mahony was born or grew up. In 1921 he was based in Dublin. But I am happy to take Dr. Phoenix’s word for it that, of the six, he was the only one with a substantial northern base. Certainly during the Treaty Debates Miss MacSwiney made much of his being the only TD who would be excluded from the Dáil by its acceptance of the Treaty (unlike the other northern TDs he didn’t have a second southern seat).

Among the Sinn Féin also-rans were Seán MacEntee, a Belfast engineer and former Connolly Socialist, and Frank Aiken, a sometime IRA chief of staff from Camlough in South Armagh. At some point between the formation of Fianna Fáil and its coming to power they each abandoned family and friends in the occupation and made lives for themselves in the South as cabinet ministers of great power and influence. The human aspect of their decision is problematic to say the least of it. Politically it underlines Fianna Fáil’s promotion of republicanism over anti-partitionism.

Collins then, post-Treaty, allied his army to the Northern Divisions of the IRA to lead a futile war along the border. But his “active non recognition of Partition” policy was never again taken up by any of the South’s avowedly anti-Partitionist parties. De Valera was later harried by Armagh-man Eamon Donnelly to stand and win South Down (while Taoiseach for the first time he was also an abstentionist MP at Stormont), but only to avoid even worse embarrassment. (I once thought that counted against judging Fianna Fáil a partitionist party, but really it was just de Valera deflecting a momentary surge to much greater cross-border involvements and so doesn’t count that way at all.) And

then there is that other Armagh-man, Charlie McGleenan, and his harrowing of the Dáil between 1949 and 1951.

Those stories are for later. For now, please bear in mind that a Republican Cabinet's first essay at a coherent policy for the North produced this from Michael Collins:-

"It is my opinion that candidates should be put forward, and put forward

in every division. The programme will be abstention from the Northern Parliament and assembly with their colleagues of the rest of Ireland. This is an active non recognition of Partition, and by securing a goodly representation will be of help to the rest of Ireland, and will be a hope of salvation for the North."

Never a better man nor a better plan since.

Joe Keenan

"outlandish". Though nothing appears to have been said about how Silcock, an ordinary decent criminal, would have known of Garland, or his position in the Official IRA. Garland's name was also mentioned in a May 1997 report on the matter of the 'superdollars' by the US National Security Agency. He was alleged to have been involved "with counterfeiting" the 'superdollar', which is a more substantial charge than merely helping distribute them.

Garland was also involved—as reported in *IN*—in a previous counterfeiting scam. In 1983 the Gárda Síochana uncovered printing presses in a warehouse in Dublin's docklands, churning out fake Irish fivers. One of the machines had been used to print literature in the WPI headquarters, and Seán Garland was a director of the company renting the warehouse. This scandal was, effectively, suppressed. Nothing is made of this by Scholes, though he remarks that the three WPI TDs supported Charles Haughey's minority Fianna Fáil government. If large numbers of 'revisionist' journalists did not have Sticky skeletons in their own closets, this would be noised about as a further aspect of Haughey's sheer 'evil'. Haughey was not just shoring-up his own Government (though he had a duty to do so, partly because he took himself seriously as the head of Government and as a Party leader, and mainly because the opposition in the Dáil was rubbish): he was attempting to 'house train' the Stickies. Fianna Fáil, in the words of one of its founders (Seán Lemass) was a 'slightly constitutional' party, and chose not to wag its finger at the WPI. Possibly Haughey felt that an overtly Marxist party in the national assembly made the Republic more like a genuinely 'European' state.

He would also probably have the political savvy to welcome Provo Sinn Féin into the political process. What do the 'revisionists', the PDs and Fine Gael think is going to happen if they turn their backs on Sinn Féin?

The BBC 1 *Panorama* slot for Sunday June 20 rebroadcast the *Spotlight* programme, 'fronted' by Declan Lawn, and billed as a BBC NI production. There was more detail about some of the persons involved in *The Superdollar Plot*. Levin, described as a "criminal" and a "Russian", had an Armenian alias, 'Batikian'. A former KGB agent, he was wanted by the Armenian authorities for "a double

OLD HABITS...?

When Bolshevism imploded Communist Parties throughout the planet were thrown into a quandary. Should they remain true to the 'old faith', or should they try to become something else entirely? The option of dissolving themselves and admitting they were wrong, if only in the sense of having shackled themselves to the Soviet Communist Party, seems not to have been considered by most of them.

The Workers' Party of Ireland were late converts to the Bolshevik Faith (having abandoned what Pearse called 'the Fenian Faith'—though most of the rank and file attempted to straddle both). It annoyed the CPI by asking for, and getting, financial support from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This was organised by the USSR's secret police, the KGB, and there was possibly some sort of *quid pro quo*, though the Soviets seem to have played the thing pretty straight.

The WPI (aka 'Official' Sinn Féin, or the Stickies) also had other ways of subsidising electoral efforts. One was selling off the various bits of property it had accumulated over the years. (An aspect of its 'Official' nature was that it was able to hang on to this property. A Georgian house in the centre of Newry sold for a six figure sum in the 1980s. Another method was using the (officially non-existent) Official IRA to rob banks and post offices in the North—and more rarely, the Republic. The WPI, one of the smallest parties in Northern politics had the glossiest, most expensive publicity material. Even awkward questions about funding on BBC NI radio and television in the early 1990s merely led to a 'blip' in their use of very well-produced and designed posters.

The *Irish News* headlined: *Allegations link Workers' Party President To Counterfeit Scam*. Seán Garland President of the WPI, is reported as having been described as "top jolly" of the Official IRA, by Terence Silcock, jailed by Worcestershire Crown Court in July 2002. His crime was 'laundering' what US authorities have called 'superdollars' (on the grounds that the \$100 dollar bills are near-perfect copies. Which tends to indicate that the printers had a lot of time and expertise. In other words that they may well have had the protection of some State—or a very powerful state-agency, the KGB, or its successor-groups, maybe?).

One of the people involved in this international scam is David Levin, another defendant in Worcestershire Crown Court (meaning a law court which tries serious cases). Levin is described as "a former Armenian KGB agent", and the 'superdollars' were "transported around the world in the diplomatic bags of North Korean officials". Seán Garland is alleged to have controlled the distribution of these fakes in "Western Europe". As Levin was given a nine year sentence for distributing (by way of banks, bureaux de change and travel agents) \$27 million, we are talking serious (fake) money. (*Irish News* 19.03.04, reporting a BBC NI *Spotlight* programme.)

The *Irish News*'s William Scholes reports that Garland was not available for interview, nor was *IN* able to get the WPI to respond to the claims broadcast in the *Spotlight* programme. To give them their due, any response would be incriminating. A Party "spokesman" at the time of the court case claimed that the assertions were

murder". He was said by a Birmingham detective to be a "very dangerous individual", who had arrived in the city some years ago. Silcock was heard complaining about 'Levin' appearing at a meeting with four "dark-skinned" (Armenian?) heavies—all wearing black leather jackets and with a person trussed up in Levin's car boot.

North Korea does not simply distribute the superdollars, it (allegedly) manufactures them. There was great emphasis by the Birmingham police and US Secret Service personnel on the Koreans having acquired the "intaglio" and "off-set" machinery to produce these near-perfect fakes. These two methods of printing are quite common, and nobody would remark on such machinery being purchased by anyone, anywhere.

This is where something of a 'credibility gap' opened up. It was stated that the North Korean régime regarded this scam, aimed at destabilising the US economy, "as important as [its] nuclear development". And, by Secret Service agents, that \$13 million, presumably in 'clean' dollars was stashed away by individuals in US banks. (Whether by Seán Garland / the Workers' Party, or all of those involved was not made clear. Though the method of production and distribution, had been carefully described, over-described, if anything, Declan Lawn was shown in artily-photographed 'scenes' in grand Moscow hotels, sinister Moscow squares and streets, gritty downtown Dublin, and slightly less photogenic bits of Birminham.)

Two people were interviewed in darkened rooms, or in shadow. They were captioned as, in one case, a 'Former North Korean Counterfeiter'. Strangely, this man did not appear to be wracked by guilt, but simply described what he had done. The other person, described as a 'Former North Korean Diplomat', said that diplomats did not know how much they were given in the way of counterfeit money, but surmised it was 50:50 real and fake dollars. He also spoke in Korean. Why not English, the language of diplomacy? It can hardly have been for reasons of personal security. His speaking Korean would surely be more easily recognisable by his former employers than his speaking English?

There was also mention made by Silcock of "Sean" (Seán Garland) being "Colonel-in-Chief" of the "old" IRA, who were "communists"—all of the money going to the movement. This was talking to undercover police. Something

else that did not ring true was the fact that an arrest was staged during this conversation. The IRA does not have 'colonels' much less 'colonels-in-chief'. Garland would hardly have told a common criminal in England about his background, at least not in detail. There was yet another 'courier' (of the funny-money from Dublin to Britain), an "Irish-South African". He may have been WPI. He got three separate sentences in GB, the USA and Germany, for money-laundering. Frankfurt was a staging-post in the trail from Pyongyang. The first 'superdollars' were discovered in the Phillipines in 1989.

Apart from this stacking-up of circumstantial evidence, the commentary then claimed that what had been used for (apparently acceptable) military / political revolutionary purposes was now going to a "criminal élite". It was not clear what this 'élite' was, or where it was located, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Russia or wherever.

This was a rather ambiguous way to end the programme, and one did wonder if the BBC really had the courage of its convictions. It was (even before broadcasting) attempting to have its anti-Communist / Sticky cake and eat an anti-Sinn Féin one. The publicity material mentioned "a leading Irish Republican" being involved in this international scam centred on North Korea, which was described in the commentary as a "pariah State". As President Bush includes it in his "axis of evil" maybe we now know why he is so irked by the place. Undoubtedly Seán Garland would still describe himself as an Irish Republican, and the programme made it clear that he was an 'activist' since the 1950s, though it did not detail the Brookeborough Raid in January 1956 (or mention Seán South or Fergal O Hanlon), in which Garland was involved.

Most people scanning the publicity would assume that 'leading Irish Republican' would be a Provi—in fact there are probably millions of people who have vaguely noted this in the blatts and free-sheets who now assume that Gerry Adams is subsidised by Communist Korean Superdollars. in fact, the counterfeiters belonged to the other Republicans, the Officials, who now have the leadership of the Irish Labour Party.

The Beeb, particularly the Beeb in Northern Ireland is going to have to learn that there is such a thing as being too clever by half. \$13 million in American

banks is not going to destroy the US economy: the Mafia (an actual criminal élite) would regard such a sum as petty cash. Sinn Féin has a substantial sum of money, in the millions, in US banks, gathered openly through a US Government-approved fund-raising body.

Seán McGouran

Letter to the Editor

Was Elizabeth Bowen Irish?

Dear Editor,

Bowen is a Welsh name. Bowen could also be a respectabilisation of the native Cork name Bohane. Bowen is certainly not an English name. As native Welsh and native Irish are racially identical, this makes little difference.

A more interesting question is how did her ancestors acquire a big house. Probably by switching religion at the time of the Penal Laws and then going on to eliminate, or tell tales on, their neighbours who had not switched religion.

Bowen's highly readable novel "The Last September" shows how unhappy such people felt after 1916, particularly the progressive poseurs amongst them. They helped England whenever they could.

Snobbish people in England like Jane Austen. They identify with her characters and not with their own ancestors, the millions of farm labourers who were dispossessed and forced to work hard to maintain the Jane Austen characters' way of life.

Ivor Kenna
London, 18th June 2004

PS McDowell is a native Roscommon name I wonder when Major Tom's ancestors switched religion?

An Cor Tuathail Comment:

This type of poetry is called Fiannaíocht. It was popular from the 13th to the 18th centuries. The Normans introduced strict Papal Christianity to Ireland in the 12th century, and this kind of religious practice was associated with the relentless genocidal English pressure on the Irish and their way of life. Until the sixteenth century, that is, when the descendants of the Normans turned against the centralising anti-papal Tudor monarchy. This conflict led in a straight line to the "kill-them-all" campaign of Cromwell out of which emerged the modern Catholic Irish nation.

[Contest concluded next month.]

Biological Politics

On Martin Mansergh And Others

There-emergence of biological politics recently is probably a sign of the times. It has sprung up unselfconsciously and has not been remarked upon. When, a few years ago, I came upon the reprint of Hubert Butler's 1955 Election Address in Kildare, in which he asserts the political superiority of Protestant blood, I took it to be a mere echo from the distant past. Then Jack Lane brought it to the attention of the distinguished speakers at the Butler Centenary Conference at Kilkenny Castle, who had been praising Butler as one of the great liberals of his time, on whom present-day Ireland should pattern itself. And I saw Professor Terence Brown and Professor Edna Longley racking their brains in an effort to understand why it might be thought that there was something not quite right about Butler's assertion. That made it clear that the universal denunciation of Nazism was little more than a routine chant behind which an area of common ground with Nazism survived, even on the issue on which Nazism was most abhorred—the issue of the social influence of blood.

Then I noticed the remarks of Robin Bury about the "*Protestant blood-pool*" in Ireland, and how it was being squeezed out. (Bury purports to speak for the Protestant community in the Republic. He has the *Irish Times* and the *Church Of Ireland Gazette* as platforms.)

And then I noticed in obituaries on Douglas Gageby (editor of the *Irish Times* for many years), the statement that he was of "*Protestant stock*". Not that he was a Protestant, but that he was of Protestant stock. Not that he was brought up within a Protestant culture, but that he was of Protestant stock.

I have never been accustomed to seeing humans as "*stock*". In the easy-going individuality of the society I grew up in, stock was a word applied to cattle. Cows were what they were as a result of careful breeding for certain features over many generations. A Kerry Blue was a Kerry

Blue and a Friesian was a Friesian. They were what they were, and that was the end of it. But people were what they thought they were. What made them interesting was not their sameness but their difference. And the social milieu was such that, if somebody happened to have a deep yearning to be mere stock, there was little opportunity for him to realise his heart's desire.

Protestantism, according to its own stereotype—a stereotype which it imposed on Irish affairs over many generations—means individualism and Catholicism means uniformity. And yet we have "*Protestant stock*".

One of those obituaries on Gageby was written by Senator Martin Mansergh. And now I find this puzzling statement by Mansergh: "*My criticism of southern unionism—with certain important exceptions like Parnell—was that it retreated without engagement, until the Irish Convention of 1917-18*".

This statement will be found in the Autumn issue of *History Ireland* in an interview with Mansergh conducted by the Editor, Tommy Graham. Graham does not query it, and so we are left with this puzzling description of Parnell as an exceptional Unionist.

Parnell was the outstanding leader of the Nationalist movement in the 1880s. He was regarded by Unionists as the leader of extreme nationalism. I can think of two ways in which he might nevertheless be construed as a Unionist. One is that he displaced the mild Home Rule politics of Isaac Butt, and effected an alliance with the land agitation and the Irish Republican Brotherhood, for the ultimate purpose of saving Ireland for Britain—that he postured as an extreme nationalist in order to gain the leadership of the extremists so that he might disable them at the critical moment. Something like that was suggested by anti-Parnellites after the split of 1891. And I seem to recall that Mrs.

Parnell said in her memoirs, long after the event, that his purpose was to thwart the movement that he led.

The other explanation is that Mansergh uses the word "*Unionism*" biologically, as a way of describing the "*stock*" which produced Parnell, and as applying to Parnell himself regardless of what his opinions might happen to be at a particular movement. I discovered this kind of usage in Northern Ireland, and I published a pamphlet on *The Unionist Family* almost twenty years ago. Unionism was something much less, or much more, than a political position. One might, by pedantic application of the dictionary definition, describe a certain political position as Unionist, but the pedantry would miss the substance of the case. When I first encountered Louis Boyle and heard of his attempt to become a Unionist, I knew by reflex that the project was absurd, and I set about figuring out why it was absurd. But it was useful that he had not sensed its absurdity, and that he had made a genuine effort, as a Catholic, to become an accepted member of the Unionist Party.

Lord Fitt likes to describe the Northern Ireland situation as "*tribal*"—but, until he emigrated and was elevated, he was himself a tribalist. The description applies in the sense that one is a Nationalist or a Unionist by birth, and that one's actual political character is determined by the community into which one is born rather than by the political notions one happens to form. It is only within the structures of a securely established party-political democracy that the individual can determine his own political position by choice. Democracy is a highly artificial arrangement of the political life of states—a very recent arrangement, not yet a century old, and an arrangement that applies over a small part of the Earth. And where the artifices necessary to the operation of democracy do not exist—and they have never existed in Northern Ireland—political life takes other forms.

Mansergh describes Parnell as a Unionist as another way of saying that he was Anglo-Irish, discounting the political opinions held by Parnell. One might ridicule that frame of mind, as Lord Fitt in comfortable exile ridicules the tribalism he left behind him, but it is not merely absurd. The Ireland of the Anglo-Irish—the Ireland of the Protestant colony—was never a democracy. It was not even a representative oligarchy. It had no national body politic, any more than Protestants

and Catholics form a common body politic in Northern Ireland today. The Anglo-Irish lived a life apart, and they continued to live their exclusive life while the millions around formed themselves into a body politic, and eventually into a state. They did not respond to Davis's call when landlordism was their mainstay. And they did not respond to the call of Canon Sheehan and William O'Brien in 1910, when they had been eased out of landlordism and local government had been taken from them, to take their place in the life of the country as Protestant country gentlemen. And, as far as I can judge, many of them continue to live an exclusive life as much as they can arrange it.

Parnell was an odd man out amongst them. But Mansergh takes it that he remained one of them—and they were the Unionists. And Parnell did not become something other than Unionist merely by forming a novel political opinion.

In a letter to Jack Lane, published in *The Burning Of Cork* (Aubane Historical Society), Mansergh says: "As I have written about Tim Healy vis-a-vis Parnell, if one wants to attack the Ascendancy why pick on someone talented, who through her writing earned some credit for Ireland".

Now Healy, as I showed in my book on the *Cork Free Press* (Athol Books), did not pick on Parnell, either because he came from the Ascendancy or for any other reason. Parnell had led the Party into a tight alliance with the Liberal Party with a view to securing a second Home Rule Bill. The Nonconformist element in the Liberal Party, after seeing the evidence in the O'Shea divorce action, made it a condition of continuing the Home Rule alliance that Parnell should not continue as leader of the Irish Party. Faced with this ultimatum, the other leaders of the Irish Party suggested that Parnell should step down from the Parliamentary leadership for the time being but resume it when the crisis was past. Parnell, who had misled his associates about what would emerge in the divorce court, refused this compromise. He demanded unconditional loyalty at the cost of breaking the Liberal alliance which they had all been working for, and launched a savage attack on the Liberals. And he tried to destroy the Party through an appeal to the people against it. Much of his prestige was due to the work of others—Davitt, O'Brien, Healy—none of whom was willing to bow to his dictate. It was Healy who had to deal with him at the Commons meeting, but Davitt was the

first to say that he must go. Subsequently political achievement did not come through the unquestioning Parnellite, John Redmond, but through those who had not been prepared to put up with his utterly unreasonable conduct in the crisis.

Mansergh's remark in *History Ireland* was made in reply to this question about his new book:

"Several essays in this book are empathic with the Anglo-Irish tradition. How do you respond to the criticism voiced in recent newspaper correspondence between yourself and Jack Lane and Brendan Clifford of the Aubane Historical Society that this tradition, 1798 and the United Irishmen excepted, has contributed little or nothing to the emergence to [sic] modern Irish nation?"

It is a strange question to come out of the blue. Were Jack Lane, myself or Aubane ever before mentioned in *History Ireland*? And what does the "newspaper correspondence" consist of? One letter by me in the *Irish Times*, after Mansergh had twice denounced me by name in it, and the Directorate of the paper thought it would stretch the credulity of their readers too far to expect them to assume I had not submitted a reply. Thereafter Mansergh did not name me when denouncing the ideas I had put into circulation, and the Directorate therefore saw no need to publish my response.

The question put to Mansergh—and suggested by him?—is not one which would have occurred to somebody who had read what I have written on these matters. The idea that the United Irishmen contributed a lot to the emergence of the Irish nation is an idea which is perhaps in general circulation, but it is one which I have dissented from. I could find only one substantial point of continuity between the United Irishmen and the national movement of the 19th century—Walter Cox: and William Sampson through his contribution to Cox's *Irish Magazine*.

Wexford was a provoked rebellion. After its suppression, oblivion was offered and accepted and a fresh start was made. The organised conspiracy around Dublin was effectively dealt with by the superior conspiracy of the state. The West was a military invasion and was defeated by the regular army. The United Irish movement proper was what developed in eastern Ulster from about 1790 onwards. It was the political movement of a society. It was in substance a movement for reform of the existing Constitution under the

sovereignty of the Crown. When it was outlawed, it became a mass conspiracy as a gesture of stubborn defiance of an unreasonable action. It was then formally committed to revolution. But its heart wasn't in it. At the critical moment it stayed at home. Some of its leaders expressed support from prison for Pitt's *Union Bill*, which was seen as a defeat for its Ascendancy enemies which took the sting out of their victory in 1798, and most of the movement accepted the Union as the framework of political life once it was established—and thirty years later, having supported Catholic Emancipation, did not support Repeal of the Union.

The culture of the United Irish movement was rather arid. The mass of the people were not grabbed by it, as they were by the Jacobite resurgence of Young Ireland. Walter Cox and the Young Irelanders made the United Irish leaders icons of the new national movement, but that movement itself came from a different source.

So much for the inexact question. Here is the gist of Mansergh's reply to it:

"In relation to the controversy with Lane and Clifford, nation and state are not coterminous; you do not have to be a nationalist to be Irish, and indeed, as the Good Friday Agreement has very clearly said, there is no incompatibility between unionism and Irish nationality. I don't subscribe to the 'two-nations theory'. What they are engaging in, denying the Irishness of all the major cultural figures of Anglo-Ireland—Swift, Berkeley, through to Elizabeth Bowen—saying essentially that they were English, that is not the view of the state, nor is it the view of most people. As Fintan O'Toole effectively pointed out in the *Irish Times*, you would be ripping out most of the cultural endeavour pre-independence or pre-1900. A lot of our towns and villages, cities even, were laid out by people from that tradition. Then there are the scientists: Boyle, Hamilton, Parsons, etc. Of course, they were a privileged class, and they also had a very negative effect, not just in terms of the landlord system but in their support for the British connection when it was threatened. That delayed independence by the best part of two hundred years. So I have no sentimental illusions about the Anglo-Irish. But if one is interested—and the two-nations theorists may not be, I don't know—in this country coming together, the whole island that is, some time in the future, you simply cannot afford to write off a small but important minority tradition, as that will be extrapolated

and writ large by unionists as their likely fate too. Some of those attitudes are pretty destructive, and a lot of them appeal to prejudices that were understandable and more current 50, 60 years ago. The nation is not to be understood in purely nationalist terms. Even the state has to be inclusive and embrace other traditions. One of them wrote that in 1922 the Anglo-Irish were left high and dry. In a political sense, that is largely true. But what choice was there for those who wanted to remain? It was to become Irish on the same terms and on the same basis as everyone else, and what was wrong with that? It did not leave them 'high and dry', unless they chose to be marooned. I have taken a more positive, though not totally uncritical, view of Elizabeth Bowen. My feeling is that she has been chosen as a plausible example to prove the theory."

If I was wondering whether Mansergh's assault on Aubane was due to accidental misunderstanding, this leaves no doubt that, whatever it might have started from, it has now become charlatanism. The "*two-nations theorists*" of 1969 gave no thought to the Anglo-Irish. The subject of the "*theory*" was the social development of Protestant Ulster subsequent to its United Irish phase. It rejected the view, then almost general amongst Dublin 'opinion-formers', that Ulster Unionism was an Ascendancy hangover and that it would collapse in the face of popular opposition, as Unionism had done generations earlier in the rest of the country. We held that democratic development, which had subverted the Ascendancy stratum of Unionism in the rest of the country, had made Unionism a popular force in the North East. And we argued that the attempt to carry the North by force—which had very widespread support in all parties in the Republic, even though the formal stance was against violence—would bring to the fore the popular forces of Unionism in a kind of national resistance.

That might have been described as a mere 'theory' in 1969, but I would have thought that the events of the intervening 35 years have developed it into an indisputable historical fact.

But Mansergh is still in denial about it. There is a kink in his conceptual apparatus, resulting, I suppose, from his insistence that his father's British history is Irish history.

We argued that an all-Ireland state could not be established through the

nationalism of the existing Irish state. Telling the Ulster Protestants that they were part of the Irish nation only confirmed their conviction that they were not. (What C.C. O'Brien told them in 1969 was that they were "*colons*". We disagreed with that too.) Our proposal was that Articles 2 & 3 should be repealed as a preliminary measure to broaching a project of bi-national political unity. I spoke at numerous meetings around the country for that purpose. TDs and journalists were lobbied. And a group of Belfast Catholics and Protestants (including the late Eamon O'Kane) chained themselves to the Foreign Office railings to make the point—and were hauled off to Mountjoy.

Our proposal was rejected by all parties in the Republic, and also by the SDLP. Other approaches were tried and proved counter-productive. Then, 30 years later, Articles 2 & 3 were amended under the tricky Belfast Agreement, in a way that cut no ice. The alienation of the two communities from each other is now greater than it has ever been. Unionism has become Paisleyite. Paisley's stronghold for the past 30 years is the region that was once the stronghold of the United Irish movement. And this situation was present as a logical possibility in resolutions adopted at the Parish meetings throughout Antrim and Down organised by the United Irishmen in 1792.

With regard to "*our towns and villages and cities*" being "*laid out by people from that [i.e. Anglo-Irish] tradition*"—it was not as a "*tradition*" that they laid them out, but as an English colony, monopolising political power in Ireland on foot of a military conquest. They came with the pretensions of a master-race, and they behaved as the Germans were intent on behaving in Poland and the Ukraine in the early 1940s. The difference is that the German conquest was undone in the course of a few years, while the Anglo-Irish ruling stratum ran on for a couple of centuries. But, taking both in their time—which is what historians are supposed to do, isn't it?—I can see little to choose between them. Unless the persistence over time of a military conquest confers moral goodness on its treatment of the conquered, while the failure of the military conquest in the short-term makes it evil. It may well be that Senator Mansergh inclines to the view of things. I don't know. But I can see that a plausible case can be made for it. As I can see that those who establish morality on the basis of power can, if their power is sufficiently

great, persuade those who submit to it to deny in the course of submitting that what they are submitting to is power. These are delicate and problematical matters. If they are to be dealt with they should not be treated glibly. And the condition of the world today—brought about by the same power which laid out our towns in the 18th century—is such that I do not see how it can be avoided in any earnest attempt to think about human affairs.

Let's take it that Williamite Ireland was Irish, and that if one did not accept it as Irish one "*would be ripping out most of the cultural endeavour pre-independence or pre-1900*"—that leads to the amazing conclusion that the Irish, under the heel of a master race for two centuries, produced in their oppression some of the literary glories that gave distinction to the master race.

The non-paradoxical view is that the English who chanced to hold land or livings in Ireland under the Williamite conquest continued to participate fully in the mental life of the conquering English nation, and to produce English literature, having no interest in what the Irish were doing for themselves. (I had been willing, on the strength of "*O'Rourke's noble feast*", to believe that Swift had descended into hell and made acquaintance with the natives. Pat Muldowney takes a different view of the translation (*Irish Political Review* July 04), and I suppose he's right.)

Ireland without the Williamites is a wilderness for Fintan O'Toole, who committed himself to false memory a generation ago and has been evolving towards an OBE. It is a wilderness only because the figures who inhabited it have been wiped out by the revisionists in academia and publishing. The half a dozen generations after 1800 who forged a national movement which began the unravelling of the British Empire did not live in a vacuum. But their culture has been systematically taken out of circulation during the past 30 years—with the object, I assume, of inserting in its place, as Irish literature, the English literature produced by the colony in Ireland.

I read much of this literature when I was young—Congreve etc. etc. It never crossed my mind that it was anything but English literature. And I doubt that I would have appreciated it as much as I did, if it had been presented to me as Irish literature.

In any case, it has nothing whatever to do with the two-nations view that we published amidst the heat of the conflict in the North in 1969 at a moment when we had taken part in the physical defence of the Falls against the Unionist incursion. And what I recall of Ascendancy remnants in the Republic at that time is that some of them were obnoxiously one-nationist out of spleen against the Ulster Unionists for having gone their own way. The Protestant masses of the North had let them down, leaving them stranded amidst the Catholic hordes of the South, and they were taking revenge. And, as between the Protestant masses and the vindictive Ascendancy remnants who had been obliged to take on some nationalist colouring after the desertion of their cannon-fodder, my sympathies were entirely with the former. I must have another look at the *Irish Times* editorials of that period.

Brendan Clifford

PS

I did not bother commenting on Mansergh's attribution to me of the view that state and nation are coterminous. It is too ridiculous for words.

News In Brief

KELLY: PETTY VINDICTIVENESS

One of the last things the late Captain Kelly said to his wife was, "At least I know you'll have a pension". But, when she applied for it after he died in July 2003, she was told she would only get a reduced pension until July 2005. The reason was that, although James Kelly had paid into a Wives and Dependents Fund ever since it was established in the 1960s, he did not have quite enough contributions to allow a full pension to be paid out straight off. As a result Mrs. Kelly is given just Euro 108 a week to live on by an Irish State that her husband served with dedication and honour for 21 years.

Not content with taking away his good name and making life difficult for his young family of six children by blighting his career opportunities, Fianna Fail compounds the injustice done to Captain Kelly in life by withholding for two years part of the pension he expected his wife to get after he died.

"The editorial on the subject of D-day (Irish Examiner, June 7) is impatient with the Irish State for "turning a blind eye to this epic event".

"Are war commemorations for belligerents or non-belligerents? The Irish State has never been at war."

J.A. BARNWELL, Dublin 9.

SIPTU has called for a review of the work permit system after an unfair dismissals case on behalf of two Polish workers in the Munster Joinery window and door-making factory in Ballydesmond, Co. Cork.

After working for two years with the company, the men were given 10 minutes to take their belongings from the accommodation provided by the employer and taken separately by taxi from the accommodation in Killarney to Cork Airport.

There they were handed one-way tickets back to Poland and advised to return there. They claimed they were given no proper reason for their dismissal.

"Asked also about claims by the dismissed workers about being under "constant pressure" and about severe working conditions at the factory, Mr. O'Connell said there were 240 Polish people working for Munster Joinery in Ballydesmond, which has a total workforce of 1,000. They had "integrated totally with the workforce and locality, and had absolutely no difficulty with their employers." (Irish Times, 25.6.2004).

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more surprising, therefore, that his memoir has been out of print since 1929."

"THE BURNING OF CORK: An eyewitness account" by Alan J. Ellis. Aubane Historical Society. 10 Euros.

ISRAEL: Time To Act On The EU Association Agreement

The EU sees itself as broker for peace in the Middle East; yet it actively bolsters the Israeli vision of themselves as Europeans engaged in a 'peace process'. It does this particularly by maintaining two EU-Israel Association Agreements, one on Trade, the other on Technical and Scientific Co-operation. We are concerned here only with the Trade Agreement.

This agreement allows almost all Israeli products free entry to the EU. Exports to the EU now constitute some 30% of Israeli exports and are worth some 8 billion dollars a year.

This is not an issue of an economic boycott of Israel but a question of the right of Israel to economic privileges not enjoyed by other, much poorer, countries.

The Agreement was concluded in 1995 as part of the Oslo Peace Process and Article 2 states explicitly that the Agreement itself "shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles which constitute an essential element of this agreement".

There is in principle a parallel agreement allowing 'Palestinian' products into the EU tariff free, but in practice no Palestinian exports reach the EU because of the stranglehold of Israel on the Palestinian economy.

In April 2002 the European Parliament voted to suspend the agreement, given the numerous Israeli violations of international Human Rights Law. The Council of Ministers refused to implement this decision, with Britain, Netherlands and Germany as the only countries opposing suspension.

Since that time, however, the UK Government has issued numerous statements condemning the human rights violations of the Israelis and in early July the properly constituted International Court of Justice at the Hague voted 14/1 that the Israeli separation wall was 'an illegal violation of human rights' and that it should be dismantled and compensation paid to the many victims. This ruling gives all states an obligation to see the decision implemented and effectively says that Israel's self-proclaimed security needs cannot take precedence over its human rights obligations towards the Palestinians. Israel and the US don't accept that, but the judge nominated by the British Government agreed in full to the ICJ ruling. All this puts the UK's original failure to support suspension of the Association Agreement in question.

We now have a new European Parliament, including many new member

countries that had to 'clean up' their human rights acts before being given the access to European markets currently enjoyed by Israel.

Many EU member states, like Germany and the Netherlands, feel particularly vulnerable to the possible charge of anti-semitism if they oppose Israeli government policies. Hence it is particularly important that outside groups are at the forefront of a campaign to suspend the Agreement until such time as Israel meets its human rights obligations.

In Ireland and Britain, many new MEPs may need to be convinced to take up the issue. But, in Britain, there is also in the advantageous position that large numbers of Labour Party MPs and cabinet ministers openly question Tony Blair's subservience to George Bush on Middle East policy. In addition, pursuit of a fair and effective Palestinian policy could mark out a positive role for Britain in Europe, were the Government pressurised to take action. In Ireland, there is plenty of cross-party disquiet at what is going on in Israel.

In other words this is something that could be won, with sufficiently focussed effort.

The second world war was man's inhumanity to man, made manifest. We swore then, 'never again'.

Yet, today, the world stands by, as an onlooker, whilst innocent people - albeit in far different numbers - are routinely killed by the Israeli army, as suspected militants.

Would we ourselves not be 'militants' if our land and livelihood were taken away from us; if our water supply was restricted; if our very lives from dusk to dawn were circumscribed by the laws of an occupying force?

Israel acts illegally. It has been indicted and found guilty by the International Court of Justice - yet it contemptuously continues to ignore international law.

Furthermore, it holds a clandestine nuclear arsenal that it refuses to allow to be inspected by the IAEA and which is therefore a terrible threat that could well crystallise upon the whim of an Israeli administration. The world would then be in mortal danger.

How much longer is the EU going to sit on its hands merely because Israel is funded by its ally, the United States?

The EU has the power to abrogate its trading Agreement with Israel. It should act now in order to force the Likud government of Ariel Sharon to respect and adhere to international law and to world opinion. We should wait no longer and appease no more.

* Stop all EU preferential trade with Israel

Internet: "Time to Act" group

Censorship?

A letter was published in *The Sunday Times* (June 20, 2004) which is really self-explanatory. This is the text:

"WRONG BAN: I must correct Terry Wogan's smirking piece on James Joyce (News Review, last week). The Irish government's list of banned writings was never called "The Index". The Index of Prohibited Books was maintained by the Vatican, was moribund when Wogan was at school and was interested in theological writings, not novels. Joyce's *Ulysses* was never banned in Ireland because it was unavailable in Ireland, having already been banned in Britain by the lord chancellor's office. —David Manly, Dublin"

The only thing wrong with this, presumably heavily edited version of Mr. Manly's letter (in the *Points* section, the Letters page) is that the officer of Her/His Majesty's Household that he mentions should be spelt in the upper case: Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor's usual job was the censoring of plays to be staged in London. This sort of directly interventionist censorship was only ended in the late 1960s. Mr. Manly may be incorrect on this matter, as Joyce was one of the victims of Joynson-Hicks, the Home Secretary in the early 1920s who had a bee in his bonnet about 'pornography'. He ordered the Metropolitan Police to raid an exhibition of paintings by D.H. Lawrence, and conducted a virtual reign of terror in the theatre, and among publishing houses.

It is very useful for this sort of thing to appear in the *ST*, Wogan can hardly be unaware of the infrastructure of censorship in Britain. It ran from the Home Office through the Lord Chancellor to Watch Committees at Local Government level (from City and County to Parish Council levels). These Committees could censor anything from pantomimes to films (which had already been censored by the British Board of Film Censorship—which still exists). This is the first time in decades that the *ST* has acknowledged that Britain even had censorship laws, much less an infrastructure of censorship that made Éire look the tyro it was in the censorship game. The UK's is still one of the most secretive governments in the world: information (on any matter) which has not been released by the government can be deemed to be a State secret and persons publishing material which the government finds irksome can find themselves being visited by the Special Branch or even military 'spooks'. Such 'persons' have (within the past ten years) included the BBC and the *Guardian* newspaper.

Seán McGouran

Street Garda Station. It was probably the only occasion in the history of transport in this country that the custodians of a boardroom could have wielded a positive influence on behalf of the travelling public—and the law was called in.

THE RETURN

"I went up to the reception desk and asked for the Chairman of the Court and the Chief Executive of the Commission. I didn't even know if they would be present but suspected that, in the circumstances, they would be. In a very short period of time, they emerged, together. Finbarr Flood greeted us warmly, offering a firm handshake. Kieran Mulvey was less warm in his greeting.

"The statement that our members had agreed that morning was then read in full to both men and presented to them with safety documents. The statement began:

"ILDA SGMPASSES RESPONSIBILITY FOR RAIL SAFETY TO LCR/LABOUR COURT

"ILDA members met today, August 25, 2000, at the end of the tenth week of this most unnecessary dispute.

"ILDA members have raised and carried the issue of rail safety at the cost of their own wages for the past ten weeks. We have invested 1,000 weeks' wages in trying to make safety the focus of rail transport in Ireland. We have tried consistently to raise safety issues of the 'New Deal' with our employer, Iarnrod Eireann, who has responded by locking us out unless we work an agreement that we believe to be inherently unsafe. We have protested, demonstrated, lobbied, and on numerous occasions tried to explain, in our own words and those of safety expert P.G. Rayner, the serious safety concerns that caused more than 100 train drivers to refuse to work an unsafe agreement"

"The statement went on to outline our attempts over the previous weeks to pursue the issue of the unsafe nature of aspects of the 'New Deal', and to criticise those who had apparently joined forces to oppose us, whether through condemnation or ignoring of means to resolve the dispute. It emphasised that ILDA had not been crushed by this opposition, but that we were 'united, determined and organised in such a manner that we will never be crushed. We have brought Trade Union principles to life again in the railway.'

"We stated that we had welcomed the LRC/Labour Court intervention despite concerns about its statutory basis, and that our members had voted unanimously in support of it, while restating their safety concerns, continuing: 'A further initiative intended to address the safety

concerns and allow us return to work met with further silence. We protested and were arrested.'

"The statement laid the responsibility for safety firmly at the door of the shareholders and management, and said that we, the drivers, refused to carry the burden of it any longer. We would therefore: 'return to work on Monday next, August 28th, 2000 at 9 a.m. together. We will be staying together thereafter... ILDA members will report for work under the LRC/Labour Court expectation and jurisdiction. We will work the disputed agreement under protest and with some relief that rail safety responsibility now passes to the LRC/Labour Court'.

"Included with the statement were copies of the independent safety reports we had commissioned, and which had formed the basis for our safety position during the dispute, and the statement continued:

"Each week we will provide the LRC/Labour Court with a detailed update of our safety concerns in operation as part of their investigation. We now call on the LRC/Labour Court to expedite their investigation of all issues which gave rise to this dispute. In view of their new and daily responsibility for rail safety, we urge the LRC/Labour Court to commence immediately their investigations into safety aspects of the 'New Deal' and, in the interests of the travelling public and Iarnrod Eireann, to report on all matters as quickly as possible.

"ILDA note assurances from Iarnrod Eireann that no victimisation of any Driver will occur. Similar assurances from SIPTU and the NBRU do not interest us. The actions of their officials and some members have been quite disgraceful.'

"We were all dreading the return to work. However, in Athlone it wasn't so bad. The ILDA members met outside just before 9 a.m. on the fateful day and walked into work together. We were received politely although it wouldn't have taken much to spark off an argument with some of the SIPTU members present. John Keenan called me on my mobile phone to see how things had gone and we spoke affably at length as we had done throughout a lot of the dispute. I told him that I was concerned that I would be singled out or targeted for dismissal. He gave a verbal assurance that that would not happen. Elsewhere our members experiences were similar. The day passed largely without incident. In Cork, things went particularly well. Our members assembled outside the station and walked towards the door together, where the SIPTU members in Cork had assembled and formed a type of guard of honour. There the applauded our members back into work. SIPTU Cork members are unlike many of the

SIPTU members elsewhere. It was they who had placed the first picket in this dispute way back in Week One, they who had ignored all the pressure to work out trains during the IFI charade, and they who were at the meeting from which Des Geraghty had fled back to Dublin, with his tail very much between his legs. And now it was they who went the extra mile to make the return to work of our members in Cork as painless as possible. Gentlemen, every one of them" (p283).

GHOST WRITERS

I have heard sniggers in relation to Brendan Ogle's authorship, but he has no need to apologise, there wouldn't be any book or story if it wasn't for ILDA, Ogle, Masterson, Christy Holbrook and the 118 members, these men wrote their own history—they acted when the call came, and even today, action still counts for more than all the words of all the hacks, and by god, we have an army of them.

ONE OF OUR OWN

A single request to the reader: it is important to preface this very limited review, with a plea to Trade Unionists and followers of the Labour movement to go out and buy the book, it may be one man's insight into a single dispute, but his story encompasses the entire industrial network, the courts, the civil service and the government—it is also a working man's insight, which is even more valuable.

THE FUTURE

"And what of his future? Ogle is currently studying for an MA in industrial relations and human resource management from Keele University in Britain, and he continues to work as a train driver. Although he joined the Labour Party when Pat Rabbitte became leader, he does not see himself going into politics.

"I've a big interest in trade unions and the representation of workers. If that can be allied to my role as a train driver, great. Or if it develops another way, that's equally great", he says. Either way, while the book may be the final chapter in the history of ILDA, a few more pages are likely to be written yet about Brendan Ogle" (Sunday Tribune, 2.11.2003).

On December 8, last year, the former ILDA, now members of the 3/57 branch of the ATGWU deferred plans for a series of one-day rail strikes.

Instead, the train drivers decided to take Iarnrod Eireann to court over its refusal to negotiate with them. ILDA lost a previous case in the Supreme Court concerning its status as a Trade Union.

3/57 branch argue that it is legally entitled to be recognised by the company now that it is part of the ATGWU.

overdrive. Would we ask our members their views? Our members were portrayed as poor deluded souls sucked into the mire by our executive—me in particular—and with no minds of their own... the union members are portrayed as fools led down a path by ‘evil people’ like myself or some other easy target... There was never any question of not asking our members...” (p259).

The Train Drivers assembled in Tullamore, Co. Offaly on Sunday, August 13, 2000:

“Our executive discussed the initiative and the Saturday-night ‘clarification’. We were at one. Working under protest would mean working an unsafe agreement. How could we take responsibility for our trains if we knew that they were being worked under unsafe conditions and with part-time drivers”

“Interestingly, if we had emerged from Tullamore and said that we accepted the initiative and would return to work at 9 o’clock the following morning, nobody would have given a damn whether or not we asked our members’ views or how we had reached the decision. If, on the other hand, we had come out and rejected the proposal outright, without asking our members, we would have been pilloried. But as I said, there was never a question in our minds. What we actually said when we emerged from that meeting was that we were convening a Special General Meeting of ILDA members less than 24 hours later in Dublin” (p259).

“It was clear that the dispute had reached one of its defining moments. It was therefore important not alone to ascertain our members’ views on new developments, but also to allow them to reconsider their position relating to the ‘New Deal’ itself. If—as Iarnrod Eireann had been loudly contending—they actually wanted to return to work the ‘New Deal’, we needed to know that. And so our members arrived to make some vital decisions. Seventy-four locked-out members came to this meeting. It was incredible. The dispute had been begun by 118 members, and 106 would finish it. And here—having had less than 24 hours notice of this Special General Meeting—seventy four of them had come from the three corners of Ireland in the middle of the holiday season. They didn’t have one vote. They didn’t even have one secret vote. They had three secret votes, independently verified by a solicitor present specifically for that purpose” (p261).

The Seventy-four train drivers voting in secret ballot gave 100 per cent endorsement to their union executive. When the results were announced, the room broke into spontaneous applause. “*I felt vindicated*

and relieved. For weeks, we had been told by outsiders that our members felt differently from us, but here they were standing side by side with their executive. Again. As I went to announce the results to the waiting media, I was buoyant. Democracy had its day, and ILDA was as united as ever” The ‘unique joint initiative’ was rejected.

FINAL DAYS

As the dispute entered Week Nine, the issues—

“needing immediate resolution had now been distilled down to safety issues, with a forum now available for investigation of industrial relations issues following any return to work. As I suspected, the Labour Court/LRC initiative had not been withdrawn following our inability to meet their ‘expectation’ that we return to work by August 14. Nevertheless, we had still not thought up a manner of dealing with our safety issues in such a way as to enable a return to work to happen in the immediate term. Our members were hurting though. It now seemed that every day, another of our members was reaching financial breaking point. At this stage, I didn’t mind when a handful of our members began, through sheer financial necessity, to drift back to work. This dispute was now about breaking ILDA and nothing else, and I knew that these men still felt very strong in their beliefs. Going back to work was harder for them than it was for those of us who could stick it out for another while. At this stage, I was determined that there would be no falling out with any member who was starved back. I wondered as the week went on without further intervention how long we could keep our members together. Whatever happened, we could not allow ourselves to be split. We began to assess every member on an almost daily basis and, for the first time, we began to contemplate how much more our members could take. But they had been so strong on the previous Monday, and when I spoke to them now by telephone, that strength was still there. A terrifying thought struck me. What if they were staying out beyond their breaking point, out of loyalty to me or to the executive?” (p263).

“Fergus Finlay and Phil Flynn were still working on possible letters from the CIE Chairman to our members. We had an executive meeting scheduled for the Monday, August 21, 2000 and Fergus asked if he could come to it. He wanted to speak to our executive. Normally Fergus would be happy to speak with me and allow me to pass on any views he had to the rest of the members. But by now, I had other ideas in my head. Although I didn’t fully realise it then, I was coming to the conclusion that the dispute needed to end one way or the other. I didn’t see

how we could keep a large bulk of our members out past the end of the tenth week of the dispute. The lack of money was now the key issue for our members, and I felt that another week would break a big section of them. That couldn’t be allowed to happen. We would finish this united, whatever that meant doing. If it meant going back to work, then it was much better that we do so together, with dignity, than through division and recrimination. But there were still some things we hadn’t tried yet. I suspected that some of our members would secretly welcome a proposal from me that we go back. But I knew that others weren’t ready for that and would see such a suggestion as something akin to heresy. I also thought we should do even more. The buses were hit again and, despite the predictions of SIPTU and the NBRU, once again we got super support from their members in Dublin Bus. But there was still no further breakthrough” (p264).

“I was also very concerned about just how blatant the scabbing operation mounted by SIPTU and the NBRU had become on the rail. A press release issued jointly by NBRU General Secretary at the time Peter Bunting—before he defected to ICTU—and SIPTU’s Noel Dowling directed at their members on the buses, chides them for supporting our ‘pickets’. It outlines that their support for workers ‘on strike for seven weeks’ is understandable but misplaced and it asks them not to support us any further. In the middle of the statement, a single-sentence paragraph reads: ‘Our members totalling 245 out of a workforce of 350 [in their dreams] are passing ILDA pickets every day.’ Some boast for Trade Unionists to make!

“Fergus Finlay attended his first ILDA Executive meeting. It was a tough meeting which began at 8 pm. and lasted for over five hours. Fergus Finlay still hadn’t given up hope of producing a letter that would allow us to go back to work. I had. In my opinion, it had gone on too long and I suspected that Phil Flynn and Fergus Finlay—with all the best intentions in the world—were not going to get the CIE chairman to sign such a letter.

“I thought that we needed something new and I outlined to the meeting what I had in mind, at least in part. I wanted a sit-in protest. A group of our members would effectively take over a key Iarnrod Eireann or CIE building or office and maintain a peaceful sit-in protest for as long as it took... Fergus Finlay was opposed to my idea” (p266).

THE SIT-IN

A group of the men occupied the CIE boardroom in Heuston Station on Wednesday, 23rd August 2000. They were eventually arrested and taken to Kevin

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accompanied by information on how SIPTU and the NBRU were expecting this escalation and had their senior shop stewards prepared to face us down if we approached 'their' garages. We had our own information, and it indicated that we could expect some support from Dublin Bus workers who were as suspicious of their unions as we were. But we hadn't expected anything like this. This was a wipe-out, and it was a massive embarrassment to SIPTU and the NBRU.

"Just at the point where, for the first time in the dispute, I had become concerned about events and the impact that they were having on the morale of our members, happenings in Dublin and Westport had injected new life into our stand. I knew from other phone calls that our members in other parts of the country from Dundalk to Cork were euphoric at the day's events and were, in fact, planning their own escalation tactics" (p246).

"When we hit the outskirts of Dublin, it was slap bang in the middle of the evening rush hour. It was a beautiful sunny evening, which was just as well because as we approached Newlands Cross on the Naas Road, we had still not seen a single Dublin bus. We continued into Dublin to the top of Inchicore. Still no buses. In fact, we were near Rathmines—close to the middle of the city—before we met the first, single, Dublin Bus of the day. It was incredible.

"That evening was spent with Fergus Finlay. He had been speaking to an old friend of his, Phil Flynn. The name had popped up as a possible mediator in the dispute on many occasions since its onset. Although I had never met him personally, he was friendly with Martin King, and I had a good idea about how he operated. He had also worked with Fergus Finlay when they were both trade union officials years earlier and their friendship had been maintained since. I also know that Phil Flynn had the ear of Mary O'Rourke, the Transport Minister. It now transpired that both men believed it possible that CIE Chairman, John Lynch could be induced to send each ILDA member a letter, but not threatening the sack as had been hinted at days before. In fact, these letters would outline conditions, acceptable to all parties, under which our members could return to work" (p250).

LABOUR COURT AND THE LRC

"I switched on the television and went to RTE's teletext. There it was—at last, news of an intervention in the dispute, a 'unique joint initiative' by the Labour Court and the Labour Relations Commission (L.R.C.). Immediate relief gave way to questions. The Labour Court and the LRC? How did it work? What would they do? How soon? What were the conditions? I answered the next call,

and it was a journalist who wanted to know what our response was to the 'unique joint intervention' by the Labour Court and the LRC. I had no statement or terms of reference, so I told him we were considering the position and hung up. Perhaps someone from the Court or Commission had been trying to call me. Perhaps there was a message from them on my phone. I listened to all my messages but they were all from the media or from our members looking for a reaction. I called one of our members. Had he been listening to the news and did he know anything I didn't? The answers were yes and no in that order. Fergus Finlay was my next call" (p250).

"Fergus simply told me to stay calm and say nothing until I knew all the facts. He told me not to get bounced by the media into giving an ill-thought-out or knee-jerk reaction. More calls with questions followed. I had to get a handle on this. I called the LRC but no one would talk to me. The Chairman of the Labour Court was not available. I already smelt rats—big, smelly, diseased ones, with long dragging tails.

"As Finbarr and I drove to Dublin, we discussed events and tried to get a handle on what exactly was contained in the initiative. One thing was obvious. This initiative had come as a direct result of the disruption of Dublin Bus services the previous day. No one gave a damn about Westport or Kerry, or even Cork. They had had few or no services for eight weeks and everyone had looked in another direction. One day of disruption in Dublin, however, and the Labour Court and the LRC were concocting what we were told was a 'unique joint initiative' to deal with the 'exceptional' circumstances. Lesson learned! Never again would our members around the country suffer while we went easy on Dublin.

"I was then shown, for the very first time, a copy of the joint Labour Court/LRC 'initiative'. It quickly told me a number of things. They wanted us back to work by the following Monday 'under protest if necessary' in return for a 'joint investigation' into all the issues in dispute. This joint initiative was presented as having a defined statutory basis, but the detail of its workings was unclear. I immediately made a few calls and convened an emergency meeting of our executive to consider these proposals and any clarification we might subsequently receive. The meeting was arranged for the following Sunday, August 13, 2000" (p252).

"Over the next few days, we needed to assess this joint Labour Court/LRC initiative carefully. As we did so, a number of issues arose. Firstly, the joint initiative had been made by both agencies 'under the powers vested in them under Section 26 of the Industrial Relations Act 1990'. This posed an immediate

problem. Section 26 provides for an investigation of a matter in dispute by the Labour Court only. This may happen following an investigation by the Commission or a direct referral to the Labour Court. However, there is absolutely no provision for a 'joint' investigation involving both agencies in this section, or indeed in any other section, in industrial relations law. So why was the LRC added to this investigation? The answer to that was simple and clear to ILDA members. The LRC had, of course, facilitated the entire 'New Deal' from the outset and had even 'supervised' the ballot count. Now we were questioning whether this agreement, brokered by the state agency, contained safety concerns, breached our statutory entitlements regarding Sunday and public-holiday premium payment and was flawed in so many other respects... So the LRC was clearly a party to the agreement that provoked the dispute. However, section 26 of the Industrial Relations Act provided for the Labour Court to investigate these matters alone and, in all of the circumstances, this was, in fact, the only appropriate course.

"But what if the Labour Court were to find in our favour? Wouldn't that impugn the work of the LRC? Of course it would and that is why the LRC, without any statutory basis whatsoever, appended itself to this 'unique joint initiative'. That was bad enough. But to portray the investigation publicly as fully in line with 'the powers vested in them under the Industrial Relations Act 1990' was quite another matter when, in fact, the opposite was the case" (p255).

"The most remarkable thing about the joint statement is that the word ILDA, which was now a word familiar and known to practically every citizen in the state, was contained nowhere in the statement. We interpreted this as an example of how sensitive ever these two bodies had now become to the issue of 'recognition', to the extent that they felt unable to include in their statement the one word on everybody's lips... the most bizarre thing was that ILDA had as yet received no official notification of this 'unique joint initiative'. No phone calls; no faxes; no emails; nothing—just questions from the media who had been issued with it, and demands for responses to points being raised by the other parties who had been given the document. I first saw the document in RTE on the evening of August 10, 2000, almost eight hours after every significant reporter and news agency in Ireland had received it... Eventually, I had to write and formally seek a copy of this one-page document... I had a copy faxed to me that evening... twenty four hours since it had been issued" (p256).

"Iarnrod Eireann had moved into

a Joint Oireachtas Committee on Public Enterprise and Transport, which was chaired by Sean Doherty, F.F. TD for Longford/Roscommon. This was just one of a number of all-party committees established to focus on specific issues of concern. Obviously a national rail dispute in its seventh week was of major concern:

“And so the big day arrived. The venue was Kildare House, a large committee room just across the road from the Dail, which housed most of the opposition TDs on higher floors. I was there ahead of the 11 o’clock starting time, and was advised of the ‘running order’. Department officials would be first in the hot seats, followed by Iarnrod Eireann. Then it would be the turn of the unions, and finally Minister O’Rourke would arrive. We were a little put out that SIPTU and the NBRU would be there as they were not in dispute and I didn’t see what they would have to offer. However, it was a small price to pay for finally getting our say in a proper forum” (p226).

“I scanned the TDs to see that everyone was there and was immediately struck by two factors. Firstly, I noticed Conor Lenihan, TD, nephew of Minister Mary O’Rourke, sitting in the middle of the row of elected representatives. As he was not a member of this committee, I was surprised to see him there. Deputy Doherty explained that Deputy Lenihan was, in fact, a proxy for another committee member who was unable to attend. I was immediately uneasy, though. However, worse was to come. We knew that Jim Higgins of Fine Gael was on top of his brief but the Labour party’s transport spokesman, Emmet Stagg TD, was nowhere to be seen... As I sat at the back of the room, taking copious notes, I was looking forward to the upcoming opportunity finally to put ILDA’s case across. I was sure that now that we finally had an even playing field, the true picture could emerge and the misleading advertisements in newspapers and all the public relations spin would be rendered useless by basic facts, commonsense and what I was sure the committee would see as our genuine, sincere and solo efforts to bring this dispute to an end.

“His timing was impeccable and it looked to me as if it had been planned with the precision of a military operation. Just as Iarnrod Eireann’s ‘quiet man’, Joe Meagher, was ending his very personalised attack on my members and me, Emmet Stagg appeared over my shoulder—obviously a man on a mission—and addressed the Chair. He apologised for his late arrival, saying that he hadn’t known that this special sitting of the Oireachtas committee of which he was a long-standing member had been

convened. Had he known that this meeting was scheduled, he said, he would have objected. This major issue of national importance was not, according to the Deputy Stagg, a proper topic to be dealt with by this committee at all. He felt it should be dealt with by Iarnrod Eireann (of which his friend, John Keenan, was the ‘Manager of Human Resources’ and the ‘recognised unions’ (the largest and most powerful of which, SIPTU, included him in its membership). His late arrival to Kildare House had allowed Iarnrod Eireann, preceded by department officials, ample time to regale the committee and assembled media with their version of events. However, he had arrived just before ILDA had time to get out of our chairs and outline our view of events. To my horror, Deputy Stagg then demanded that the hearing be adjourned to consider a proposal he had that no further witnesses (like us) be called and that the rest of the hearing be abandoned. He was supported in this by Minister Mary O’Rourke’s nephew, proxy committee member Conor Lenihan.

“Committee chairman, Sean Doherty, my local TD who had assured me that we would finally get our say at this hearing, agreed to the adjournment and ordered that everybody leave the room to allow the committee to decide how to move forward—or backwards. I felt that it was akin to any of the many tribunals we have in this country hearing evidence accusing people of all sorts and then just adjourning without giving the accused party any opportunity to respond.

“When I got home that evening, emotionally bruised and battered and very angry, I spoke to our legal representatives and wrote a news release, outlining what had just occurred. It was issued the following morning, and offered the opinion that the Joint Oireachtas Committee meeting had been ‘a cynical and contrived propaganda exercise choreographed by Fianna Fail and Labour members of the committee’ and that it has been ‘designed to assist Iarnrod Eireann and the Department of Public Enterprise to further misinform the public about the dispute, its legalities and nuances.’ The news release also detailed Deputy Stagg’s interests in the matter, which I felt should have been declared ‘in advance of his proposal to abort the meeting’—namely, his membership of SIPTU and his friendship with John Keenan, Iarnrod Eireann’s Human Resources Manager” (p229).

THE LOCK-OUT

Of the ten-week Lockout of ILDA in the summer of 2000, one single event graphically illustrated the much hackneyed terms of ‘unity’ and ‘solidarity’. The Lockout began on Monday, June 19, 2000 and ended on August 27, 2000.

With their backs to the wall on the Seventh Week and little hope on the horizon these desperate men invoked the oldest and most lethal of all ‘isms weapons: the picket and the ultimate appeal to fellow workers to withdraw their own labour in support of locked-out comrades.

“It must have been around 8 a.m. when I awoke and lifted the TV remote control in my room. I switched on the RTE teletext service as I had done on hundreds of occasions over the previous few weeks, but on this occasion, the headline hit me like a bolt from the blue. ‘Dublin Bus services hit by wildcat pickets.’ I jumped up in bed and read the page. It outlined how ILDA members in Dublin had mounted ‘flying pickets’ on Dublin Bus garages from early that morning, and how services had been ‘decimated’. Apparently, Dublin Bus workers had supported our members and refused to take out their buses, leaving the capital city with little or no peak-hour bus service. From my perspective, this was sensational news. The despondency—which I now realised would have been partly fed by fatigue—that had washed over me as I went to sleep was now erased by the need to make phone calls and find out what was happening. I called John Courtney on his mobile. He was outside a bus garage and told me that they had been there since 5 a.m. They had received spectacular support from the Dublin Bus drivers and nothing was moving in or out of the garages. They planned to continue their protest until mid-morning” (p245).

“By mid-morning, however, John had called me back. Gardai had turned up and our members were fearful that they might be arrested. However, the Dublin Bus drivers were insisting that we should not withdraw our protests and that if arrests did take place, they would replace our members’ protests with pickets of their own. As it was, many of them were accompanying ILDA members outside garage gates with—what I later saw to be—spectacular success” (p246).

“To be honest, I was delighted with the turn of events. I could tell from the media reaction, that what had happened had completely changed the face of the dispute. Very few had given a damn about the sufferings in other parts of the country for weeks, but now that Dublin had been hit with a vengeance, the game had changed. I was beginning to feel for the first time that we could now build momentum to force an intervention, or an outright solution. I advised John to do whatever he felt was appropriate and that any statement I made would be to defend our members.

“For weeks, there had been speculation and rumour that we were about to hit Dublin Bus. Each new rumour was

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“My view of the 1990 Act is that it is a Thatcherite piece of industrial relations legislation of which the Iron Lady herself would have been very proud. However, it didn’t appear to me to be the straitjacket that was presented to workers, by their own unions. It was obvious from it that anything workers might do in relation to industrial action was fraught with danger. However, I was satisfied that, within the Act, the basic civil and human rights to which all workers are entitled in relation to the withdrawal of labour were, of necessity, protected as long as the workers concerned did everything strictly by the book... the District Manager in Athlone at the time, John Mullin, had agreed to meet us the following morning to discuss our dissatisfaction with the fact that the work was going to Galway and to explain why that decision had been taken. We balloted for action in advance of the meeting. Unlike 1994, all drivers who would be affected by any dispute were offered a secret ballot on the proposed action and were required to sign to confirm that they had received an opportunity to vote in a secret ballot. We returned to the mess room to count the ballots and actually got the foreman on duty to witness the short count and verify that the count was accurate. The result was nine to one in favour of industrial action should the rosters be implemented as proposed, with two drivers deciding not to vote. This was the first ballot P.J. or I had conducted. We hadn’t asked for permission from our unions as we knew that such a request, in the circumstances at that time, would be pointless. More importantly, we knew that we didn’t need their permission and that we had done everything in accordance with the 1990 Act. We were ready to meet Mr. Mullins.

“...we ‘held our whisht’ while Mr. Mullin outlined his figures. We then told him that he was wrong, forcibly, but we didn’t produce our own analysis yet. Instead we stated that we were dissatisfied, and the meeting broke up. We went downstairs to discuss the situation. Five minutes later, we were back. P.J. handed the District Manager a white envelope.

“What’s this?” was the predictable question... ‘You’d better read it,’ P.J. replied. We continued to stand while John Mullin read the seven days’ notice of industrial action. He enquired whether our unions knew about this and we replied that they didn’t but that we were sure it wouldn’t take him long to advise them... We didn’t have long to wait. As we sat in the mess room, discussing the morning’s events, the parcel porter entered to advise me that Tony Tobin was on the phone in the parcels office and wanted to speak to me. I lifted the phone, knowing what to

expect. Tony asked whether it was true that we had just presented John Mullins with strike notice. I said that it was. Tony stated that the 1990 Act required union sanction for such action and that we were required to ballot. As the union has not provided ballot papers, we were acting illegally. He told me to go upstairs and withdraw the notice immediately. I replied that we did not require union sanction and that we had conducted a secret, and proper, ballot. I then told Tony that if he repeated his accusation that I had acted illegally, he would be dealing with my solicitor and not with me at all. I could tell he was taken aback. Not alone were drivers defending themselves but Athlone drivers of all people! He acknowledged that what we had done wasn’t illegal but said that it was a breach of union rules. I laughed to myself as I was reminded of Tony Kerr BL and his opinion in 1994. Matters such as SIPTU’s behaviour in 1994 were not matters for the courts but were simply, at best, breaches of union rules. The circle had turned” (p47).

“I outline this incident in all its detail because for me it contained so many firsts—my first involvement in the independent use of industrial relations legislation, my first involvement in the issue of strike notice, my first involvement in the exposure of a serious management mistake, my first serious negotiation with Irish Rail, my first part in a successful outcome achieved by unity among drivers, and my first involvement in a direct tug of war with Tony Tobin as my union official. It was not to be the last” (p52).

These views certainly do not conform to the media interpretation of a rigid, inflexible hide-bound demagogue. They provoke more the idea of a thinking, innovative leader who, hemmed in by legal technicalities and a lot of legal guff, relies on his own common sense, adheres to the secret ballot process and takes his membership with him.

SPRING ‘LABOUR

“In due course, various elements of the media would expend much energy in speculating on the nature of my relations with Donal Spring, and subsequently Fergus Finlay and John Rogers. Whatever the feelings of these men on that speculation, I was always entertained and amused by it. As my own profile and that of ILDA increased over time, there seemed to be a suggestion by some in the media that we were a pawn being used by some kind of Rogers/Finlay/Spring triumvirate, in an effort to either embarrass or undermine the Labour Party or for some other unspecified reason. The reality is that all three are very committed members of the Labour Party, and any future contact with Fergus Finlay or

former Attorney General John Rogers was brought about by our professional relationship with Daniel Spring & Company, Solicitors, who were, in turn, retained by *ASLEF in London, without any input from us and before ILDA was even formed” (p36, *ASLEF-Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen).

PAT RABBITTE

“In recent months, I finally joined the Labour Party when Pat Rabbitte became its leader. The reason for this change was twofold. Firstly, I agree with Pat Rabbitte that this country needs a new political dispensation and a break with the old Fianna Fail/Fine Gael politics of the civil war. Who cares any more? I certainly don’t. However, I do care about corruption in our society; I care about the fact that well over 40 per cent of our electorate feel so disenfranchised from society that they won’t vote and that, increasingly, our young people view all our political discourse and our politicians as a waste of time and space. That’s what happens when you engage in decades of corruption at the very top and do nothing but obstruct tribunals and try to spin your way out of it. People aren’t stupid. They will either rebel, or just switch off. The night Pat Rabbitte was elected Labour Party leader, he sat on the Late Late Show and repeated his pledge not to enter into coalition with Fianna Fail after the next election. I decided to join at that moment” (p37).

EMMET STAGG

Emmet Stagg does not emerge well in *Off The Rails*. The Kildare TD features prominently, and in particular his friendship with John Keenan, Iarnrod Eireann’s Human Resource Director and the main company protagonist in the dispute with ILDA. In his review of the book, Gerald Flynn, Industrial Correspondent with the “Irish Independent” declares that: “*The background roles of Dick Spring’s Labour Party kitchen cabinet shows that this was no run-of-the-mill work stoppage*” (23.11.2003).

“After that, the discussion mellowed somewhat, and turned to political corruption. I made some sweeping comment to the effect that there was no honesty left in Irish politics. John’s reply was one that I was to have reason to recall some years later. He disagreed with my observation on the low ethical standards in Irish political life and evidenced his viewpoint with a tale about his ‘close personal friendship’ with Kildare TD Emmet Stagg, which he believed showed great principle on Deputy Stagg’s part. What interested me was that Iarnrod Eireann’s Human Resource Director was a member of the Irish Labour Party and had connections to Emmet Stagg” (p55).

Deputy Stagg again enters the stage at

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Off The Rails

Part Two

“Today, after a generation of neglect in favour of the all-conquering motor car, the railways of the world are undergoing a revolution and are set for a triumphal return to favour. Their rebirth, like their original conquests, is global. It includes some of the most ambitious engineering projects ever undertaken, such as the Channel Tunnel between Britain and France and the combined bridge and tunnel link between Scandinavia and the European mainland. This regeneration has meant overcoming huge logistical problems, like laying tracks over the Gobi Desert in Mongolia... this line will provide a continuous rail link between London and Shanghai or Saigon, proving that railways can no longer be seen as merely a historical phenomenon.

“The railway revolution is under way. Who said that railway dreams belonged to the nineteenth century?”
(Locomotion: The Railway Revolution by Nicholas Faith, BBC, 1993).

TRANSPORT

Transport is the greatest political football in this state. In no area of public service does the ‘jobs for the boys’ syndrome operate in a totally uninhibited fashion—and drastically so, at managerial level.

This is another positive aspect of Ogle’s book. A printer could write an eloquent and precise book about the fundamentals of typography—but who would give a devil! With the railways its different—Ogle could be the driver on your next train journey—you are surely interested in standards and you and your family are most certainly interested in rail safety. In this book, he presents a fine introduction to the working of the railway system in Ireland.

In 2002, just over 55% of all workers drove a car to work, up from 46% six years previously.

More than half of primary school children were driven to school by car in 2002, compared with less than one in five some twenty years earlier. During the same period the proportion of primary school children walking to school declined from 47.3% to 26%.

Car ownership was higher in rural areas (86.2%) than in urban areas (73.3%). The trend in both areas has been sharply upwards since 1991 when the relevant percentages were 74.6% and 59.5%, respectively.

FREIGHT SERVICE

Iarnrod Eireann —

“tended to concentrate what drivers were available on passenger services as opposed to freight trains. This meant that freight customers had their services affected disproportionately to the number of drivers actually in dispute. While this prioritising of passenger services is mirrored in overall company policy regarding freight, it is perhaps sad that in a country with such an inadequate road infrastructure, freight

traffic by rail is so far down the priority list of those controlling what passes for traffic policy in Ireland” (p195).

The story of ILDA
 by *Brendan Ogle*
 Currach Press—2003
 (18.99 Euros).

352 pp, Index.

1990 INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT

“I have already referred to the level of regulation accepted by trade unions in Ireland. It is such that we have more restrictions placed on the operation of unions here than apply in Britain despite almost twenty years of Thatcherism. All of the restrictions and legislation that are in place to restrict trade union activity are there despite the presence in those governments of the Labour Party as a coalition partner that was partly funded by the trade union movement. I believe that the entire labour movement has many questions to answer in this regard and that, for example, the failure of the movement to secure meaningful legislation dealing with trade union recognition, as is now in place in Britain, is an indictment of a movement which has lost its focus and which is, as I say, more interested in power for power’s sake than in actually delivering for its natural constituency” (p37).

Below, is an educative insight to Ogle’s leadership in 1996 on the proposed ‘early bird’ train from Galway.

“I had decided that I needed to educate myself in the intricacies of the 1990 Industrial Relations Act. Since I have been a SIPTU representative, I had often heard workers’ demands for some action or other brushed aside by the union on the basis that the union had to be careful about ‘the Act’. To me this legislation seemed to take on the character of a chain that had been permanently tied to our union’s arms and legs to prevent it from fighting for members’ interests. However, now the interests of my members in Athlone were to the fore, and I wasn’t about to trust the interpretation of those I believed had screwed up in 1994. So I went off, bought the Act, and found it very enlightening indeed.

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