

# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

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Caseмент: Forensic View  
Russell & Subhas Chandra Bose

Molly Keane

Frank Dunlop Review  
(Labour Comment: back page)

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## I Believe . . .

There was, it is said, a very big bank robbery in Belfast about a week after the Democratic Unionist Party scuppered an attempt to manoeuvre it into Coalition with Sinn Fein. The DUP leader had declared publicly that his object was to subject the Republicans, whose electoral support now constitutes a majority in the Catholic community, to public humiliation. Nobody can fault him for that. It has been his position consistently for about forty years. If he had made a deal with Sinn Fein in December, he would have left himself open to Loyalist jeers from David Trimble and the Ulster Unionist Party at the British Election in a few months' time.

A couple of years ago their positions were reversed. Trimble, not willing to be caught by Paisley in alliance with Sinn Fein at the impending 'Ulster' election, threatened to bring the house down. To save him from doing so the Government (the *real* Government, you understand) said that there had been a high-level spy ring at Stormont in October 2002. There was a high-profile police raid on Sinn Fein offices, accompanied by TV cameras. Hugh Orde subsequently apologised over the publicity, but the prosecutions came to nothing. (And, before that, on St. Patrick's Day of 2002, there was a daylight robbery of high-security files at Castlereagh, a high security police facility, by a group of men *not* wearing masks. Again the police said that the IRA did it. That saying has passed for a fact in the Constitutional fantasy land of Northern Ireland, though no charges have been brought against anybody to this day. A copycat theft of files on republicans more recently, which seems to have been carried out by security forces, has received virtually no publicity.)

And now the Chief Constable says that he Believes that the IRA did the robbery. And the Dublin Minister for Justice (Michael McDowell, a member of a minuscule political party with 3% electoral support in the Republic which, however, seems to be running the

Government) says that he Believes that the Chief Constable sincerely believes that the IRA did it. The grounds of the Chief Constable's Belief is that he can't see who else could have done it. Very large numbers of high-denomination notes have turned up in Banbridge and Craigavon (with people buying low-value items

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TEN YEARS OF WTO:

## Peter And His Problems

The World Trade Organisation was ten years old last month. Peter Sutherland was the midwife of the organisation and naturally takes a keen interest in how his 'baby' is developing. He is a worried man. He has been so concerned that he has had to make a full diagnosis of the organisation in recent months and published his findings, *The Future of the WTO* to coincide with its birthday. The equivalent of the creature's birthdays, or rites of passage, are its Ministerial Meetings—and all have been failures. Those of *Seattle* and *Cancun* were spectacular failures, the former caused by America and the latter by a combination of Brazil, China and India. And the meeting at *Doha* in October 2001 was a 'non-event', because everyone's mind was on what happened the month before on 9/11 and all were glad to get home quickly in one piece. Another one is planned for *Hong Kong* in December this year and looks likely to go the same way. So Peter appoints himself and calls himself a Consultative Board to tell the world what it should be doing about this.

He summarised his findings in the *Irish Times* on 21st January 2005. He looks for silver linings. He says that "China's accession is especially worthy of note". Praising China is a double-edged sword for our globalisers. China's success is based on the kind of independence and national control of its economy that is anathema to the WTO. The country has joined on its own terms and for its own reasons and, like the Lord, *China giveth and China taketh away*. If that model was

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with high-value notes, see *Irish News* 11.1.05), but the Chief Constable says that they weren't from that robbery.

Such is the respect for 'rule of law' in Ireland.

The Northern Bank (the subject of the robbery) seems to have only the haziest idea of how much money it had, and therefore of how much was taken. Readers who have not lived in 'Ulster' may be unaware that a peculiarity of the region is that a number of Banks there issue and print their own money, as in olden times, and that it does not look a bit like Bank of England money, which is an inconvenience to people travelling from Belfast to London, because cashiers in London stores do not recognise those Ulster notes as money at all. And the fact that these banks make their own money is probably the reason why this bank did not know how much it had when it was robbed.

We have no knowledge whatever about the robbers. But the Taoiseach says he knows that the IRA did it, and that he also knows that Gerry Adams was planning it while he appeared to be working with the Taoiseach to make a settlement with the DUP. And that's a lot of knowledge. Which makes it puzzling why there have been no arrests.

The Chief Constable briefed the media about his Belief two days before he made his public statement, and what he was going to say he Believed was treated as

established fact in the BBC Radio 4 pm news on 6th January. And Alex Attwood, the little white hope of the SDLP in West Belfast, went on Radio 4 to say that, speaking as a solicitor, he thought that the Chief Constable saying who he Believed to be the culprit, without bringing any charges, was the right way of doing policing.

We offer no comment. We have always said that Northern Ireland is a weird Constitutional entity, which should never have existed. In its handsomely-financed official structures it is an exercise in make-believe. And behind the lucrative make-belief there are the tightly-organised Protestant and Catholic communities who have nothing to do in the way of politics but grind against each other. In the good old days the Protestant community used to dominate and harass the Catholic community, but now there is a more equal mode of mutual attrition.

\*

The reason why the Chief Constable is so widely believed in the South has nothing to do with the believability of his case—which is a circumstantial case without circumstances. It has to do with the fact that Sinn Fein is now a major player in the electoral politics of the Republic. The Republic is a democracy with a weak political system. In any democracy nothing takes precedence over the struggle of political parties for political power, but in the democracies of strong States (such as Britain and the USA), a kind of consensual

elite develops which limits party conflict in what is called the 'national interest', particularly in foreign policy matters. The weak political system of the Republic has inhibited the development of such an elite. And the North is both a domestic and a foreign policy issue. The curious thing is that, since the repeal of the sovereignty claim in Articles 2 & 3 (making it entirely a foreign policy issue), it has become more of a domestic issue than it ever was before. And the political parties cannot adopt a statesmanlike approach to Northern affairs when one of the major Northern parties is a rising force on home ground.

Sinn Fein is no longer just an element in the problematical Northern situation, as it was when the Republic claimed sovereignty. The Republic now recognises the North as part of the British sovereignty, but the Sinn Fein Party, which arose out of the Northern chaos of 1969-70, might be holding the balance of power in the South after the next election. Sinn Fein is therefore an enemy of all the other parties in the Republic (as all parties are enemies of each other in a democracy) and it is at the same time a major component of the Northern situation, towards which the parties of the Republic are supposed to adopt a statesmanlike attitude.

De Valera might have been able to do it. Haughey did it insofar it was required of him. Albert Reynolds did it superbly and, if he had continued in office, the 1998 Agreement would have worked out differently and it is unlikely that Sinn Fein would have become the force it is in the Republic. But the thing is entirely beyond Ahern. McDowell doesn't even want to do it. Enda Kenny, the Fine Gael leader, has never given a moment's serious thought to the Northern situation. And the Labour Party, in the hands of the Stickies, is caught in the 'Official Republican' attitude of 1970 against the unauthorised upstart 'Provisionals'.

Here is a Dail exchange on 26th January, as reported in the *Irish Times* o 27th. In support of his contention that Republicans were responsible for the Northern Bank robbery, Ahern said there had been a punishment shooting in Serbia Street, Lower Falls. Sinn Fein TD O Caolain asked, "*What is the evidence?*"

Ahern: "Does the deputy want me to name the individual? What would happen to him?"

O Caolain: "The Taoiseach is abusing his position without evidence."

Ahern: "I will defend the facts... The deputy asked where is the

evidence... Before I said anything, I did not say much by the way?"

O Caolain: "The Taoiseach said more and should not have said it."

Ahern: "That is not the position. I spoke to... Mr. Blair, I got a report on what British Intelligence has, I got a report from Hugh Orde?"

O Caolain: "Is that what the Taoiseach is relying on?"

Ahern: "I am answering to something with which the deputy's party has a difficulty... When I come into this House, I have to listen to what the Garda Síochána of this country says... In this case, it said that its professional assessment is that it shares the view that the Northern Bank robbery was carried out by the Provisional IRA", and could not have been done without the knowledge of the leadership.

Is the individual Ahern chose not to name, for fear of what would happen to him, the one who did the shooting? If so, what would happen is that he would be charged, or at least arrested, is it not? And if it is the person shot, he is already well-known where it counts, is he not?

In the same week that Ahern says that he must say in the Dail what the Gardai tell him, the conviction of Colm Murphy was overturned on appeal on the basis of evidence that the Gardai rigged the evidence. And, in this instance, there can be little doubt that the Gardai rigged the evidence under political pressure to bring a prosecution concerning the Omagh Bombing at all costs. (The great difficulty about bringing a prosecution in the North seems to be the impossibility of doing so without the involvement of the State through its intelligence agents being brought in. The state has therefore been exhorting the relatives of the victims to pursue the matter by vendetta, i.e. by a civil action for damages, where there is a lower standard of evidence, and where (this apparently being the most important consideration) the involvement of agents of the state can be kept out. And the state has been funding the civil action both overtly and covertly.

Also in the same week, Douglas Hogg MP gave a long interview on BBC Radio 4 (10 o'clock News) about the order of the Home Secretary that people who had been interned without trial, but must be released because of judicial ruling, should now be held under house arrest. He said that, on the bases of extensive experience of the intelligence services when he was a Minister, he had concluded that they got things wrong as often as they got them

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## Holocausts: Two Letters

[The first letter below was sent to the *Guardian* and to the *Belfast Telegraph* on 17th January 2005 by Pat Muldowney. *The Guardian* ignored it, while the *Belfast Telegraph* printed an emasculated version on 21st January, cutting out the quotations:]

### PRINCE HARRY

Prince Harry has been wrongly castigated. His Nazi uniform was entirely in keeping with the "Colonials and Natives" theme of the party. The successful, and hence generally uncondemned, British colonial genocide in Australia and North America, included the following incident: "[The] final extermination [of the Tasmanians] was a large-scale event, undertaken with the cooperation of the military and judiciary ... Soldiers of the Fortieth Regiment drove the natives between two great rock formations, shot all the men and dragged the women and children out of fissures in the rocks to knock their brains out" (Moorehead, *The Fatal Impact*).

Hitler's unsuccessful project was based on, and copied from, the British method: "The talk about the peaceful economic conquest of the world was possibly the greatest nonsense which has ever been exalted to be a guiding principle of state policy. ... England [is] the striking refutation of this theory; for no people has ever with greater brutality better prepared its economic conquests with the sword, and later ruthlessly defended them, than the English nation."

Britain was Hitler's accomplice and supporter until it turned on him in late 1939 when it felt its imperial pre-eminence was threatened by the ambitions of its former friend. (It was mistaken in this, as indicated by approving statements such as the above from *Mein Kampf*.) And Hitler was defeated by his intended victims in Eastern Europe—Russians and others who, unlike the populations of Australia and North America, understood modern warfare.

So why castigate Harry while his brother William gets off unscathed—though he was adorned in the garb of the bloodsoaked colonials?

[The following letter by Pat Muldowney was published in the *Irish Independent* on 31st January:]

### GENOCIDE

On Holocaust Memorial Day President McAleese declared on RTE Radio that we in Ireland have many things to be ashamed of in our conduct during the genocidal slaughter of innocent people. Her remarks were confirmed in the same radio programme by Professor Dermot Keogh of Cork University who demanded that the Irish Government should make a formal apology.

It behoves us to reflect, and indeed make amends, for favouring a power which engaged in genocide on a world-wide scale, involving us in a *de facto* alliance with a monstrous evil which, despite all the bitter lessons of the past, is currently rearing its ugly head in the world yet again. The savage methods by which this criminal power sought and achieved world domination are a matter of record:

"The subject races ... whom we cannot utilize we exterminate"

—Gilbert Murray (Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, died 1957);

"There is only one sane and logical thing to be done with a really inferior race, and that is to exterminate it"

—H.G.Wells (in his book *Modern Utopia*);

"The final extermination was a large-scale event, undertaken with the co-operation of the military and judiciary. ... Soldiers of the Fortieth Regiment drove the natives between two great rock formations, shot all the men and dragged the women and children out of fissures in the rocks to knock their brains out"

—Wilhelm Ziehr (in *Hell in Paradise*) describing an incident in Britain's extermination of the Tasmanians.

Is it not time to challenge those people who seek to align us with this genocidal force?

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right. It was Hogg who, some time before Pat Finucane was killed, pointed towards him as an obnoxious lawyer who showed excessive zeal in making legal defences for people who were morally indefensible, and who needed to be dealt with. We presume that it was the way Finucane was dealt with (killed by British Intelligence and Loyalists acting in collusion) that caused him to reconsider his general outlook on these matters.

O Caolain observed that the Government was not impartial in its view of the North because it was in competition with Sinn Fein for votes in Ballybough and Ballyconnell:

Defence Minister (Willie O'Shea): "Where is the deputy's party getting the money to buy those votes? It is robbed money."

O Caolain: "With respect to the little whipper at the Taoiseach's side, we never interrupted you or any of the participants—"

O'Dea: "Robbed money."

O Caolain: "Deputy O'Dea would serve his position and ministerial responsibilities better if he learned to behave himself in this House."

Ahern denied that party-political rivalry with Sinn Fein had anything to do with his judgment on the Bank Robbery:

"If I wished to fight his political party in a party political way, I certainly would not do what I have been doing for the past number of years, such as doing everything possible to bring his party into the centre by ignoring all kinds of things, and trying to convince the DUP recently and the UUP for years of the benefits of working with Sinn Fein. I have tried to convince presidents Bush and Clinton and President Prodi to put money into Northern Ireland to help peace and reconciliation. If I was only interested in a political fight, I would not have taken those actions. Before we began taking those actions, the deputy's party was a party with 2 per cent but it now has quite a strong political mandate because people on all sides of this House, the Labour Party, Fine Gael, Fianna Fail, the Progressive Democrats, the Green Party, have all worked to try to bring Sinn Fein in."

O Caolain: "Not at all."

Ahern: "We have done so because of our history..."

As we recall how these things happened, John Hume obliged Dublin politicians to do what they would not otherwise have done. The Dublin media engaged in a defamation campaign against him with the object of breaking him, and were supported by elements in the SDLP.

At a certain point Albert Reynolds took up the issue with a will and the Agreement was made. This enhanced the prestige of Sinn Fein so much that, when Reynolds was bounced out of office by the *Irish Times* and the Labour Party, Bruton had to overcome his inclinations and work with it. The situation to which Ahern refers as evidence that he is not influenced by party politics in the matter was well established before he became Taoiseach. His conduct as Taoiseach has been completely erratic. He has from the start treated the Agreement (which had been carried by a Constitutional referendum and was said to form part of International Law) as an initial negotiating position put by Sinn Fein which would have to be substantially amended in a bargaining process of which it was only the start. In doing this he did what came naturally. He rose in politics as a fixer, a negotiator of compromises, within the politics of the Republic. But in those days he was somebody else's lieutenant. When he became Taoiseach he rose beyond his abilities. He was inherently incapable of standing by an Agreement which had already been made by others through the process of compromise, and he immediately set about compromising it.

The Progressive Democrats showed some understanding of the Northern situation when Liz O'Donnell was handling it (as a Junior Minister). Since MacDowell took the Cabinet position which was rightfully hers, its position has been, in substance, that Provisional Republicanism is a criminal enterprise and that the Agreement should never have been made. The Justice Minister has now made this position explicit by saying that Bobby Sands was not engaged in politics, only in crime. (The PDs have 3% support in the state, and Sinn Fein 13%.)

This journal does not make predictions. We think that 'Political Science' is bogus. A science predicts the future of the matter it deals with, and we do not think that the political future is knowable. But we did not think the Agreement could work, and we were certain it could not work without powerful external compulsion on the Unionist Party to work it. And we knew that it went against the grain of British political culture to make a deal with an enemy and stick to it. In 1918 Britain made an Armistice with Germany and then worked at developing it into an unconditional surrender (thus preparing the ground for the Nazi Party), and we expected it to act in similar manner with regard to its deal with the IRA, and said so. Its outstanding ability over the centuries

has been to manipulate opportunities in pursuit of a consistent purpose. What it has been doing since 1998 is unravelling the Agreement which it found expedient to make then, while gaining substantial advantage from having made it.

Over the past few weeks we have seen the moral collapse of the ideological layer roughly aligned with the wing of the SDLP which kept avenues open to Sinn Fein. The *Irish News* has gone to the lengths of deploring Irish neutrality in the Second World War. Brian Feeney says the IRA did the robbery, and he said on BBC Radio 4 that the Agreement was fatally flawed by having the Republicans as part of it. And Fionnuala O'Connor (whom we remember under another name as a radical in the other PDs—the People's Democracy, which did its bit to make Northern Ireland explode and invented the term, "*Brit Huns*" when it did—and who sometimes directed snide remarks in our direction as bizarre Fenian Orangies) looks forward to the time when the voters will 'sicken' of Republicans who "*think they can advance with the ballot box [yes, the box!] in one hand, gun in the other, swag over the shoulder and the proceeds of business, shady and otherwise, stuffed in their pockets*" (Irish Times column 28 Jan). How can Orde, this very politic policeman, not be believed when, she says, he has until now "*been almost laughably supportive of the republican leadership*".

Sinn Fein did not gain its present strength in the Republic merely on the basis of the Belfast Agreement and the way Ahern has been failing to live up to his obligations under it. It can only have done so because of an element of rottenness in the political life of the state which none of the other parties can address. And, because of this, and because the SDLP and the *Irish News* have lost their way in the North, a local West Belfast paper, the *Andersonstown News*, has decided to launch a new all-Ireland national paper. The Justice Minister has denounced the enterprise by describing the projected new paper as an Irish version of the *Volkische Beobachter*, which was the newspaper set up by the Nazi Party in Germany.

We give this month some further transcripts from *Questions & Answers* (RTE), which is now virtually the only forum of political discussion in the Republic, despite the fierce bias of its Chairman, John Bowman. We begin with a brief extract from 10th January, when there was no Sinn Fein representation on the platform, the members of which were

in agreement with the Chief Constable. But a member of the audience was allowed to say this:

“An English functionary has walked in, as many before him, and has said, ‘It’s the Catholics, they’re the criminals’. Except now he’s getting the backing of the Southern Irish Government. The people up there have suffered a great deal over the past 80 years. They require their political power and they’re entitled to it. And they should be encouraged and backed in that. The idea of constantly reducing this to a criminal activity, their aspirations, is a West British—

*Bowman* [(looking fierce)]: —Ah, come on, was a bank raided or was it not?

*Questioner*: I don’t know. All I know is the word—

*Bowman*: You don’t know if a bank was raided or not.”

*Questioner*: I know the word of a British functionary. That’s all I know.

*Bowman*: But was there a bank raid or was there not?

*Questioner*: There was a bank raid, yes. So what has that got to do with it?

*Bowman*: Well you said you weren’t sure whether there had been one or not. Third row here. Yes.”

This is the entire exchange. For Bowman the only issue was whether there had in fact been a bank raid. If there had, then the Provos did it. It was like an 18th century libel trial in which the only function of the jury was to decide whether the book had been published, because if it had, libel followed automatically. The man in the audience took some time to understand the Chairman’s mindset, and thought he was being asked if the Provos did it.

The man in the third row commented on the Republican pattern of criminality and said: “The crunch has now come. Sinn Fein needs to decide whether it wants to be involved in democratic politics, or we have to decide to go ahead without them.” Bowman then turned to a member of the platform and asked: “John Mooney, do you think they have faced that crunch question or not?”

The implication here is that Bowman thinks there might be a Northern settlement without the Republicans. So why does he suppose they were brought into settlement negotiations?

On 17th January Mitchel McLaughlin and Michael McDowell were on the platform. An extract follows:

*McLaughlin*: ...In my view the political landscape in Ireland has changed, and the issues of conflict and division which have sustained the political violence in this island

are being addressed, perhaps not quickly enough for all—

*Bowman*: —Yea, Mitchel, that’s true over the last ten years, what you said. But it’s also true that over the last month the landscape has changed again, and what looked like only a photograph that was between us and the jackpot—decommissioning and an end to violence and normal politics—is no longer the case, and that’s because the people with whom you would be sharing power no longer believe that the IRA were not involved in the bank robbery in Northern Ireland. The trust is gone.

*McL*: Well, there are three points there that I could pick upon... Some people use this word *trust*, and there’s an assumption that there was trust. I think there was very little trust between the parties, for perfectly understandable reasons. There’s a very long history of the conflict—

*B*: —You’re not addressing—you’re going back.

*McL*: Sorry, but you introduced the word, and so I’m just addressing that—

*B*: —Trust was difficult but now it’s gone.

*McL*: No. Trust wasn’t there. We were in the process of—in confidence in our own ability—attempting to reach out to each other. And trust might well have been the product of that. But the process itself had not got that far. So my view is that we’re always kind of susceptible, particularly when we have an agenda which moves from the position of an opinion. And people are entitled to their opinion. And people are entitled to say, well I support that opinion, or I actually have a different opinion. You then have to judge your actions on the basis of hard fact and evidence. So: Will the peace process be sacrificed on the basis of the opinion of a senior policeman in Belfast, or will it be sacrificed on the opinion of the Minister for Justice in this State? No. It should be judged in the context of the evidence that people produce, and that they can then stand over... Now I happen to take the position when the IRA tells my party leadership they didn’t do the job, I believe them. Now, that’s not to say that I know who did the job. And I don’t even know who didn’t do the job... And let me give one illustration of why people I think should be very careful... Another aspect of the bank raid that struck me very strangely, is that almost on a daily basis we got revised information with relation to the amount of money that was taken. You’d think the bank would know how much money they had under their charge. So each day we get a different figure—

*B*: —But it’s [indecipherable] figure

*McL*: —Then they tell us that they know the serial numbers. And they release the numbers. And some people are inconvenienced by being challenged when they attempt to—

*B*: —But the substantive point—forget this detail, it’s not important—the substantial point is that a significant sum of money, more than 20 million, was stolen, and most of your colleagues, who would be

your colleagues in a Northern Ireland administration, believe the IRA did it.

*McL*: Well, here’s the substantial point. [Bowman tries to move on.] You interrupted me and that’s very unfair. I want to make a substantial point. If we can have such imprecision in terms of the amount of money that was taken, how can people be so certain that they know who carried out the robbery? Is that not a substantial point? that fair-minded people have to consider?

*McDowell*: Was there a robbery, Mitchel?

*McL*: Yes there was.

*B*: I thought there was too. Minister.

*McD*: I have to say, you know, just listening to Mitchel there, he was avoiding all the real fundamental questions, because, firstly, the exact amount of the money has nothing to do with who did it.

*McL*: Do you know it?

*McD*: No, of course I don’t.

*McL*: But you’re a hundred per cent certain of something else!

*McD*: I’m making the point that the exact amount of money taken has nothing to do with the identity of the perpetrators. Nothing at all. You’re bringing it in as a red herring to create a kind of smokescreen.

The second thing is that Hugh Orde is a sensible level-headed, honest police officer. He’s a person who, as you know Mitchel, was the chief operating officer in the Stevens team that came to investigate inadequacies in the Northern Ireland police system. He’s a person who I have great trust in his judgment. And I think that he wouldn’t call it the way he did if he didn’t have good reason to do it. That’s the first thing. The second thing is that we have had in the past a huge number of occasions in which the IRA has stated that it wasn’t responsible for this or for that and it turned out afterwards that that was completely untrue. Now I could reel them off. But I’ll give you some examples. For instance, Gerry Adams said immediately after Gerry McCabe was shot in Adare, and murdered, Gerry Adams said then this was not an IRA job, that this was something which damaged Republicanism and was nothing to do with Republicanism, and that he was quite satisfied that the people who were blaming the IRA for that job were trying to damage the peace process. That’s what he said at the time. But, having said all those things, when it did transpire that it was an IRA team, your party colleagues in the Dail all trooped down to Castlereagh Prison, as TDs they’re entitled to, to visit prisoners, and then posed for a photograph with these prisoners, which was published in *An Phoblacht*. Now, either this was something which Gerry Adams thought was consistent with Republicanism or it wasn’t. But it was amazing that he said at the beginning that it was damaging to Republicanism and alien to Republicanism, and then at the end your colleagues are posing with these people and asking for them to be released. And in *An Phoblacht* this week, for instance, there are still messages from those people to people on the outside, describing themselves as prisoners-of-war. So what way is it? Are we

to accept anything that the Provisional movement says at face value? Because if Gerry Adams' genuine opinion of the offence, that this was damaging to Republicanism was true, why is it that the SFTDs go to Castlereagh Prison and pose with these people and then demand their release? [At this point the Minister was obviously caught in a fugue, a rut. The Chairman took pity on him.]

*B:* This is old ground. What about the raising of the bar, Minister, which came up at the talks today? How far is the bar now being raised for SF and to prove that there's an end to criminality with the IRA before the peace process can continue?

*McD:* Well in November-December the Irish Government made it a red line issue, and so did the British Government, that the Provisional movement would make it very, very clear that henceforth nothing that any of their members, political or Army, would do, would endanger the rights or the safety of others. And that is the phrase we used. It was a very simple phrase. It's not replete with any kind of political overtones or undertones. And they refused point blank to say that. And Mitchel in fact went on the radio, and said in a jocose moment doubtless, that perhaps their reluctance to do it was because it was a phrase made up by me. It wasn't made up by me, by the way, as a matter of fact. But it was interesting that Mitchel went on the radio and specified that that was perhaps a reason why they were unwilling to use that phrase. Now they refused point blank to exclude criminality in December, and we had all this business, this pretence that the only outstanding issue was a photograph. You're asking now how far the bar is raised. It's raised to this point. That there can be no budge, no fudge, on this issue. That SF and the IRA have to make it very clear that from now on there's no exilings, no robberies, no kidnappings, no punishment beatings. None of these things will happen. And, if they happen at the behest of a group to which you are allied, Mitchel, that you exit the political process, mandate or no mandate, out you go.

*McL:* Well, we'll see about that. I think at the end of the day it's a matter for the people of Ireland. Let me just deal with the point about Hugh Orde, and you made the reference. And it's an interesting point, that he investigated as part of the Stevens Team the collusion policy of the British Government and the role that they played in the murder of nationalists in the North. Pat Finucane—Hugh Orde knows that the British Government was involved. Has he made a political intervention where he has stated that he is convinced, or that he believes, that the British Government was involved in the murder of Pat Finucane? And, more interestingly, I wonder Minister, did you ask today the representative of the British Government, and did you say on the basis of your belief—and I believe that you share the view of the vast majority of the people in Ireland—that the British Government was directly involved in the murder of Pat Finucane? Now is that an important issue?

Does that reflect criminality at the heart of government, the British Government? And did you address that issue? Were you interested in it?

*McD:* The answer to that question is, as you know, that the Stevens Inquiry has concluded that there was collusion by the police with the people who murdered Pat Finucane. But you're ratcheting it up one stage further, and you're now saying that the British Government was doing it. And I ask you, you're the man who was talking about evidence, where is there one shred of evidence that the British Government was involved in the murder of Pat Finucane? Where is there one piece of evidence?

*McL:* I have made a point and you are going to studiously ignore that. Hugh Orde comes out and he pronounces that he believes the IRA was responsible for the bank robbery. He doesn't produce any evidence. I'm saying they investigated also the Pat Finucane murder. They came to conclusions. The dogs in the street know that the British Government—

*McD:* —Do you accept his conclusion on that issue?

*McL:* I'm saying I have a belief, Michael McDowell, I believe that—

*McD:* —That there was collusion by the security forces.

*McL:* Oh absolutely. Collusion is not an illusion.

*McD:* And wasn't that what the Stevens Inquiry decided?

*McL:* So here's the question that I'm putting that you're trying to deflect. Hugh Orde had an opinion that the IRA committed the bank robbery—

*McD:* —And you believed him on—

*McL:* Hugh Orde has an opinion as to who was responsible for the collusion campaign, and conducting that murder campaign that resulted in the murder of Pat Finucane and many other nationalists. Now, he hasn't come out and said it. He hasn't made a political intervention in that way. And neither would it seem, in terms of the British Government's culpability, are you as Minister of Justice in this State. I think you have a double standard. I think that's hypocrisy.

*McD:* I don't have a double standard. Hugh Orde, the same man whose judgment you accept on the Stevens Inquiry, you're now saying is chancing his arm in relation to this robbery.

*McL:* No, you see, my opinion is backed up by evidence—

*McD:* —Of [unintelligible]

*McL:* Of collusion? There have been court cases, and people have been—

*McD:* —Exactly, and who uncovered that evidence? Hugh Orde did, with the Stevens Team. And you accept that.

*B:* And here's another dimension, Mitchel McLaughlin.

*McL:* Has Hugh Orde ever stated that he believes that the British Government was involved in directing terrorism against Catholics in the North of Ireland?

*McD:* The British Government!

*McL:* Yes.

*McD:* Are you talking about the people who sit around the Cabinet Table?

*McL:* We're talking about the Security Coordinating Committee. They reported directly to the British Cabinet. This leads into Downing St. That's why I think the Irish Government are so reluctant to examine this issue. That's why they won't pursue the fact that the British Government is withholding evidence on the Dublin/Monaghan bombings. Your Department lost the files {shot of McDowell looking grim}. I think that's incredible. I wonder who's going to be held responsible for that? The forensic evidence was returned to the British. And you know the Irish Government conducted its own Tribunal of Inquiry. The British Government refused to cooperate. Has anybody lifted the bar on the British Government's participation in the peace process? I didn't hear the Irish Government doing it. [Shortly afterwards, McDowell said he was thinking about suing the British Government over the Dublin/Monaghan Bombings, see *Irish Times* 28.1.05.]

*B:* Mitchel McLaughlin, the substantial point remains that the people with whom you need to work in politics, all of the political parties everywhere, don't believe that Hugh Orde is wrong. They think the IRA had the capacity, the will, and that they did the job. Now you will accept that the IRA has the capacity?

*McL:* Yes.

*B:* And they do bank raids. It's one of the things they do and they do them rather well in terms of execution of the bank raids. Now, in those circumstances, it's plausible that they did it. And that's your problem.

*McL:* It's only plausible, first of all, if the people that's making the accusation are prepared to accept the possibility that they're wrong. It's only plausible if people also accept that there are a number of major criminal gangs, some of them based in this city—

*B:* —No, you're missing my point. My point is that the people with whom you have to do politics believe that the IRA did it and they believe that the peace process has gone off the rails.

*McL:* I'm not missing your point. I want to put it in the proper context. There have been bank raids in this State. I remember the Littlejohns and I'm sure you do. Who directed them? They were robbing banks right, left and centre in this State. It was getting blamed on the IRA, by the same people who presumably are advising the Minister of Justice here at the present time, that the IRA were doing it. It was in fact British Intelligence and their agents in this State. So there are a number of agencies who are perfectly capable of carrying this out. Now what is the difference? The difference is this. People can believe . . . and people are entitled to their beliefs. It is, what do we know? Are we being told what to believe? Are we are being told, by people who won't divulge their information, what we have to believe. Well, I think, they'll make their own minds up. I think that the people, the ordinary people, will say, Well, here there's questions that have to be answer-



ed. People are entitled to their view. But how do you extrapolate that to the position where a party that represents 362,000 voters in this island are going to be penalised, and that the democratic process is going to be subverted, on the basis of opinion? Let's produce the evidence. And if the evidence is produced, then let people take their medicine in those circumstances and say We were right, or We were wrong. And I hope when it is proved that it isn't the IRA that did it, that those who are making the accusations now, will be big enough—

*B:* —And if it were the IRA who did it, what would the implications be?

*McL:* I have already said that we will take our medicine. We will say that we misread the situation... It is my view that there are very very serious questions here that are not being addressed... You can bet that, when both Governments take the stand that they have, that they are devoting very very considerable resources to attempt to make their accusation stand up. Hugh Orde tells us that 45 of his top detectives are engaged on this case. They haven't even come up with a fiver of the money that was stolen. So perhaps they're looking in the wrong direction...

[Audience comments]

[Interchange between McLaughlin and McDowell about what happened in the December talks]

*B:* Would they have excluded criminality?

*McL:* Well, I don't think the IRA would have used the word 'criminality'. But I do think—

*B:* —Why not?

*McL:* Because I don't believe, and anybody who thinks the IRA is going to issue a statement saying that, We will no longer be involved in criminality, is living in cloud cuckoo land.

*B:* Why? Because they don't do criminality, is that it?

*McL:* Yes, and they didn't do criminality in the 1920s.

*B:* No, but, but—

*McL:* John, you asked the question. Let me answer it please. You keep interrupting me. In 1920 the IRA was robbing post offices. They were robbing banks. They were shooting people, men women and children. They were burning houses. It is in fact seen by many people as an honourable chapter in the Irish fight for freedom. Now the IRA have that view today—

[Shout from audience: Shame, Shame]

*McL:* —No, not shame. You can have a different view, and you're perfectly entitled to it. But let me make this point. There are many people, and there are many political parties, who are very proud of their ancestry, and point to the role that their fathers and their grandfathers played in the fight for Irish freedom. Now those circumstances are what led to the modern-day IRA. But my party is trying to change it.

*B:* Martin McGuinness said yesterday if sanctions are taken against SF then Republicans may believe politics isn't working. Is that a threat to return to what you do best?

*McL:* No. You're a historian, so you know why the conflict and why really the IRA emerged. Now can we guarantee that there's no return to circumstances where nationalists and Republicans have no voice, have no democratic peaceful opportunity to pursue their aspirations, which are legitimate aspirations...

[Some argument regarding formula of words in December, still being worked on when Paisley pulled the plug, and would not have led to breach]

*McL:* Well, my motivation was to get the IRA to agree, and yours was slightly different, I think.

*McD:* ...And the fact is that the IRA has been engaging in major criminality. I put a simple point to you now, Mitchel. If you take somebody like Jean McConville. She was shot, and her body was recovered recently. Do you classify her shooting as a crime?

*McL:* It was wrong.

*McD:* Do you classify it as a crime?

*McL:* I do not. Let me ask you a question. Do you think Bobby Sands was a criminal?

*McD:* He was convicted of a criminal offence. Yes, he was. Yes he was a criminal.

*McL:* So he was a criminal. That's very important. Lots of people will hear you say that.

*McD:* He was convicted of a criminal offence. He was serving a sentence

*McL:* And had such a belief in his political philosophy that he was prepared, and not only he—

*McD:* —he went on hunger strike, but he was convicted of a criminal offence—

*McL:* —and nine of his companions, in turn. That was their sense of honour and integrity. And you think Bobby Sands and his colleagues were criminals.

*McD:* You know he was convicted of a criminal offence.

*McL:* So you were going to attempt to put words in the mouths of the IRA!

*McD:* You know he was convicted of a criminal offence. [The leader of Fine Gael in the Senate, Brian Hayes, subsequently also described Bobby Sands as a criminal, *Irish Times* 28.1.05.]

Question from audience: Was the Bank Robbery a crime?

*McL:* I think it was a crime.

*B:* And if the IRA had done it, would it be a crime?

*McL:* Yes, I would say that. This is a different set of circumstances. We are in the middle of a peace process... I would have a different view if this was in the context, say of ten years ago, before the peace process, and when the IRA was in full operational capacity. It doesn't mean that I agree with armed struggle. But it means that I do recognise the reality of it. We have changed that... Now this robbery comes at a time when the IRA was in cessation. I think it would raise very serious questions, and certainly serious questions for the relationship between Sinn Fein and the IRA...

## THE CLONBANIN COLUMN

“For nearly two minutes there was not a sound other than the noise of the vehicles as they moved down the road through the ambush position which extended about a quarter of a mile in length. Firing resumed with two rifle shots in quick succession, and the touring car swerved across the road and ran into the ditch. The Hotchkiss gun sprayed the second lorry with a leaden hail. That, too, was quickly brought to a standstill, and a heavy toll taken of its occupants.”

(Rebel Cork's Fighting Story by Pat Lynch-Anvil Press, Tralee)

### LIBERTY HALL

“SIPTU is to consider selling one of Dublin's landmark buildings, Liberty Hall. The 15-storey city-centre building is in need of refurbishment and disposing of the property is one of the options to be discussed by the trade union's national executive early next year.” (*Irish Times* 27.12.2004).

“The general president, Billy McMullen, was introduced and took his place on the rostrum.

“Yes,” the general president continued. “We intend to set up a fund to finance the rebuilding of Liberty Hall on this site. We must always remember that our docker members paid for the repairs to Liberty Hall after 1916 when this building was a shambles. They ceded their first week's wage increase to the ITGWU to get the work done and make a HQ for our union. That was an act of faith that we must always bear in mind. It was also a huge sacrifice in human terms for an ideal of ordinary working men with families and commitments. Men who could quite easily turn their backs on a union that was barely able to function at that time.

“We now intend to build a new modern building here on this site in which our jobs can be done effectively in a deal more comfort than this dilapidated building affords. So, on behalf of the officers and national executive council of the union, I ask you to rise and honour in toast: the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union.” (Billy McMullen speaking at the ITGWU Christmas Social occasion in 1947).

The above was taken from a lovely memoir published by May O'Brien titled *Clouds on My Windows—A Dublin* continued on page 21

# An Cor Tuatail

Δ θάλει θιλ αν θαινιθ λιθ μο εδς ανοις?

An Mangaire Súgach ccc. ar n-a briseadh amac Le sazarc is Le ministir Cromaid.

Δ θάλει θιλ αν θαινιθ λιθ μο εδς ανοις,  
Dom éarceadh tuig, as easlaus san fad ar bi;  
An dicme sin ní glacaid me ac im fánaire,  
'S ní faduid liom im procescan ná im páraire.

Deir pearsa aca sur cearrbad neamh-zhacac me  
'S zo n-adhaim sur Sasanaic do lachair me,  
Nuair scaram leis eun aifriinn zo mb'fearr liom dul,  
'S nac ceactar mise procescan nó páraire.

Deardaim san dearmad nac fulair leis me  
Do éarceadh tuig le harma do lachair éire,  
Zo raicid liom eun acrainn san spás ar bi  
'S zo scaithead beic im procescan nó im páraire.

An sazarc deir sur feannaire neamh-falac me  
'S zo dearrainim le mangaireadac na mná eun uile,  
Sur measa me 'ná ceactarnac acá le broit,  
'S ná glacaid me im procescan ná im páraire.

Is do freasrad sur eactarnac san náire me,  
Is nac caicneamac mo dearta ná mo éalir ris,  
Nac acarraic me ac reaccaire acá san scrus  
Do éleactann beic 'na procescan is nac páraire.

Ní carcanadac fé púara do ná zrad do sula  
Mo éarce-sa do éasrad do lachair scuit,  
Ní maise do mo maslad-sa i scás ar bi  
Dé aca mise procescan nó páraire.

Ó caicadh me as an easlais is zo dearla amuis  
Is sur fada me ar mearaicall san dic ar bi  
Caichead cur le hacarraic na cáine sin  
Do zeadas leam im procescan nó im páraire.

Cé fada do bí Magdalen is Daibí an king  
Ar mearaicall is an t-aspl do euir cáine i mbroit  
Do glacad iad nuair éasadar i scáil 's i scion  
Is ceactar doib níor procescan ná páraire.

Δ cara θιλ cá raicad-sa eun fain ανοις?  
Ó's feasac mé ar dearmad san fad san rios,  
Caichead beic im caibimisc nó im arian uile  
Ó scaras le beic im procescan nó im páraire.

'Dé aca-san den dicme-se ar a deactaim-se  
Nár dearmad na haicéanica is acá san eoir  
Caicéad liom a zarb-leac zo habalca  
Dé aca-san me procescan nó páraire.

An Ceangal:

Féac an t-aspol do beacuis fá trí ar ucús  
As séanad a carad sur glacad arís si huíal;  
Δ Dé θιλ dicim, cé scaras le olige na níru,  
Mar don le peadar an mangaire scaoil ic óin.

Anbriac Mac Craic (an Mangaire Súgach)

Andrew Magrath, commonly called the *Mangaire Sugach* (or “Jolly Merchant”), having been expelled from the Catholic Church for his licentious life, offered himself as a convert to the doctrines of Protestantism; but, the Protestant clergyman having also refused to accept him, the unfortunate *Mangaire* gave vent to his feelings in this lament.” [Note by **Edward Walsh**]

[Note from manuscript: Composed by the Mangaire Súgach, after falling out with the priest and minister of Croom.]

## Lament of the Mangaire Súgach

Beloved, do you pity not my doleful case,  
Pursued by priest and minister in dire disgrace?  
The churchmen brand the vagabond upon my brow—  
Oh! they'll take me not as Protestant or Papist now!

The parson calls me wanderer and homeless knave;  
And though I boast the Saxon creed with aspect grave,  
He says that claim my Popish face must disallow,  
Although I'm neither Protestant nor Papist now!

He swears (and oh, he'll keep his oath) he's firmly bent  
To hunt me down by penal acts of Parliament;  
Before the law's coercive might to make me bow,  
And choose between the Protestant and Papist now!

The priest deems me a satirist of luckless lay,  
Whose merchant-craft hath often led fair maids astray,  
And, worse than hunted fugitive all disavow,  
He'll take me not a Protestant or Papist now!

That, further, I'm a foreigner devoid of shame;  
Of hateful, vile, licentious life and evil name;  
A ranting, rhyming wanderer, without a cow,  
Who now is deemed a Protestant—a Papist now!

Alas! it was not charity or Christian grace  
That urged to drag my deeds before the Scotie race,  
What boots it him to write reproach upon my brow,  
Whether they deem me Protestant or Papist now?

Lo! David, Israel's poet-king, and Magdalene,  
And Paul, who of the Christian creed the foe had been—  
Did Heaven, when sorrow filled their heart, reject their vow  
Though they were neither Protestant nor Papist now?

Oh! since I weep my wretched heart to evil prone,  
A wanderer in the paths of sin, all lost and lone.  
At other shrines with other flocks I fain must bow,  
Who'll take me, whether Protestant or Papist now?

Beloved, whither can I flee for peace at last,  
When thus beyond the Church's pale I'm rudely cast?  
The Arian creed, or Calvinist, I must avow,  
When severed from the Protestant and Papist now!

[Whichever of these people of whom I speak  
Neglected not the Commandments and is without sin,  
Let him throw his stone forcefully at me  
No matter whether I am Protestant or Papist now.]\*

## Avran

Lo Peter the Apostle, whose lapses from grace were three,  
Denying the Saviour, was granted a pardon free;  
O God! though the *Mangaire* from him Thy mild laws cast,  
Receive him, like Peter, to dwell in THY house at last.

Edward Walsh



\* [This verse is not included in Walsh's translation. It is translated here verbatim, in the usual style of this column. In contrast, Walsh's poem is good verse in its own right. Unusually for such translations, it reproduces in English the verse style of the original. Note that Walsh has twelve syllables to the line, just like the original; also the rhythm of Walsh's version is the same as the original—quite a feat.]

Along with *Reliques Of Irish Poetry* by **Charlotte Brooke**, an 18th century Methodist lady, and Queen's University (Galway) Librarian **James Hardiman's** 19th century *Irish Minstrelsy*, **Edward Walsh's** *Irish Jacobite Poetry* was the means by which Irish poetry was salvaged from the wreckage of Gaelic civilisation. The following details about Walsh are from the Catholic Encyclopedia:

"Irish poet, born at Derry in 1805; died at Cork, August, 1850. When little more than a boy he showed great intellectual gifts, and in 1830 was private tutor in County Cork. He was for a time teacher of a school at Millstreet, whence, in 1837, he removed to Tourin, County Waterford, having been appointed to a school under the Commissioners of Education. Many of his songs and poems appeared between the years 1832-39, and he contributed to the *Nation*. Worried with the surroundings of an uncongenial occupation, and pestered by officials, whose visits were ill-received by the super-sensitive poet, he went to reside in Dublin in 1843, and was befriended by Gavan Duffy, who got him appointed sub-editor of the *Monitor*. His *Irish Jacobite Poetry* (1844) and his *Irish Popular Songs* (1847) gave unmistakable evidence of a genuine poet. Yet he was forced to fight against poverty, and, in 1848, he accepted the post of schoolmaster to the junior convicts of Spike Island, where he was visited by John Mitchell, on his way to penal servitude, who vividly describes in his *Jail Journal* his meeting with Walsh. Not long afterwards, he secured the schoolmastership of Cork work-house, but died within twelve months. A fine monument, with an epitaph in Irish and English, was erected to his memory in the Father Mathew Cemetery at Cork. Among his lyrics *Mo Chraoibhin Cno*, *Brighidin ban mo stor*, and *O'Donovan's Daughters* are in most Irish anthologies, while his translations from the Irish are both faithful and musical."

**Andrias Mac Craith** (1710-1791) was a hedge-school teacher in Co. Limerick, and is closely associated with fellow-poet **Seán Ó Tuama** who kept a public house in Croom, forming a school of poetry known as Filí na Máighe (Poets

of the River Maigue). In the story, *Flow On, Lovely River* (by novelist **Francis McManus**, originator of the Thomas Davis Lecture series which still continues on Radio Eireann), the Great War veteran Vimy is the bane of the clergy and respectable Catholic society and ruminates on whether he should give them good riddance and go over to the Protestants, but decides against it on the grounds that he just could not see himself playing tennis with the Canon.

**Pat Muldowney**

Editorial Note: An Cor Tuathail will continue as an occasional feature in *Irish Political Review*. However, longer Gaelic poems with translations will appear in each issue of *Church & State*.

## Peter And His Problems continued

followed by other Third World countries, there would be no economic disasters in those countries and no happy hunting ground for the globalisers.

Mr. Sutherland praises the Dispute Settlement Procedures: "...especially worthy of note is the consistently impressive record of the dispute settlement system". He should have explained a little more on how this actually works. Believe it or not, the settlement of disputes in the WTO is based on the principles of retaliation and hostage-taking which would be considered barbaric in any system of justice. If, for example, a country the size of Ireland won a case against the US, the EU or China, and if the guilty party ignored the judgment, the country that won the case could not send in its equivalent of the Gardai or the Defence Forces—or Peter Sutherland to win redress. It could only retaliate against the loser by raising tariffs against the loser's goods and, if the loser noticed or cared, it can easily retaliate in return—so it is quite obvious who would be the real loser in the case. The 'winner' of the WTO ruling would be swatted like a fly.

Moreover, the retaliation to be effective must be implemented against choice targets that usually have nothing whatever to do with the companies or industries in the original dispute but which are very successful companies/industries and are therefore vulnerable. The WTO permits this barbaric arrangement as it has no

sanctions of its own. Therefore you will not find any such disputes between small countries and large ones. You will find plenty amongst the US and the EU, and other big hitters, because they can hurt each other or realistically threaten to do so. The system resembles nothing so much as dispute settlement procedures by crocodiles among themselves and against their smaller neighbours.

Peter is concerned about

"...the need to improve decision-making and negotiating procedures in the WTO... The consultative board has suggested a variety of options to improve negotiation and decision-making techniques while safeguarding the rights of all members".

But in these musings one thought that never crosses Peter's mind is that a little democracy should be introduced, for example, a system of voting by members. Would that not "safeguard the rights of all members"? With all the talk and wars waged for democracy these days, one would expect that a vote or two on some—any—aspect of the workings of the WTO would be on the agenda. Not on your life. Peter has got on fine in his life without ever being voted on to anything, and if that is good enough for him it should be good enough for everyone else. For example, there is a new Director-General of the WTO being appointed at the moment, the top job, and nobody involved thinks of suggesting a vote of the members. The Conclave of Cardinals in Rome electing a Pope are raving anarcho-democrats by comparison with the 'cardinals' of the WTO. After all, those Cardinals at Rome do actually vote and vote often. Being a good Catholic Peter should ensure his organisation is at least as democratic as the Papacy.

Peter has to acknowledge in his own way that the WTO has been a disaster for the Third World,

"Among the best-intentioned arguments in trade policy are those that relate to development. There is absolutely no doubt that poor countries need help if they are to assimilate successfully into the global economy. These countries need desperately to trade and they need to attract investment to do so. The WTO can help but it can offer no guarantees, it can provide only opportunities".

That sounds very 'helpful' indeed. The single contribution to the development of poor countries was the wheeze at *Doha* of not calling the new Trade Round a Trade Round but a Development Round: so that made everything all right because it was

the right noise to make. It was a transparent PR con-trick and was the main reason that provoked the countries who ruined the following Ministerial at *Cancun* when a number of them said they had had enough of the farce.

But Peter's great concern is that the WTO is being ignored and countries are going their own sweet way, forming all sorts of bilateral, plurilateral and regional agreements and this is just not on. He says that the basis of the WTO

"...has been undermined by the proliferation of "special deals". This has created what one of our members, Jagdish Bhagwati, has described as a "spaghetti bowl" effect. The need to bring order and effective oversight to the continued proliferation of preferential trade agreements is urgent. The greatest benefits of WTO membership are in danger of being severely undermined by the drift towards politically motivated trade relationships. Governments must take greater care with the multilateral trading system or face some grave consequences"

The arrogance displayed here and its elaboration is breathtaking. Countries and governments simply cannot be trusted to know what's good for them. Peter insists that all Governments of the world should devote their time to practically nothing else but to rescuing the WTO and listening to his pronouncements.

He orders that:

"...there should be annual ministerial meetings and a heads-of-government trade summit every five years. Other machinery should be put in place to keep ministers and senior officials from member governments fully engaged in Geneva. And it is vital that the financial means be made available to ensure that poor countries participate consistently at these levels... Ministers, officials and other interested constituencies must reflect on the findings and recommendations of the consultative board. I hope they will do so carefully, in the knowledge that the realities (not just the myths) of the WTO deserve their undivided attention" .

This report and its recommendation should be dismissed as the ravings of a megalomaniac whose day has come and gone. Happily, this looks quite likely. Even the *Irish Times* buried his report deep in its business pages. Governments are increasingly doing their own deals with each and liberating themselves from the straightjacket of the WTO. Poor Peter.

**Jack Lane**

Speech by Labour Councillor **Mark Langhammer** to the *Campaign Against the Privatisation of Water*, at the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre, Donegall Street, Belfast on 4th November 2004.

## Threat Of Water Privatisation In Northern Ireland

I am very pleased to be here today to set out the view of the Labour Party on the Water Reform

Firstly, there is much in the way that the Government's *Consultation Paper* of March 2003 describes the problems that we can concur with. The diagnosis is not where the core contentious issues lies. It is in who pays, how we pay and by what mechanism. The questions here are more contentious, and it is here that the Government's proposed solutions are tendentious.

**Aging Infrastructure:** There is a backlog of investment, quoted at £460m at 1992, with a need for investment of £3 billion over next 20 years. I wouldn't quarrel with that. There is an ageing infrastructure, some would say antiquated. As a local Councillor I visited our local sewage and waste treatment centre at Greencastle a few years ago. It was built many years ago to service a population of 50,000 and now services 150,000. It has been upgraded recently, but this would not be atypical. The system is decrepit. In many areas, including my own, the human discharge of thousands of people is discharged into the Irish Sea. **Friends of the Earth** have made a valid point in noting that the poorest and most vulnerable often live downhill, down-wind and downstream of pollution. And, after heavy rainfall, it's they who are knee deep in sewage from a system that can't cope and backs up.

**EU Directives?** European Directives have to be met, notably the *Water Framework Directive*. That significant expenditure is required to reach EU standards in drinking water quality, wastewater treatment, sludge disposal, bathing water quality, shellfish protection and freshwater fishlife protection is not a matter of serious dispute.

Contrary to the initial view that New Labour sought to float, there is nothing in the framework document that requires Water and Sewerage Services to be self-financing. The Directive merely requires

that there is "an adequate contribution to the recovery of costs" for households, industry and agriculture.

### What about supply and demand?

On the demand side, additional housing, changing lifestyles, and additional business requirements have added to the level of usage. The higher than UK average leakage reflects the age of the infrastructure.

On the supply side, we have very high natural rainfall, which replenishes reservoirs. No need for hose pipe bans such as in the South of England

In short, there is little to quibble with on the central point that the water and sewage system needs investment. So, the issue is, how do we pay for this?

### Do we pay for water in the rates? Do we pay enough?

NIO Ministers have argued that "domestic users do not pay a direct charge for water services." It is true that domestic rates are not hypothecated and go towards a number of services including health and education. However in 1999 in a Foreword to a consultation paper, the Minister noted that "the contribution this year by the average domestic ratepayer in Northern Ireland for water and sewerage services is £127." This amounted to a contribution towards costs by domestic users of almost 75% of the total costs of services. The paper signalled the need for further investment and noted "increasing the Water Services annual income by an additional amount of £50 million would represent an increase of approximately 10% in the average domestic rates bill (roughly £35 per annum).

It is thus undeniable that we pay a significant contribution through rates for the costs of water services and this in itself is more than is required by the Framework Directive. The denial of this fact is a sleight of hand that enables the Treasury to levy an additional tax on Northern Ireland.

An increase in domestic of rates of the magnitude of £35 is therefore sufficient to run the services required within the public sector.

It is true that we have a lower overall local tax and rates burden than in England and Wales. But, in the absence of a “green dowry” (which I will touch on later on) we do not currently pay enough to pay for the infrastructural improvement now required. The question is how much short do we fall? It is here that we need to shift the ground of debate towards a forensic examination on the economics of the issue.

#### THE GOVERNMENT’S PRESCRIPTION

**Self Financing:** The Government’s prescription is that the water service should be self financing. There is nothing wrong with self financing if, by that, we mean that the society that uses the water should, as a whole, pay for it—like any other public service. But that’s not what Government means.

New Labour is ideologically committed to the extremist, right-wing Thatcherite dogma of private finance. Seen as a “cost centre” on its own and based on the operation of a profit imperative, “self financing” really means reducing labour costs, increasing consumer contributions and public paying through the nose for expensive private finance borrowing.

This concept is driven by H.M. Treasury who used a carrot and stick in offering the Water Service a waiver from new accounting rules if it was to become self-financing. These accounting rules would have led to substantial new costs involved in “capital depreciation”.

This is consistent with New Labour’s determination to “free” the delivery of all public services from the democratic scrutiny of politicians, either by outright privatisation or through other mechanisms, such as Public Private Partnerships, or the creation of Foundation hospitals.

And to achieve “business unit” break-even, Government now seeks payment of between £315 and £415 per annum for the average household. A hardship fund is proposed to provide only “temporary assistance” for those unable to pay

**A Go Co ?** The delivery envisaged is via a Government owned Company—a “Go Co”. This is, in our local parlance, a “traditional route” towards privatization. Clear Treasury Guidance states that Go-Co’s are only created for “those companies which are on a path to privatization”.

It is not the model that Scotland and Wales have—which are within the public sector. We are opposed to the Government Owned company mechanism which underpins this pro-privatisation process.

The GoCo is to be created on commercial principles, and has an in-built

in mechanism where it can simply increase the rates paid and the charges levied for a variety of services currently provided by Water Service, with little or no democratic scrutiny. The public will be left to rely on the light hand of regulation from OFREG. Interestingly it was recently exposed by the Belfast Telegraph that OFREG had in its employ, several people who retained shares in companies owned by Phoenix Gas, which of course OFREG are responsible for regulating.

And in all of this, the Water Service Unions expect 700 jobs to be lost—hardly a precursor of an improved system. The pension rights of remaining workers will go too.

The intent of New Labour is clear in this regard, and is wholly ideological. In a letter from Secretary of State Paul Murphy, leaked to the *Belfast Telegraph* indicated that “privatisation must not be ruled out in the medium term”. The political sensitivity was noted however in the context of widespread opposition and Paul Murphy advised that “the overt pursuit of private sector involvement will (therefore) strengthen the hand of those who are opposing the overall water reform package and could add weight to those who are arguing for a water charge non-payment campaign.”

The “Go-Co” mechanism is, therefore, merely part of a ‘salami style’ stages approach.

#### THE LOCAL PARTIES

The “Communities Against Water Taxes” campaign has made great play that these, undoubtedly iniquitous proposals, would be introduced by a Direct Rule Minister without a democratic mandate. I agree with that, and am one of a very few on the left that actually campaigned for the normalization of political life here through the normal politics of state, when that was a realizable aspiration. My current involvement in the Labour Party is all about trying to develop normal mainstream Governmental politics. But I have no time whatsoever for those who whinge about lack of democratic government (something Northern Ireland has never had) but who won’t involve themselves in the sort of politics which would address this democratic deficit.

The question is, would any of the local Executive parties do things any differently? And it’s that issue that I want to concentrate on tonight.

Unfortunately the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly accepted the transfer of responsibility for compliance with European Directives without seeking a commitment from the Treasury to make

good the years of neglect of Water and Sewerage infrastructure. Successive Governments simply diverted Structural funding and Objective 1 grant aid from the European Union—earmarked for environmental purposes in Northern Ireland—directly into the Treasury’s coffers. Our infrastructure suffered as a result. The question of subsidiarity and additionality has never been addressed by our politicians who have tolerated gross underfunding of services for years.

The Executive Parties—all of them—Unionist, DUP, SDLP and Sinn Fein, have accepted that the Executive was to be the appropriate body to account for compliance to EU Directives. Any infraction proceedings from the EU would land on the desk of the Northern Ireland Executive. **This was accepted without hesitation or argument by the local parties!** They did not make a fight of it. They did not insist upon the sort of “green dowry” that was injected into water services in England and Wales in advance of privatisation.

**A Green Dowry:** The increases in rates that would need to be levied under a self-financing arrangement would be more modest if Northern Ireland had been blessed with the Green Dowry paid to private companies in GB at the point of Privatisation. The writing off of debts was worth over £5 billion, plus a further donation of £1.6 billion to meet European environmental standards. Appropriately adjusted for inflation and other factors this would represent a figure of £342 million owed to Northern Ireland in today’s terms.

The Executive parties did, with regard to water, the equivalent of buying a used car from a dodgy second hand dealer without bringing a mechanic in to test the goods. At the very least, they shouldn’t have accepted the car without insisting on a proper service.

#### The Reform and Regeneration

**Initiative:** In addition to this strategic blunder, all the Executive parties are signed up, 100%, to the Reform and Regeneration Initiative, a Treasury driven initiative to ensure—like an IMF grant—that the only capital schemes receiving capital funding are those undertaken via a PFI (Private Finance Initiative) route. All parties, DUP and Sinn Fein no less than SDLP and Unionist are fully signed up to this extremist right wing dogma. And it is through the **Reform and Regeneration Initiative**, and the **Strategic Investment Board** that the upgrading of the Water Service’s capital infrastructure will be

funded.

Any hope that the additional powers under RRI to borrow at public sector rates could lead to a sort of municipal socialism have been ruled out by the Treasury. The Treasury has insisted that borrowing under its terms must be for the purposes of advancing Public Private Partnerships. To drive this forward the Strategic Investment Board has been established to generate demand and is of course appropriately staffed with those with private sector interests.

So let's be under no delusions here. The battle is not mainly with the Northern Ireland Office. It is principally with Gordon Brown and his team in the Treasury. We would be well advised to rely on no help whatsoever from the local, communal based, parties. **The social policy of the UUP, DUP, Sinn Fein and the SDLP in this matter is what you'd expect it to be—beside the point.**

#### **THE LABOUR PARTY VIEW:**

Firstly, we do not accept the political legitimacy of any Government that doesn't possess a single vote to its name. New Labour is an illegitimate Government without a mandate.

The British New Labour proposals are ill thought out and regressive. The water charging proposed is essentially a property based tax, but the value of a house often bears little relation to either water usage or ability to pay.

Our primary view is that water in a public service, a public necessity, and should be borne from general taxation. There should be no compromise on the primacy of public health. That's the simple view. And, politically, it's the correct view. And the notion of drawing scarce resources away from public services in the form of dividends to shareholders of privatized utilities is, frankly, obscene!

Water and sewage have been paid from public funds since mid Victorian times. And in this great city, from the times of the United Irish movement, the merest hint of social unrest precipitated the development of a sewage system established by public subscription through the Poor Law Guardians. Here, of all cities, should resistance to a privatized profit driven water be strong.

We reject outright that PFI or PPP is an appropriate delivery mechanism. Private Finance in each case, in every case, is always more expensive than Government borrowing. Government borrowing is normally 2-3% cheaper than privately procured finance.

And even in the case of investment made through the Strategic Investment

Board financing, the desire to keep capital expenditure 'off books' is, at best, an accounting device, at worst a dogmatic adherence to a system developed for ideological, rather than practical, reasons.

**Assembly tax varying?** The notion of supporting tax varying powers for a local Assembly has been made in some quarters. Labour does not support tax varying powers for a local Assembly. The Assembly has yet to prove it is a viable institution. It is a fact that Stormont has failed 9 times out of 9 in little over 30 years. Based as it is on the state funding of communal parties—it tends to stimulate sectarian antagonism. As such, adding tax varying powers to an inherently unstable institution is not a way forward.

#### **UNION CALCULATIONS:**

In the report commissioned by Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance, David Hall of the University of London has noted that the investment forecasts in previous year's Water Service corporate plans are entirely consistent with the levels of investment now cited in arguments for a dramatic change to a Go-Co with a self-financing regime. The figures note the need for approximately £150m per annum to be spent over the next 10 years to upgrade the infrastructure to meet the terms of the European Directives.

Hall, of the University of London considered that, with a green dowry (estimated at £342m as a pro rata amount relative to that received by England and Wales water pre privatization), an estimate of what we currently contribute to water via the rates (£130 pa on average) an average of £35 per household would be what is required. I am not aware that David Hall's work has been adequately rebutted.

Given that the Executive parties have 'sold the pass' on the green dowry, and the Treasury are playing hardball, is the Hall report practical politics? By my reckoning, adding the £342m to the £150,000,000 required over ten years could still require only a £50 addition to what we currently pay. At any rate, there is a significant gap between the Hall estimates and the Government's. We need to press for a forensic debate on the economics of the issue. Hall should be, I believe, the centerpiece of opposition.

**Ability to pay:** Together with the economic case, the ability to pay issue should be an Achilles heel for the Government. The Government know that the Hardship Fund proposed is a fig leaf. This particular aspect of the proposals

may not stand up to legal scrutiny under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. That should be tested.

Failing raising revenue through general taxation water can be paid for—as at present—through the regional rate—the rating system being an approximation for a progressive system. But with a proper system of assistance. At present, those who cannot afford to pay rates are assessed, and don't pay. There is a rebate system. Why should water be any different?

**Metering:** The Consumer Council has made a strong case for metering. Indeed the Minister acknowledges that the "consultation" indicated a strong public demand for metering, but indicated that the cost of metering would be some £120m. This has some advantages, but some dangers. The advantages are that it tends to conserve water. It penalizes the classes of people that wash their cars to obsession, and sprinkle their ample lawns in the summer.

But most of the cost of water is in the fixed infrastructure. Adding meters adds to the capital and maintenance costs and will be funded by the ratepayers with no advantage accruing. A metering system without a non metered quota would have working class people conserving by not using. People would cut off their down pipes and collect water to flush the toilet. Senior citizens in particular will do without, as they do, in many cases, with heating.

Metering, for both cost and public health reasons is, I believe, on balance—a non runner.

**Can't pay, won't pay:** There are, however, inherent dangers in a non-payment campaign which does not consider the likely effects of the placement of Enforcement of Judgement orders and attachment to wages orders for those refusing to pay.

Non-payment is a last gasp tactic, not a principle, and not the first knee jerk reaction to be made. In the wrong hands, it can be an irresponsible tactic. It also fails to take account of the ample research, from Consumer groups amongst others, which suggests that many people "say" they are content with a pay-per-use system.

Cheap, slogan politics, does a disservice to those in most need of protection.

Nonetheless where people hold aside the money for water rate demand for the eventuality of proceedings there may be great benefit. To exploit the possibilities we should first develop six or eight case

studies of people and families prepared to “not pay”. We should consider test cases supported by legal aid, or by a fighting fund, and choose those cases well. We should also set up a Help Line for those wanting advice on with holding water rates.

The loading of charges against those agreeing to pay to cover those refusing to pay must also be considered in social terms.

In these circumstances, any call to put people into debt without advising on saving/setting aside money, or preparedness to take legal test cases first, is a cheap and irresponsible stroke. It is not serious politics.

#### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

Our political effort should focus on several areas on which agreement can be reached.

**Support for a Day of Action:** Labour supports the discussions, ongoing within the four water service unions, to demonstrate against what are clearly iniquitous proposals. We will support a Day of Action

**Go-Co:** Opposition to a Go Co, should be backed up by a preparedness on the Unions part to investigate a not for profit Workers and Consumers Co-Operative as a “third way” alternative.

**The Economic Case:** There is a requirement for an in-depth discussion on the Green Dowry and finances.

Firstly, the green dowry hasn’t been asked for—the communal parties have sold that particular pass—it is unlikely that there will be Treasury money to subsidize water infrastructure. In that context, failure to upgrade the infrastructure will require investment and some measure of increased tax take from Northern Ireland—even the Hall report accepts this. We should however task our local parties to redeem themselves. Our MEPs should be tasked to petition Europe—to demand an investigation by the European Union on the degree to which EU money allocated to Northern Ireland over the years for water, sewage and related environmental investment was swallowed up and lost in the Treasury. We should write our MEPs a brief and set them to work. The pressure in itself may bring the Green Dowry back onto the political map.

**Legal Routes:** We should develop a number of varied case studies of people and families who are prepared to make a stand. We should prepare some legal test

cases. We should choose the test cases, and our ground of battle, very carefully indeed. The case studies should become familiar, in their ordinariness, to the Northern Ireland electorate.

We should investigate the legal potential of the Equality provisions of the Northern Ireland Act, particularly in regard to ability to pay.

And we should investigate the prospect of preparing a case for judicial review. Scotland and Wales didn’t get what is being landed on us.

It is the practical alternatives, and debate on political tactics, that I look forward to within the debate from the floor that will now follow. Thank you.

## The Black Diaries and the Giles Report (2002):

# Dissenting From The Media Consensus

What first sparked a real interest, on my part, in Roger Casement and the questions surrounding the *Black Diaries* was a BBC radio programme broadcast in 1993 where they were inspected *in situ* in the British National Archives at Kew by an English handwriting specialist by the name of Dr. David Baxendale. As I remember the presenter was one Roisín McCauley. It was a relatively short broadcast and there was no time at the end for discussion representing various shades of opinion.

This was at the time just before the *Diaries* were to be made open to the public under the UK’s Freedom of Information Act. Much of the programme was taken up giving background information to the controversy. Towards the end an element of dramatic tension was created by having Baxendale and McCauley apparently open a safe or strong-room and then peruse the once-forbidden material. After a few passing remarks and references to how the writing conformed to what he had seen of Casement’s unchallenged handwriting, Dr. Baxendale pronounced himself satisfied there had been no forgery.

No further details surfaced about precisely the methods he had used to come to his conclusions. No written report emerged. The matter was reported approvingly on other media outlets and then it dropped from view.

I was now ready to eagerly read other snippets of information on the *Black Diaries* when I encountered them to fill out the picture. I came across newspaper letters from the now-deceased Eoin O Maille of the Roger Casement Foundation stating that an analysis of vocabulary and word frequency comparing the *Diaries*

with attested Casement writings suggested they had been written by someone else. Interestingly, in this field, O Maille was self-taught. What was impressive was that he was arguing in terms of a methodology, data he had collected, and observations based on that data. He was prepared to indicate how he had reached his conclusions, rather than dispensing a pronouncement from on high, without giving detailed reasons.

In March 2002 two lavishly-produced television documentaries were broadcast which revisited the controversy, one from the BBC and another from RTE. They contained biographical material on Casement, interviews with a variety of supposed experts, and finished with coverage of an examination based on handwriting analysis which was meant to indicate finally if forgery had taken place or not. This had been carried out by Dr. Audrey Giles, a self-employed forensic document examiner who often did work for the London Metropolitan Police. It had been organised by Dr. W.J. McCormack, then Professor of Literary History at Goldsmith’s College, London. The outcome of the examination was kept secret till near the end of the programmes, which made for gripping viewing. We were shown close-ups of handwriting enlarged on computer screens which, one imagines, was meant to suggest some technical sophistication was involved.

Yet when the conclusion was announced that the *Diaries* were genuine lingering questions remained hanging in the air. Why had O Maille not been interviewed and allowed give his reaction? Why had no forensic scientist been interviewed for an independent opinion of the examination? Angus Mitchell, British-born author



of *The Amazon Journal of Roger Casement*, still maintained his conviction they had been forged.

The media in Britain and Ireland went on to tout the line that the case was now solved and could be closed. Talking with various people taught me that there was a real widespread belief at this time that this was the end of the matter.

The reality, however, was very different from this media-manufactured impression.

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At a *Colloquium* at Goldsmith's College, London, on Casement soon after the television programmes in 2002, Horan gave his evaluation of what has come to be called the *Giles Report*. A shortened version of that paper appeared in the newsletter of the British Association of Irish Studies for July 2002. It is this shortened version which appears below.

**Tim O'Sullivan**

### **How Did The Giles Report Investigate Casement's Handwriting?**

Dr. Audrey Giles has an excellent reputation in the forensic document community. She is a member of some of the major professional societies and has published a number of papers in the leading journals. She has presented a number of papers at international meetings some of which I had the opportunity of to attend. Although I have never personally worked with Dr. Giles, I would consider her a competent examiner with years of experience. What I am going to say now is based solely on the Giles report on Casement's Black Diaries. I've never seen the Diaries and I have never examined them.

For a report to be accepted in courts in the United States it must present not only the findings but also the data which backs up those findings. Under the Federal rules

of evidence, a report must include the results of the tests and all the notes and charts required to demonstrate the findings based on all the documents examined. Dr. Giles' report as it stands would not be accepted in the courts in America because the report is lacking in backup material. Where are the photographs of the evidence examined, the charts, and supporting detail necessary for anybody to review the report?

When you examine known writing, especially in a case like this, it is very crucial, that you determine the validity of the known writing. In the 1980s we had the problem of Hitler's Diary, which was accepted as genuine by one of the leading document examiners in the world. Michel and Baier, two of the German document examiners who were involved in exposing the Hitler forgery in an article in the *Journal of Forensic Science Society*, pointed out some principals that should be used in examining documents. "The reliable information on the point of origin of the material examined has to be obtained and inter-homogeneity of the documents cannot be over stressed". Basically, you have to compare all of the known writings together to make sure how it breaks down into different groups. Can they be accounted for, or can they not be accounted for? The known writing of Casement should be crucial. In effect, as much time should be spent on examining the known writing as should be spent on the questioned writing.

Another problem which Michel and Baier pointed out is the need for the examiner to be familiar with the writing system. In Dr. Giles' report she suggests that Roger Casement used a modified Civil Service system. She is referring to the English Civil Service system in Osborn's book. Osborn was one of the leading document examiners around the turn of the century and his book is still used as the leading text in the field. This is the system that Dr. Giles suggests Casement was using or was in common use at the time. She points out a number of features in Roger Casement's writing, which she calls distinctive features, but when she describes them in the report she fails to give any examples. Using her descriptions I went through a letter that was given to me in the Home Office material, which was distributed at the Royal Irish Academy Casement conference a few years ago. There are examples of writings taken from the British Consul in Norway. He sent a letter to the Home Office and basically he has the same

general features that Dr. Giles records in her report. I am not saying he wrote it but the features are similar. If I were examining writings from the turn of the century, I would have to collect a number of examples and analyse them to establish what was common and what was uncommon. Casement's writing of the "d" was very pronounced in the way it swept up and back, but I noticed exactly the same feature not only in the Consul's writing but also in a number of other writings in other papers made available by the Home Office. So that was a common feature. A document examiner, then, has to decide after very thorough examination on exactly what emphasis should be put on various features.

Dr Giles did not do any chemical analysis of the ink or pencil. With modern analytical techniques, such as Ramon spectroscopy and X-ray Fluorescence it may be possible to do non-destructive testing in the future to answer the questions about them.

The handwriting comparisons in the Giles Report are inadequately documented. As there were no charts in the report, I have no way of evaluating her handwriting comparisons. When I presented my paper "How Forensic Science Would Approach the Casement Diaries" at the Royal Irish Academy Casement Conference I mentioned the possible use of 'Write On'. 'Write On' is a computer program developed in Canada by Pikaso Software. The way it works for a comparison is that each page of the document, or documents to be examined is scanned into a computer and then the known and questioned documents are typed into the computer. This process enables you to select either words, letters, letter combinations or positions of the letters for display and study on the computer screen. Of course, this time-consuming method of scanning and typing involves much work, but I think that in the controversial case of the Black Diaries, such a detailed analysis of the documents should have been employed. Such an approach would have produced comparison charts tracking every place Casement wrote 'the' in the questioned and known writing. This type of comprehensive analysis can stand up better to all vigorous challenges. Basically the forensic document examiner should work along the lines of presenting a case to a jury. In a handwriting comparison case, the jury should be taken through the evidence step-by-step; and charts are the best way of showing why this is the handwriting of x, why this is the handwriting of y and all the charts should reach

the standard that when a jury looks at the charts they feel confident in reaching a well informed judgement.

As editor of the *Journal of Forensic Sciences* and the *Journal of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners*, I would NOT recommend publication of the Giles Report because the report does not show HOW its conclusion was reached.

Because of the controversial nature of the case Dr. Giles should have been

requested to prepare a detailed report that could be presented to a jury. To the question, 'Is the writing Roger Casement's?' on the basis of the Giles Report as it stands; my answer would have to be I cannot tell. In the fullness of time, there will emerge further illumination of the ink and pencil question. Very gradually we will draw closer towards convincing answers to most, if indeed not all, of the questions posed by the enigma of Casement's diaries.

2004—possibly because it is strong-minded enough to republish an article from an academic journal without feeling the need to edit it, or ask its readership to make allowances for obvious differences in ideological outlook between the two publications).

The CPI (M) is also not in the least embarrassed about the fact that Bose was in Berlin in 1941-42, though Sisir K. Majumdar is, and engages in awkward attempts to conceal evidence. When Bose "arrived in Germany in April 1941, he was received by a low-ranking official of the Foreign Department", which "disappointed" him, but he "met higher officials... on April 3, 1941" (i. e. two days after he arrived). They were in a position to help him set up "an 'Indian Government in Exile'". Neither Russell nor Ryan met anyone as senior as that. Indeed, Bose met Ribbentrop and Hitler himself. Majumdar describes the latter as a "frostymeeting" and Hitler as a "demon-genius" who "gave a long lecture". But it is quite clear that Hitler was taking Bose quite seriously, and was courteous, even taking note of Bose's objections to remarks about India and Indians in *Mein Kampf*. There is some stuff about Bose awakening from "his illusion about Hitler", though it is not obvious that Bose had any illusions about the Nazis in the first place.

## Sean Russell, Frank Ryan, Bose, And Berlin

On the night of Thursday, 30th December 2004, the statue of Seán Russell, the Chief of Staff of the IRA from 1937 to 1940, was vandalised by young 'anti-fascists' (allegedly), on the grounds that he had been in Berlin in the early days of the Second World War. (He died on board a U-boat on his way back to Ireland, with very little to show for his pains, other than a number of vague promises.) He, and the IRA were accused, by the "anti-fascist youths" who used explosives to destroy at least part of his statue, of being implicit in the extermination of the Jews of Europe. And "hundreds of thousands of political dissidents, homosexuals, Roma people, Soviet prisoners of war and the disabled were put to death by the Fascist hate machine that overran and terrorized Europe from 1939-1945".

He was "one of the many nationalist fanatics who looked to Adolf Hitler for political and military support in the IRA's quest to reunify Ireland at the point of the bayonets of the Gestapo". That "reunify" is a bit of a giveaway, this would not be an outing of the 'non-existent' Official IRA by any chance?

Seán Russell's confrere Frank Ryan is not mentioned in the communiqué issued by the vandals—why?

The Sinn Féin MEP for Dublin, Mary Lou McDonald was mentioned in this dispatch. And, for all the 'anti-fascism' and reciting of the various victims of the Nazis, this statement was obsessively, insularly, Irish in all of its aspects. One would assume from it that only the IRA was in Berlin; operating on the assumption that one's enemy's enemy may not be one's friend, but at least one's (at least temporary) ally. (Or, to use John Mitchel's phrase, 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity'). Unfortunately for Russell,

and the many other small-nation representatives in Berlin, Hitler was an Anglophile, and an admirer of the British Empire.

There were non-European forces at work in the course of the Second (imperialist) World War. Another person in Berlin at the same time as Ryan, was *Subhas Chandra Bose*, who had been a senior member of the Indian National Congress, led from the 1920s by Mahatma Ghandi. Bose was opposed to the pacifist policies of Ghandi and Nehru, and was in Berlin—like Russell and Ryan, and many others from around the world—to ask Germany for help to drive their colonial masters out of their various countries. In Bose's case the colonial masters were the British, led, during the war, by the greatest man of the century (according to Garrett Fitzgerald, and the revisionists), Winston Churchill. Churchill distinguished himself in the course of the 1920s and '30s by taking a 'die-hard' attitude against any extension of Home Rule to India. It would have to remain part of England's Empire for centuries before the child-like Indians were ready for self-rule. As in so many other matters, Adolf Hitler concurred with this view, saying so in an interview with Bose, on 29th May 1942.

The above information comes from an article, *Subhas Chandra Bose In Nazi Germany*, by Sisir K. Majumdar, in *South Asia Forum Quarterly* (Vol. 10, No. 1, 1997—published in Maryland, USA. And re-published in *Revolutionary Democracy*, an imprint of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), for April 2001, it has a website. The CPI (M) was one of the parties which made large gains in the Indian general election in 2004—see Pete Whitelegg's article *L&TUR*, No. 145, Nov.

The Nazis were also quite generous to Bose (as to Ryan), he was housed in a "luxury" hotel, and while the notion of an 'Indian Government in Exile' was given something of a by-bail, a 'Free India Centre' was set up in Berlin. "Ten million Reichsmarks were allotted as a 'loan' for the centre, and a monthly allowance of 12,000 Reichsmarks was sanctioned for his personal expenses", Bose used this money to help set up an Indian Legion, "... 3,500, less than one third of the total Indian prisoner of war... were recruited". This quite substantial force was used in the later stages of the war, and fought very well. Roger Casement was only able to recruit a handful of POWs in 1915-16, a (roughly) similar situation, where Home Rule had been half-heartedly offered then withdrawn, or put in cold storage.

Bose went on to journey to Japan by U-boat. The Japanese welcomed him, and did set up a 'Government in Exile' in Singapore, the capture of which had been a stunning blow to British, and to general White-European, prestige. He went on to recruit the 20,000 strong Indian National Army from POWs in Malaya, and from the Indian community in Malaya (it

included a regiment of female fighters).

Bose died just before the end of the hostilities (in a 'mysterious' plane crash, which many people in India think was no accident: the demise of a healthy opponent in his forties was just too well-timed).

Some Indian National Army men were put on trial in late 1945 by the British authorities in India under Earl Mountbatten, but this merely showed that the old imperial hand had lost much of its cunning. They picked a Hindu, a Muslim and a Sikh for trial to 'encourage the others', and seemed to wonder why the whole Indian Empire was in uproar as a consequence. The Muslim League experienced a sudden decline in credibility, and had to join in agitation with Congress, the 'Indian Navy' mutinied and British conscripts had to be rushed to various parts of India. The inadequacy of numbers, if nothing else, led to the disengagement from India in 1948. But not before the relations between the Hindus and Sikhs on one side and the majority of the Muslims on the other was usefully envenomed, leading to Partition and massacre, (and it *was* Partition followed by massacre and not the other way about).

I am not sure what the attitude of the authorities in independent India was to the veterans of the Indian Legion, but veterans of Bose's much larger force of freedom fighters, the Indian National Army, received pensions from Delhi. On the other hand, veterans of the Empire's 'Indian Army' did not get pensions, and only relatively recently forced the UK authorities to do the decent thing and give them pensions for fighting for them: on a number of occasions against the Indian National Army.

The point of writing about Bose is to demonstrate the tunnel-vision of the people who tried to destroy the statue of Seán Russell and put him, *post-mortem*, on trail for crimes against humanity and complicity in the massacre of the Jews of Europe. Like the capital of any power involved in a major war in the twentieth century, Berlin was full of people hoping to use the hostilities to their own advantage. Some of these people were fascists, some were "nationalist fanatics", some were representatives of oppressed peoples or nations, Bose and even Vlassov—the General in charge of the Russian army recruited from among (suitably Aryan) Red Army POWs—could be considered as being among the latter. There were Kurds pushing for aid to get rid of oppressors, Flemish fascists, and the Grand

Mufti of Jerusalem. There were also Zionists in Berlin, overtly until the war started, and covertly after that. London, and then Washington, were crowded with such flotsam too, the only noticeable difference between them being that the Nazis took a more honourable attitude towards those seeking their help. As Sisir K. Majumdar implies, Bose's objectives were not particularly consonant with those of the Nazi régime (though Hitler was not so much 'racist' about India, or Indians, as particularly keen to preserve England as a major imperialist power). Bose, however, was housed in comfort. (He also married a German—more precisely, an Austrian—woman which was not remarked on, maybe Sisir K. Majumdar's notions about Nazi race theories are not entirely correct.) He was also helped to get to Tokyo, in what must have been something of an epic journey for a submarine. Bose was, in effect, if not in words, treated like the head of a substantial Government in Exile: compare and contrast, as they say, with the treatment of the genuine Governments in Exile of Poland and Yugoslavia in London. But that is another story . . .

Seán McGouran

## Letters In The Press

Published, Unpublished And Un-Abridged

[Editorial Note : The following letter failed to find publication in *The Irish Times*.]

KEVIN MYERS AND PROPAGANDA

Dr. Brian P. Murphy *osb*

Glenstal Abbey

"Should the Danes apologise for the death of Brian Boru?" That is the question beneath the photographic caption of the *Irishman's Diary* of 26 November 2004. Having read the *Diary*, the most pressing question is this: should Kevin Myers apologise for denigrating the reputation of those Irish people who died in the War of Independence by the use of inaccurate historical information?

Kevin Myers writes that "the first person to be executed by the hangman in Mountjoy Jail during the Troubles wasn't a republican but a policeman, RIC Constable Mitchell, a couple of weeks before Kevin Barry." In fact, Constable William Mitchell (RIC number 75719) was hanged at 8 am on the morning of 7th June 1921 some eight months after Barry! Far from being the first person to be hanged in Mountjoy during the Troubles, Mitchell was the last person to be executed by the British in Ireland before the Treaty. He was tried by court-martial and found guilty of killing a Justice of the Peace, Mr Robert Dixon, Dunlavin, Co. Wicklow, while trying to extort money from him on 2 February 1921.

For Kevin Myers to equate the death of Kevin Barry and his comrades with that of Constable Mitchell is not only flawed by inaccuracy but also identical in approach to the tactics adopted by the British administration and British propaganda at that time. The IRA were to be portrayed as the 'murder gang'. One hour before Wallace went to his death, Edmond Foley and Patrick Maher were hanged, after trial by court-martial, for the killing of Sergeant Wallace at Knocklong in May 1919, although no case had been found against them in two civil courts. The official announcement of their deaths attempted, in the same fashion as Kevin Myers, to equate their alleged crime, with that of Mitchell. It read: "the sentence of the law passed upon Patrick Maher and Edmond Foley, found guilty of murder; and William Mitchell, found guilty of murder, were carried into execution this morning".

Forget the apology, Kevin. Now that we know where you are coming from, one understands that small matters of historical inaccuracy should not be allowed to interfere with the far grander design that you have undertaken.

30th November 2004.

SEAN RUSSELL AND NAZI GERMANY

Manus O 'Riordan

Seán Russell was a man whom de Valera once considered worth making the effort to save from himself. Russell had given sterling service in the twentieth century's first war for democracy—the Irish War of Independence fought to give effect to the democratic mandate of the 1918 Elections. But having failed to persuade Russell to accept the democratic mandate of his later Republican election victories of the 1930s, de Valera was left with no option but to act ruthlessly and with resolve against Russell and his IRA followers. By all means condemn Russell, as I have always done, for his actions in defiance of de Valera, specifically his 1939 bombing campaign in England, followed by his request for German aid to mount an IRA invasion of the North. If Russell's plan had materialised it would have had the knock-on effect of either a German or British invasion and occupation of Southern Ireland, bringing to nought de Valera's skilful safeguarding of this State from both war and fascism.

Condemnation of Russell is one thing; character assassination is quite a different matter. Russell was not the Holocaust-championing caricature painted by the so-called "anti-fascist" gang responsible for the paramilitary destruction of his monument on December 30. Nor is your report by Jim Cusack ("Sunday Independent", January 2) accurate in stating that it had previously "been vandalised by communists in the fifties" because it originally was supposed to have had Russell's arm "raised in a Nazi-style salute". On the contrary, it had originally been a clenched-fist, which was denounced as "communist" by the anti-semitic and clerical-fascist organisation Maria Duce, who then proceeded to amputate

the offending Russell arm. The facts regarding Russell and Nazi Germany are as follows : The UK Public Records Office has released files which show that after intensive post-War interrogation of German intelligence agents at the highest level, British intelligence itself concluded in 1946 that “Russell throughout his stay in Germany had shown considerable reticence towards the Germans and plainly did not regard himself as a German agent”. In his 1958 novel “Victors and Vanquished” Francis Stuart observed of the Russell-based character’s outspokenness in Berlin: “Pro-German when it comes to the English, and pro-Jew when it’s a question of the Germans”. One might be forgiven for dismissing this as another of Stuart’s literary inventions were it not for the fact that this assessment was corroborated by a far more significant witness—the Austrian Erwin Lahousen, the first and most important witness for the prosecution at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials in 1945. Lahousen had been head of the second bureau of the German Intelligence Service from 1939 to 1943. A devoutly religious Catholic, Lahousen loathed Nazism and had been the key figure in an aborted pre-War plot to assassinate Hitler. By common consent, it was Lahousen’s evidence at Nuremberg that ensured that Hitler’s foreign minister Ribbentrop would be sentenced to death. It was the self-same Lahousen who proceeded to offer the following character reference on behalf of Russell: “The Irishman was a hyper-sensitive Celt who, however willing he might be to use the Germans for his own political ends, regarded the Nazi philosophy as anathema”. Lahousen said that “Russell was the only one of the IRA with whom I dealt who was a real Irish Republican of the old school”: After what Lahousen described as “one of Russell’s fiery denunciations of the Nazi attempts to indoctrinate him”, the IRA leader further proclaimed: “I am not a Nazi. I’m not even pro-German. I am an Irishman fighting for the independence of Ireland. The British have been our enemies for hundreds of years. They are the enemies of Germany today. If it suits Germany to give us help to achieve independence I am willing to accept it, but no more, and there must be no strings to the help”. This, of course, was extremely naive. As regards his dealings with Nazi Germany, Russell is to be condemned more as a fool than a knave. But notwithstanding that condemnation, Seán Russell is still entitled to the integrity of his reputation, in death no less than in life.

Published in *The Sunday Independent*, January 6, 2005

#### RADIO INTERVIEW

Manus O’Riordan was interviewed by phone for Joe Duffy’s *Liveline* radio show (RTE) on 18th January. He said that he would not have wanted the statue erected in the first place; he’d have supported Dev; that Russell was a fool but certainly not a Nazi. He stated that there were other far more imposing monuments that should also not have not have been erected in the first place. He cited the *Traitors’ Arch* at

Stephen’s Green, commemorating the British army in South Africa (in which service a first cousin of his grandfather became thoroughly ashamed) that led to the establishment of concentration camps in which 50,000 civilians (28,000 white Afrikaners and 20,000 black Africans) perished, half of them children. He pointed out that the derogatory term was not a Republican but a Redmondite one, whose Parliamentary Party had opposed the South African War. But such monuments were part of our history. He stated that, just as he would be opposed to any paramilitary destruction of the *Traitor’s Arch*, he would be opposed to anyone seeking to hand a victory to this particular paramilitary gang by trying to impede the re-erection of the Russell statue.

#### NOT RUSSELL BUT BRISCOE

Manus O’Riordan

[**Editorial Note** : The following letter by was published in an abridged form by the Sunday Independent on 23rd January 2005 under the heading of Defence Of De Valera’s Neutrality Remains Intact. It is hereunder given in full, as originally submitted, the sections omitted from publication being indicated by double square brackets [[ ]]. The letter as published must appear particularly confusing at the point where the Samuels attack on the Russell monument is countered by the Briscoe defence of de Valera’s neutrality. Briscoe’s support of de Valera’s actions against Russell is made perfectly clear in the last two sentences quoted. But the reason why it had been necessary to quote him so precisely on neutrality is because it was none other than de Valera himself who formed the chief target of the Samuels attack.]

It is Toby Joyce who in fact muddies the waters by maintaining that there is a need to argue with me that Sean Russell was a traitor (“Sunday Independent”, Letters, January 16). Since my previous opening paragraph (“Sunday Independent”, Letters January 9) had applauded de Valera for acting ruthlessly against Russell and his followers, this was not at issue. What was at issue was the charge by [[ the paramilitaries ]] (the word ‘those’ was substituted for this omission — MO’R) who destroyed his statue that he was a Holocaust-championing Nazi.

[[ As a researcher acknowledged 21 years ago by the then Chief Rabbi of Ireland for my pioneering work on the history of anti-Semitism in Irish politics, I learned at a very early stage both the importance of unmasking that phenomenon wherever it was to be found and the immorality of alleging its existence where any such charge was baseless.]] In this 60th anniversary month of the Red Army’s liberation of Auschwitz I deplore the exploitation of the memory of the victims of the Holocaust in the interests of a squalid game of domestic Irish political point-scoring [[ that can only serve to undermine the peace process. What is already sordid goes on to become even more sinister when accompanied by criminal paramilitary activity, such as the destruction of the Russell monument. ]]

Although not born until 1949, my very existence can be said to have depended more than most on the failure of Russell’s mission, since my father, a young anti-fascist veteran

of the Spanish War, had been sentenced to death by the Russellites for opposing his strategy within the IRA. But whatever Russell might be condemned for, anti-Semitism was not one of his crimes.

There was more than one nationalist movement with its Russell-equivalent, and the Simon Wiesenthal Centre describes as follows one such group’s activities a year after Russell’s death:

“Lehi, the ‘Fighters for the Freedom of Israel’, also known by the British as the ‘Stern Gang’, tried unsuccessfully to enlist German help to create a Jewish state in Palestine in exchange for Lehi military and intelligence support. Lehi charged that Britain, through its continued occupation of the Jewish homeland, was as guilty as the Nazis for the slaughter of European Jews”.

[[ Its founder Abraham Stern continued to wage war on Britain during World War Two, until he fell victim to a British “shoot-to-kill” raid on his Tel Aviv hideout in 1942. In 1978, however, the State of Israel decided to issue a postage stamp in his honour, while the hideout itself is maintained as an official Ministry of Defence museum on what is now Avraham Stern Street. ]]

If Shimon Samuels, the Wiesenthal Centre’s director of international affairs, had ever protested that the Stern Museum was a blot on the record of the vast majority of Jews in Palestine who supported the war against Hitler, he might have claimed some consistency when he applauded the results of vandalising the Russell monument (Jim Cusack’s report, “Sunday Independent” January 16). [[ But what is particularly objectionable is his focusing on Russell’s arch-opponent Éamon de Valera as the principal target of his attack. He goes so far as to call for the monument to be preserved frozen in its vandalised form as “an enduring symbol of Irish shame” for wartime neutrality.]]

It was, however, that outstanding Irish Jewish freedom fighter Bob Briscoe, who had lost 156 known relatives in the Holocaust, who wrote the following defence of de Valera’s neutrality in his 1958 autobiography, a policy that had been loyally and wholeheartedly upheld by the Irish Jewish community as a whole:

“Britain to us was still an aggressor nation with her troops on Irish soil... We in Ireland believe in democracy. We believe in it for all nations; but we also believe that democracy begins at home... It was on this account politically impossible for Ireland to join England in the war. Was it desirable? I think not... Now how did I personally feel about Ireland’s declaration of neutrality; ... I who hated Hitler and all he stood for... ? I thought it was right for Ireland... Ireland’s neutrality was not injurious to England, which even Winston Churchill now admits. No obstacle was put in the way of Irishmen who wanted to go over the border and enlist in the British Army... The extreme irreconcilable element of the IRA did try to profit by England’s difficulty. But de Valera clapped these people in jail as fast as he could catch them.”

There was nobody else who could ever match Bob Briscoe’s record of combined

service to the Irish War of Independence and the birth of the State of Israel, as well as on behalf of Jewish communities world wide. Notwithstanding the intervention of Shimon Samuels, the integrity of Briscoe's defence of de Valera's neutrality remains intact.

**[Editorial Note : The following letter failed to find publication in *The Irish Examiner*]**

#### COMMEMORATIONS

**Nick Folley, 18-01-05**

Brendan Cafferty (Irish Examiner 18-01-05) thanks those who rehabilitated Irish soldiers of the Great War "who did their patriotic duty at the time" (my own grandfather among them). Perhaps they believed they were doing it for Ireland, for Home Rule, which was the best that could be grudgingly extracted from Britain at the time. It wasn't long before they realised they'd been duped, sent *en masse* to their deaths in a war of Imperial expansion. Don't believe it? Britain did quite well out of WW1—adding 1.5 million square miles to her empire after WW1 despite declarations that this was not a war of conquest. Home Rule was shelved by a Unionist Government that had risen to power during the war. I have in my possession a letter from a family member to another, abroad, and dated 27th or 7th January 1918. I quote—"Nearly all the Irish Regts are sent from Ireland and replaced by British ones—the Barracks are full, even the infants' school is taken". Perhaps Britain had sensed the change of mood and didn't trust their own 'Sepoy' Regiments of Irish—some gratitude and respect, that! Even the huge sacrifice made by thousands of Irishmen volunteering to fight for 'the freedom of small countries' (as long as those countries were not asking for freedom from Britain, of course) proved not to be enough for imperial greed, and in 1918 Britain decided she wanted all our men and would take them by force. Those who believe that Irish people wholeheartedly supported Britain's war effort should consider how the true feeling of the majority Irish towards Britain's military adventure, and how they realised they'd been lied to, showed when they resisted conscription *en masse*.

If people want to honour Irish war dead and so on, I can think of no better start than for the British Establishment to offer a sincere apology—even at this late juncture—to all those they sent needlessly to their deaths so rich men could get richer, and to all the widows and orphans they left behind. Then promising never to do it again. The traditional wreath laying ceremony graced by the Queen or other establishment figures and the wearing of poppies is a mere sop—since it does not address this issue of imperialism. I cannot give my support to such a remembrance anymore than I would want to support the war in Iraq. It's a whole package, and would be an insult to the dead. If Ireland hadn't gained independence, we would now also be dragged into this highly unpopular war for profit. In the same manner Blair implores us to support the troops in Iraq (and just forget about why they're there, please). We all now realise how Bush and Blair lied to all and sundry to drag their populaces into a war of conquest.

Is anyone so simple as to believe this is the first time?

As a footnote, Irish veterans of D-day had to lobby very hard to finally get British National Lottery funds—available to ex-servicemen to attend the ceremonies—to be alongside their former British comrades—gratitude, once again!

**[Editorial Note : The following letter failed to find publication in *The Irish Times*]**

#### MYERS ON PALESTINE

**Nick Folley, 208.01.05**

Kevin Myers, in asking why Palestinian refugees should be allowed vote in recent elections, goes on to ask if they should really be considered as Palestinian (Irish Times 19-01-05). I would like to reply to the most salient points. He points out that the exodus (sic) happened 60 years ago—but this is well within living memory, meaning many refugees were born in Palestine. That would make them Palestinians by birth, then. Comparing them with Irish famine 'refugees' doesn't really work either, as the famine occurred 150 years ago, well beyond living memory. It also ignores the fact that, until the creation of the Israeli State, most exiled Jews hadn't seen their ancestral homeland in almost 2,000 years. Is Myers suggesting that they shouldn't have been considered Jews, or entitled to create the state of Israel? He compares Palestinian refugees to Irish-Americans. Again, he argues against himself here by suggesting that a) Irish-Americans have been totally integrated into that society, and pointing out that b) Palestinian refugees have not been integrated into theirs. Their situations are not comparable. Moreover, the average Palestinian refugee probably

has a better grasp of what's happening across the 'border' in Israel-Palestine than the average Irish American has of events in their ancestral homeland. I believe this makes the Palestinian refugees more qualified to vote in the election of a leader. Myers states "*the Jewishness of the state of Israel is already threatened demographically by the natural increase of the Palestinian population. Israel is simply not going to accept the presence of 8.8 million Palestinians*". I hardly need to point out how it would be perceived if I were to suggest that the "Irishness" of this country was 'threatened' by immigration. Thus Myers seems to be implying—perhaps unintentionally—that Israel is a racist theocracy ('Jewish' connoting both a religion and race). It is identical to the claim employed by unionists in the North, fearful of being 'outbred', as if their culture can only be preserved through their domination of co-existent cultures. Rather than tackling these legal and indeed moral issues, Myers simply tells us that the Palestinians are living in fantasy because Israel is backed by the power of the US. The Palestinians should therefore put up and shut up. In essence Myers is arguing that if you succeed in ejecting a population from its homeland, disenfranchise and keep them out for long enough, you have a claim on their former home while their claim correspondingly diminishes: an argument at least as old as Cortes, Pizarro and Raleigh.

**[Editorial Note : The following appeared on 27th January 2005 in *The Irish Times*:]**

**Tony Allwright**

... The Palestinian refugee problem only exists because of... Israel's refusal to massacre them in 1948, as it could have...

## Letter Writing to *The Irish Times*

This writer can't remember when he last wrote to the Editor of *The Irish Times*. I've certainly never written to Geraldine Kennedy and if I've written to Conor Brady at all, it was in the early part of his editorship. Most likely the only editor of the *Irish Times* I've ever written to was Douglas Gageby in his 'second coming' (1977 to 1985).

Someone at the time pointed out to me that the letters page of *The Irish Times* was quite influential and that many people buy it only to read this page. It was also said that the letters' editor was one of the most highly paid of all employees in the paper. When I heard this it occurred to me that by writing these letters I was doing unpaid work for a commercial enterprise. My instant reaction was to urge all letter writers to down tools (i.e. keyboards, pens and crayons) and strike for a decent wage.

Unfortunately I couldn't think of any way of pursuing this matter except by writing a letter to *The Irish Times*.

Nevertheless, I have maintained a dignified silence in the matter of letter writing to *The Irish Times*, if on few other matters, for more than fifteen years. I can't say that I was on strike during this impressive period of inactivity because I never sought ICTU approval for my inaction. If I had, it is likely that I would have been refused out of hand. I recently discovered that the Irish Congress of Trade Unions has had an almost permanent seat on the board of the entity with ultimate control of the newspaper, the so called The Irish Times Trust Limited. Donal Nevin held the seat for nearly thirty years and the current incumbent is David Begg, who is also the current Secretary General of the ICTU.



Another reason for not writing to *The Irish Times* was that I disagreed with the politics of the paper. Therefore if I was published it would indicate that my letter was quite harmless. It seemed a quite pointless activity to take the trouble to write with the express purpose of not being published.

I can't say for certain if all those years ago I succeeded in failing to get any of my letters published, but I do remember thinking that if they were published, it would be a good thing if someone responded to them. All letter writers wish that their thoughts will be validated or considered worthy of discussion even if the response is a hostile one. Indeed a hostile response usually, but not always, gives the letter writer a second bite at the cherry. I've often seen some outrageous views expressed in the letters page or by columnists of *The Irish Times*, but have decided to hold fire in order to avoid giving such views credibility. (Another reason, of course, was laziness.)

The problem with this approach is that if errors in fact are not corrected they remain on the record by default. An example of a controversy which was given an airing in the letters page of *The Irish Times* was Peter Hart's claim in his book that the heroes of the Kilmichael ambush shot British soldiers in cold blood after they had surrendered. It must have occurred to the people who sent in letters rebutting this assertion that they were also giving credibility and even promoting the book. Ultimately, in my view the Hart thesis was demolished and a benefit of the debate was that readers were made aware of Brian Murphy and Meda Ryan's research on the matter.

It appears that the revisionist historians now want to "move on". The Kilmichael debate is a bit "sterile" now (i.e. they've lost) although they have not withdrawn their allegations. The new debate is the alleged ethnic cleansing of Protestants during the war of Independence and afterwards. Again no evidence of substance is presented to support this outrageous proposition but nevertheless it is considered worthy of debate.

It could be said that if there is no substance to the allegations they will be exposed as a matter of course. That is arguable. But why should the Irish people even have to defend themselves? Do the British agonise over genuine and much larger atrocities such as Dresden? Is there any sense of guilt at the Black and Tan war? Of course not! Recently, Winston

Churchill was voted the Greatest Briton of all time. Mo Mowlam gave as an example of his "greatness" and, indeed, commitment to democracy, his decision to send the Black and Tans to Ireland overriding the 1918 election result.

And yet we are constantly encouraged to fret over our history. Who decides that an issue which is raised is worthy of debate? The immediate person is the Letters Editor, but there are other forces at play. Just for starters: who knows how many letters to *The Irish Times* have been generated by an outrageous article from Kevin Myers?

And yet the newspaper which raises all sorts of issues regarding Irish history is incapable of publishing its own history. The recent Irish Times obituary of Tony Gray, a prolific writer with a long association with the newspaper, revealed that he was commissioned to write a history of *The Irish Times* in 1982 but:

"After a preliminary draft of the history was submitted to the then editor, Douglas Gageby, the project was

dropped, due, it is believed, to sensitivities about the working of the trust set up to safeguard the newspaper in the 1970s." Notice the "*it is believed*" clause, as if the writer was talking about an institution other than the one he was writing for. Does The Irish Times not know itself why the project was dropped?!

If I was to guess, I would say that Douglas Gageby had nothing to do with the decision. The most powerful man on The Irish Times Limited board was Major McDowell. Gageby resigned as Editor following the setting up of the so called Trust (He was recalled three years later by the Bank when the newspaper was on the verge of bankruptcy). What could Gageby have to hide? McDowell, on the other hand, had his power institutionalised following the setting up of the Trust. No satisfactory explanation has ever been given as to why this was done and *The Irish Times* appears to be very embarrassed about it all.

But don't expect a Kevin Myers article raising that particular issue.

John Martin

## The Molly Keane Centenary Conference

"The whole power and property of (Ireland) has been conferred by successive monarchs of England upon an English colony, composed of three sets of English adventurers who poured into this country at the termination of three successive rebellions. Confiscation is their common title; and from their first settlement they have been hemmed in on every side by the old inhabitants of the island, brooding over their discontents in sullen indignation."

John Fitzgibbon, Earl of Clare, urging adoption of the Acts of Union, 10th February 1800.

"But we cannot afford to have ghosts on this clearing scene. I wish not to drag up the past but to help to lay it."

Elizabeth Bowen, 'Afterword' to Bowen's Court. Longmans, Green & Co. London. 1942. p.336.

On the weekend of 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> November 2004, University College Cork celebrated the centenary of Molly Keane's birth by holding this Conference in her honour. Keane was the last of the Big House writers—in the sense that she wrote from "*the inside looking out*", she was born on

the 20<sup>th</sup> July 1904 in Co. Kildare—Mary Nesta Skrine—and died at the age of ninety-two at her home in Ardmore, Co. Waterford. Unlike the Elizabeth Bowen Centenary Conference in 1999, this one was *not* grant-aided by the British Council. And there was no fee except a nominal one of five Euro to cover "*coffee and miscellaneous expenses*" as one person charmingly put it.

The President of the College, Professor Gerard T. Wrixon, in association with the Dept. of English, gave a wine reception to mark the opening of the Conference. He said some nice words of welcome and then listened to the two daughters (and only children) of Molly Keane as they gave their prepared speeches. Drs. Eibhear Walsh and Gwenda Young took it in turns to introduce them. The eldest—Sally Phipps, a writer herself, gave a very fine and moving account of life "*inside*" the big house and later, when fortunes faltered, "*outside*" with her mother after the death of her thirty-six year old father. The younger daughter, Virginia Brownlow,

gave a shorter account but both were thoroughly unsentimental and all the more interesting for that. There were perhaps eighty to a hundred people in attendance with a sprinkling of the Keane and Skrine families.

Then we all moved over to the Boole Library where there was an exhibition of Molly Keane memorabilia—books, letters, photographs etc. After looking around we smartly marched around the quad to W9 where the keynote address was given by Thomas McCarthy, “*poet and novelist*”. The title was *The Drawing Room Was Quite Another World: Molly Keane’s Later Trilogy*. Tom McCarthy, who also read a paper at the Bowen centenary, gave an entertaining talk, perfectly in tone with the occasion itself. Being also from Co. Waterford, he reminisced about meetings with the author and the Keane family. He thought that Molly Keane was “*a drawing-room personality*” and commented favourably on her love of gardening and cookery. All in all, after the buzz of the wine and reception, nothing to frighten the horses. About the latter, did he neglect to say how much Keane loved them, and what a fearless rider to hounds she was? I confess my notes rather tailed off, so until the book of the Conference is published, we will have to await the further thoughts of Mr. McCarthy on “*the drawing-room*” and how it figured in the fiction of this author. Tom, who is employed by Cork City Library, has been seconded for the last couple of years to the *Cork City of Culture 2005 Committee*.

The next day heralded thirteen speakers whose papers had to be delivered within a very specific time frame. Such a hectic pace was never conducive to allowing a dialogue to develop between speaker and audience. This lack of engagement, meant in effect, that there was little or no interplay, no teasing out of positions, and quite restricted *Question and Answer* sessions when they were allowed. This fault lay very definitely with the organisers who should have weeded out the more quixotic papers, thereby relaxing the time constraints and allowing for a more involved participatory conference. Additionally, as some of the papers were culled from doctoral theses, these could easily have been sidelined from the main lectures (providing a *mini-fest* for graduate/postgraduate attendees) thus leaving more room and time for the more mainstream lectures.

The other main complaint about the Conference, which was billed as an

“*international*” one, was the absence of Keane’s drama. All the speakers confined their talks to the novels, and when the organisers were questioned about this glaring lacuna, they didn’t really give a satisfactory answer. I found this very odd, as Molly Keane—writing under her pseudonym M.J. Farrell—had exceptional success in the London theatre and indeed Broadway too—until 1961. Her last play, *Dazzling Prospect*, was unsuccessful, as this was the era that ushered in the new ‘realist’ theatre of ‘angry young men’. The light frothy comedy-of-manners theatre withered under the twin glare of John Osborne and the swinging sixties. But surely Keane’s dramatic output (five plays, one screenplay) necessitates the same academic interest, at least, as her earlier novels, if not more so. James Agate, considered one of London’s finer dramatic critics—remarked of Keane: “*I would back this impish writer to hold her own against Noel Coward himself*”. Yet none of this was grist to this academic Conference and I—for one—found this omission hard to fathom.

Because of the plethora of papers delivered, I think it will be more beneficial to note the more outstanding ones. Silvia Diez Fabre, University of Burgos, Spain lectured on *Colonial Ireland In Retrospect In Somerville And Ross’s The Big House of Inver And Molly Keane’s Two Days In Aragon*. As this was comparative, it made a brave stab at pitting a minor novel by Keane against a heavy hitter by the hugely successful writing duo—Edith Somerville and Martin Ross (whose real name was Violet Martin) but a good point was delineated about the colonial sympathies of the latter *versus* the harsher indictment of that colonial system by the former. But Somerville, like Keane, didn’t flinch from portraying the fall of her caste—the Anglo-Irish—as a result of their own profligacy and irresponsibility.

Derek Hand, St. Patrick’s College, Drumcondra titled his paper, *The Anglo-Irish Big House Under Pressure: Elizabeth Bowen’s The Last September and Molly Keane’s Two Days In Aragon*. Hand (a devotee of John Banville) often reviews for the *Irish Times*, and is a bit of an obsessive when it comes to that well-worn genre—the ‘Big House’ novel. Contrasting the assured political knowing of Bowen with the more halting hesitating Keane did the latter no favours. Hand neuters imperial conquest and dispossesses favouring instead the revisionist reading of a “*colonial relationship between Ireland and Britain*” (my

emphasis). The hard-hitting deconstruct of imperial Anglo-Ireland by both Bowen and Keane segues into soft focus romanticism when analysed by Hand.

Eibhear Walshe, UCC (one of the Conference organisers) spoke on *Bad Education/Good Behaviour: Bourgeois Effeminacy And The Fall Of Temple Alice*. When the novel *Good Behaviour* was published in 1981, Keane was 77 years and it created a literary sensation. Short-listed for the Booker, it was a best seller and adapted for television by Hugh Leonard in 1983. (Leonard successfully lobbied Aosdána for the *Cnuas*—pension—for Keane who had lost copyright on all her earlier works and who was living in rather impecunious conditions in Ardmore.) Walshe’s take is that “*the Big House falls because of the clash between two alternate systems of male education*”. He goes on to state that his “*argument is that due to the distinctly anti-Ascendancy bourgeois influence of the governess Mrs. Brock, the male line is ended and the house and family fall*”. He argues this theory by “*drawing on Joseph Bristow’s two studies ‘Effeminate England’ and ‘Empire Boys’*”. Temple Alice is the name of the Big House in *Good Behaviour*, and its decline, as Keane explicates, was because its owners, indulging in the leisure pursuits of their class, leached precious resources from their estates.

“While, as though in duty bound, Papa was hunting, fishing and shooting... at Temple Alice money poured quietly away. Our school fees were the guilty party most often accused. Then came rates and income tax and the absurd hesitations of bank managers. Coal merchants and butchers could both be difficult, so days of farm labour were spent felling and cutting up trees... Life at Temple Alice went on, well sheltered in the myths of these and other economies” (*Good Behaviour*, Abacus, London, 1981, p73).

The implosion of the Big House, mirrored the collapse of its social order, as Walshe knows, but then “*bourgeois effeminacy*” has much more of an academic cachet somehow.

Professor Patricia Coughlan, UCC read *Mad Puppetstown: Reading Eros and Thanatos In Early Keane*. This 1931 novel is contextualised by Coughlan as following “*Civilization and its Discontents*” and “*can be seen to form a sardonic counterpoint to Freud’s arguments*”. Thus Keane’s voice is appropriated by academic discourse and loses its resonance and uniqueness. Coughlan further alienates Keane from her audience by linking in a relatively

comic undeveloped early novel to “*Margot Backus’ theory of Anglo-Irish history and narrative as a single trans-historical family romance*”. Such particularist theorising erodes the authentic authorial voice and creates unnecessary constructs that defy the best intentions of both writer and reader. Coughlan also gave a paper at the Bowen Conference and is best remembered for saying that she had read *Friends And Relations*, Bowen’s 1931 novel, and only realised it was “*a lesbian novel*” much later when she spoke to some gay friends about it. This display of naivety was very telling, and allowed an insight into the thinking of this English professor’s instructed response to her subject.

Andries Wessels, University of Pretoria, South Africa, named his paper *Resolving History: Negotiating The Past In Molly Keane’s Big House Novels*. Wessels focuses on William Trevor as a writer compatible with the ‘big house’ genre of Keane. But this does a great disservice to the latter—who really was the last of her kind. Trevor—son of a Bank of Ireland manager, along with Jennifer Johnston and more recently John Banville, are all post post-ascendancy writers—writing ‘big house’ novels from the outside-looking-in. Their writings—so unlike the steely Keane and early Bowen are full of nostalgia for a ‘lost Eden’ and foreground sympathetic portraits of the Anglo-Irish as *victims/pawns* of a more brutal newer Ireland. Wessels’ reading of Trevor’s *Fools Of Fortune*, for example, neglects to show how fully that author exploits the elegiac Yeatsian vision leading him into sentimentality and oversimplification. Trevor’s landlords are benevolent decent people living in idyllic demesnes of sectarian tolerance with their Catholic servants—the stirring people outside the gates however are the worm in the apple. Keane didn’t allow for that type of *invented* reading—which follows a Fosterian approach to history.

The rest of the papers presented were by Clíona O Gallchoir, UCC, Sinéad Mooney, UCG, Carolyn Lesnick, Pennsylvania University, Rachel Sealy Lynch, University of Connecticut at Waterbury, Ellen M. Wolff, Philips Exeter Academy, New Hampshire and others. These diverse papers favoured the kind of academic approach that John Banville famously declared to be “*the dead hand of scholarship*”. There seemed to be a heavy thicket of feminist theory with some stress on the “*queering of Keane*” (according to Rachel Sealy Lynch) and of course the horsy Keane.

As we staggered out from the Conference, dazed by such virtuoso displays of cleverness, I found myself wondering how we came to this provincial university to always honour dead Anglo-Irish writers. When will we gather for the Canon Sheehan Conference, the Daniel Corkery Colloquium—or will our next outing be for “*that gentle murderous poet*” Spenser, as Séan Moylan called him?

Julianne Herlihy

## THE CLONBANIN COLUMN continued

*Memoir* published just before Christmas by Brandon publishers. May herself worked for the One Big Union from 1947 until 1992.

Would the Pope sell St. Peter’s Basilica?

### WORK, WORK, WORK

“NEW breastfeeding rights for mothers in the workplace will make it much easier for them to return to the workforce, campaigners said yesterday.” (IRISH EXAMINER-21.9.2004).

The new legislation provides workers with the right to a minimum entitlement of one hour’s paid breast-feeding leave a day and to facilities which include a private room, fridge, storage and comfortable chairs.

“Taoiseach Bertie Ahern said: “Breast-feeding offers protection against infection so such guidelines are also important in terms of health.

“He said companies which employed mothers and allowed them to continue to breastfeed experienced three times less absenteeism, more productivity and a better staff morale.” (ibid.).

### National Flour

#### “Inferiority Complex Conquered By “National Pride”

The Irish Free State is proud of its recent achievement in Flour manufacture—but it was left to the National Flour Mills, Ltd., in Cork to shatter for all time the erroneous idea (due to inferiority complex) that this country could not make as good a flour as foreign rivals

The National Flour Mills, Ltd.,ve succeeded in producing a quality of flour equal to the best foreign flour ever imported into Ireland.

The State provided the opportunity—The Mill Proprietors provided the sinews of war and the resultant outcome of this combination is called NATIONAL PRIDE”

(Advertisement, *Cork Examiner* 8.12.1934.)



### AER LINGUS

Is there any journalist in the mainstream media with a semblance of a critical faculty? Goldman Sachs produced a report on Aer Lingus effectively saying that the company should be taken out of state ownership. And because Goldman Sachs said it, it must be true. Graphs were produced showing such esoteric figures as debt per seat of various international airlines to show Aer Lingus in an unfavourable light.

But could it be that it is in Goldman Sachs’s interest to recommend a stock exchange placing or even a Management Buyout [MBO]: more consultancy fees for that company?

The current management led by Willie Walsh is also in favour of an MBO. And why not! Chief Executives tend to do much better under that system. Get money from a venture capital organisation and then “sweat” the assets for a few years, pay back the Bank, sell it off and then move on after another three to five years and who cares about the long term?

There is a new religion in the Business pages of our national newspapers. It’s called the cult of the Chief Executive. Some of the true believers in this cult believe that 200 million Euros has been wiped off the value of Aer Lingus as a result of the departure of Walsh and his colleagues. What utter rubbish! No doubt Walsh and company are competent businessmen, but it seems that their success has gone to their heads. They followed the low cost airline model of Ryan Air, who in turn followed the model of South West Airlines in the USA. Not rocket science. There are plenty more competent people who could run a national airline. Bertie was right to let them go.

At the time of writing the Cabinet is deliberating over the future ownership structure of the airline. We say: why change a winning formula? Learn the lessons of Eircom and keep it as a state asset.

Don’t be fooled by the flimsy arguments of Goldman Sachs. That firm gives the impression that share capital is free unlike debt capital which has a cost (the rate of interest). But share capital is not free, as farmers who owned the Agricultural Coops found when they were put on the stock market. The investors in shares expect a greater return from the company they invest in to compensate them for the risk they have incurred. A greater return in terms of dividends is in effect a greater cost to the company (even if accountants put dividends after the profit figure in the Profit and Loss account).

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# Reviews

According to a recent biography of President McAleese she brought a libel action against the *Sunday Independent* in 1988:

“Mary’s legal team endorsed Neil Faris’s original opinion that they would never get as far as the courtroom”.

At the moment of trial:

“an agreement was reached... An apology, dictated by Mary, would appear in a prominent position on the front page of the next issue..., accompanied by a photograph of Mary, chosen by herself. In an apology, the editor accepted that the allegations... were without foundation, and that they had caused Mary McAleese considerable distress. Costs were awarded to the plaintiff. Mary accepted the prohibition not to reveal the amount of the damages, but it was enough to buy all the Leneghans a present each and to give her parents, her aunts and uncles and their spouses a weekend at a fine hotel in Dublin. Some money went to Concern and some to charities for the deaf, and there was enough left to put a sizeable deposit on an apartment in Ballsbridge in Dublin 4. Shortly after the apartment was bought, one of the Leneghans christened it “Independent House”.

“Brendan Clifford, the publisher and editor of *Belfast Magazine* must have been paying scant attention, if any, to the proceedings of the libel case in Dublin. He published a libellous article about Mary in the August/September 1988 edition of his magazine. The two-page spread, entitled “The Knitting Professor”, was remarkably similar to the offending article in the *Sunday Independent*, and Mary dealt with *A Belfast Magazine* exactly as she had dealt with the Dublin newspaper... Donal Deeney, the well known QC who would later become chairman of the Arts Council of N. Ireland represented Mary and cited nineteen grounds of defamation... No apology was ever published because, although the damages were reported to be small, they were enough to put the cheaply produced magazine out of business” (Ray Mac Mánaís, *The Road From Ardoyne: The Making Of A President* p245).

Alas, it was not so. There is no Clifford Apartment in the McAleese property portfolio. And, rather than stopping the *Belfast Magazine*, her frivolous libel action kept it in being.

If she paid her own costs—I am not

saying that she did—then she was heavily out of pocket against me. After four or five preliminary Court hearings (at which two barristers and the most expensive firm of solicitors in Belfast acted for her and nobody acted for me), she called off the action without either damages or costs about a fortnight before the trial. That is why I call the action frivolous. Libel actions are about money. Libel as a popular pastime was introduced in the early 19th century as a substitute for duelling. When wounding through the body was being banned, wounding through the bankbook was facilitated.

McAleese placed herself in the position of taking action against somebody who couldn’t lose, because he lived on the income of a labourer, had no bankbook, and was propertyless. On the other hand, she herself could lose heavily if the matter went to trial, and not just through the costs of the action. It seemed to me that her lawyers appreciated this, but they indicated to me that they had difficulty in getting her to appreciate it. And, when I offered them a way out, which would only cost her her legal fees to date, they went for it like a greyhound out of a trap.

At that point I was so fed up with what I had seen of the Unionist establishment at close quarters that I would have agreed to some tricky face-saving formulation (for her) about undisclosed damages. But the other side was so desperate to end the matter without further loss, that they did not even notice a hint of this that I gave.

I made it clear from the start that I did not want to win this action and I did not launch a counter-action. If I had entered into the egoistic spirit of these things, I might have had a fine old time with impunity. (If you haven’t got a bank, you can’t be bankrupted.) But I had other things to do, which I thought were valuable even though they did not involve large quantities of money—a thing which is possibly difficult to understand in Dublin 4.

McAleese’s appointment as head of the Institute of Professional Legal Studies, Belfast, in a way that breached the Fair Employment rules would, if put to trial, have been a high-profile political case. The Fair Employment rules were broken

in a number of ways, and David Trimble was involved as a better-qualified applicant according to the rules and whose application for the job had been improperly solicited and then passed over. I didn’t want to be where winning would have put me. On the other hand, people like McAleese had to understand that trampling on me with money was not easy. And so it went.

The *Belfast Magazine* was launched for a purpose which did not work out. Some of the people associated with it thought it could be made commercially viable. I am a kind of anti-commercial being and I was about to hand it over to them when McAleese issued her writ. And so the *Belfast Magazine* was saved—because I am sure the commercial venture would not have succeeded.

There was a bookshop in Belfast which stocked publications that were not distributed wholesale. McAleese threatened them with libel action if they did not undertake that they would not stock the *Belfast Magazine* again, never, forever and ever, Amen. (And small booksellers are timid souls—though no more timid than large ones in Ulster.) Nevertheless, it continues, and henceforth it will acknowledge its debt to McAleese for putting it beyond the reach of the likes of her.

Her Holocaust *faux pas* had something in common with her libel action, in that it lacked a sense of proportion. Leaving aside the matter that the Holocaust is officially held to be unique, comparable to nothing and therefore with lessons for nothing else, and taking it to be a normal genocide, so to speak, the comparison of the Nazi attitude to Jews with the Protestant attitude to Catholics is outrageous—though not, I think, as outrageous as her denunciation of the Palestinians on the day of the destruction of the World Trade Centre. And her amendment only made it worse, i.e. that the conditioning to hatred was mutual. I never before heard it suggested that the Jews hated the Germans before the event, and I know that some of them did not find it easy to cease to be German even after the event.

Two of the recent issues of *A Belfast Magazine* (Nos. 22 and 23) have to do with Casement. No. 22, *The Casement Diary Dogmatists*, reviews books about the Diaries by Jeffrey Dudgeon, a Belfast homosexual law reformer, and W.J. McCormack, an English Professor (i.e. a Professor at an English University). I quoted Dudgeon both from his own book and from what he is recorded as saying to

Susan McKay in her book *Northern Protestants: An Unsettled People*. For example: “*There is more aggression in Protestants than Catholics—its the frontier mentality. God and the rifle*”. I have had a communication from Dudgeon telling me that he has been misrepresented in that book and has written to the publishers about it.

Dudgeon hovered around the fringes of Athol Street during the seventies and eighties. Though his outlook was a kind of fundamentalist Unionism, he found enough in what Athol Street was saying to draw him into a kind of external association. He then relapsed into straight Unionist fundamentalism about fourteen years ago and has had nothing to do with Athol Street since then. He combined with Professor David Fitzpatrick last year to do a Radio Eireann programme on the *Diaries*. They share the view that Catholic culture was homophobic and that, on that ground, Catholic Ireland went into denial when Whitehall confronted it with the *Diaries* in 1916, and is still in denial. But Catholic Ireland never saw the *Diaries*, or anything purporting to be the *Diaries*, until two generations after 1916. The documents shown to select people in 1916, to act on their homophobia (the characteristic homophobia of English culture) were never seen again.

Whitehall, far from making those documents publicly available, would not, for more than forty years, acknowledge that such documents existed. It seemed to me that in those circumstances it was entirely reasonable to suppose that forged documents were used in 1916. But Dudgeon and McCormack will have none of that. McCormack in particular denounces writers in the 1930s for not taking it as an article of faith that Whitehall would never resort to forgery. They were ‘in denial’ because they did not believe that documents that were put about furtively, and then withdrawn so comprehensively that not a single one of them escaped, were the genuine article. That is why I called Dudgeon and McCormack *Diary Dogmatists*.

These issues of the *Magazine* were reviewed (*moryah\**) in the December issue of *Books Ireland*. The ‘reviewer’ is Professor McCormack. There was a time when I used to read reviews, a long time ago, in the *Sunday Press*, *Sunday Times*, and *Observer*. I never before came across an instance where the subject of a publication was chosen by the Editor or Publisher to do a review. A review by the subject is not

a review at all, but a reply. There might be some value in that if the subject did actually engage with the substance of the matter—which in this instance is the denunciation of W.J. Moloney and others for not believing in the authenticity of the documents furtively used by Whitehall in 1916 and then withdrawn. If the Professor had dealt with that point one would not quibble about formalities. He does not deal with it. He doesn’t even mention it. Thus the review is not a review and the reply is not a reply. I would describe it as the cry of pain of a wounded animal—a cry which expresses the nature of the animal.

This is the kind of thing it consists of: Brendan Clifford is a—

“back-row stalwart of the Roger Casement Foundation”; “the most voluble commentator of the Irish Left (the definition of “left”, of course to be left to him)”. “He is fond of invoking Karl Marx, but Clifford’s Marxism is based on Capital re-designed by M.C. Escher, the illusionist par excellence... The dialectic advances backwards, workers reach upwards for the Grundrisse, while the avant garde musters at the rere: “ [He urges them all ] “to support Sinn Fein (those well known Marxist comrades) in their “efforts to harness the fire to peaceful uses.” [His] “grasp of history is no less sure. The Redemptorist Order (founded 1732) can be implicated in a publication written about 1600”. “The French, you will be glad to learn, started the tiff of 1870, doubtless by invading their own country Escher-style” etc. etc. etc.

Further he starts

“from the axiom that Britain is always wrong”; he cannot “resist digressions into the archives of the *Church of Ireland Gazette* or the niceties of Hussite doctrine. The first proposition is quickly taken as proving the superiority of German political aims in 1914 and 1939, while the second facilitates a “two nations” theory of Irish affairs”. “Anxious to clear Sean Russell of any Nazi taint, Clifford sails perilously close to blaming Britain for the invasion of Poland and the break-up of Czechoslovakia”.

I must have a very inadequate command of language if I only came close to holding Britain responsible for depriving the Czechs of a defensible frontier in 1938. I did my best to say that, without Britain’s collaboration, Germany would not have got the Sudetenland.

“Clifford makes a timely admission that his Campaign for Equal Citizenship failed totally... The tragedy is that so helpful a project as the CEC was led by this Commissar from Sliabh Luacra (Cuchulain of Plazatoro), now harnessing

Gerry Adams’s fire”.

A publisher is responsible for what he publishes. The responsibility of an author is secondary—unless like me and the *Belfast Magazine*, he is as *Books Ireland* puts it, “*a self-publisher*”. A publisher of reviews cannot be expected to have expertise in all the matter that is reviewed. He must take much on trust. But he should at least know what a review looks like, and that the subject of a publication is not the most likely person to produce one.

I take it that the publisher of *Books Ireland* (Jeremy Addis, according to the issue in question, and I am given to understand that he is also the owner) knows very well that what Professor McCormack gave him was not a review but a spate of wounded feelings. It would be unreasonable to expect McCormack to produce a reasonably objective review of the material that wounded him. The recklessness in the matter is entirely the publisher’s. In further consideration of it I shall therefore take him to be responsible for it and give it his name, and regard the wounded Professor as a victim.

In summary: I am not a member of the Roger Casement Foundation, but I attended its public meeting addressed by McCormack and challenged him from the back on a matter on which he now appears to admit that he was entirely wrong. I doubt that I have quoted Marx in a quarter of a century, and back in the days of universal Marxism I was more likely to “*invoke*” Kant or Burke. The CEC was not run by me, but was based on a series of pamphlets written by me. It was run chiefly by David Morrison. I dissociated myself from it altogether when Jeffrey Dudgeon’s one-time leader, Robert McCartney, began to make noises about Athol St. David resigned from it soon afterwards. McCartney, Dudgeon, Neil Faris (see above) *et al* had it entirely to themselves and ran it into the ground in double quick time. I have not been regarded as being on the Left for over thirty years. The *Two Nations* did for me in that regard. It was condemned as anti-Marxist and hints of that condemnation are evident in *Books Ireland*. And I published a critique of Marxism when it was the height of fashion. I will take up other matters in a future issue. I will conclude here with Addis’s outrageous misrepresentations with regard to harnessing the fire. Here is the passage which he misrepresents:

“It is a bit late in the day for McCormack *et al* to prevent Enniskillens. The time for that was back in 1970. But what they did then was throw



their little handfuls of faggots on the fire. That being so, integrity of conduct would require that they should now be assisting Sinn Fein in its efforts to harness the fire to peaceful uses, instead of denouncing it after the event—an event to which they made their own modest contribution”.

The least that can be said for the “two nationalists” is that in 1969-70 they directed a number of people from the warpath, and for that reason they did not lose their bearings when the war was not as successful as was anticipated, as so many playboy Republicans of that era in the Southern Universities did.

**Brendan Clifford**

**PS** I am thinking of circulating Addis’s strange review along with the *Magazine*. That would, of course, be a breach of copyright. But, if pressed, I could bring a counter-action for defamation with a very much better case than McAleese had against me.

[\* A Gaelic word meaning ‘supposedly’; would you believe; as it were; as if it were so—as interjection implies doubt and irony. Ed.]

## Short Cuts continued

There is, of course, an argument for a privately owned company having a substantial proportion of its capital in the form of shares. It reduces its risk. Interest on debt has to be paid regardless of whether the company is profitable or not. But dividends during loss making years can be foregone and thereby avoid cash flow crises. However, even this argument is tenuous: some companies on the stock exchange feel the need to pay constant dividends regardless of profit performance in order to maintain the share price. Another argument for share capital is that often capital might not be available from the banks. Banks do not like to be the only investors in a company.

But none of the above arguments apply to Aer Lingus. It is a well run company backed by a state with an excellent credit rating. Why should private individuals be allowed get their hands on this valuable strategic asset which has been built up using tax payers money?

### THE HAUGHEY LEGACY

We’ve just been handed an article by the former deputy editor of the *Irish Times* and current *Irish Independent* journalist, James Downey. It is a rambling review of the legacy of Charles J. Haughey (Irish Independent, 20.11.04). We could say it is incoherent, but that would be negative. Ten years ago such an article would have been hostile, so incoherence represents progress. Who knows, in another ten years Downey

might have something sensible to say, but we doubt it.

One of the issues that Downey touches on is the 1970 Arms Trial. He suggests that, if Haughey is to be rehabilitated, the deification of Lynch and O’ Malley will have to be put on hold. And we can’t have that!

About five years ago the RTE current affairs programme *Today Tonight* decided to tell the truth about the Arms Trial. Justin Keating, no friend of Haughey, had to admit that the latter’s reputation had been unfairly traduced. Loyal servants of the State such as Captain Kelly and Colonel Hefferon were shamefully treated in what was the biggest scandal in the history of the State.

And what of Lynch and O’ Malley! Let us just say that they don’t emerge from this episode with much credit and leave it at that for the moment. The *Irish Political Review* will be returning to this subject at a latter date.

### IRISH TROOPS AND BATTLE GROUPS

“Bet you didn’t know this: members of the Defence Forces have been taking part in joint exercises with the British Army at the UK School of Infantry at Pirbright in Yorkshire in preparation for the formation of a joint British Irish Battlegroup under, wait for it, British command!...

“What’s more, according to an EU briefing document that was prepared for a meeting of EU Foreign and Defence Ministers on Monday 22 of November, (and which was made available to this newspaper), “Ireland is committed in principle to supporting the development of battle groups and has formally committed 850 troops to the development although the Irish appear not to be part of the first phase of the development.”

“The document states that the reason for this is that the Irish defence forces “could not stand the strain of delivering on such such a commitment—unless it were to be undertaken on some kind of a shared basis with the other partner being the core of the group including providing the command and the Irish simply supplying the foot soldiers”.

“Consequently the plan is to have a joint British/Irish battlegroup under British command and, according to the authors of the report, the proposal makes sense as the British and Irish forces share a common military culture and command structure. Yet it warns that the plan can only be successful if “the obvious political concerns can be assuaged”.

“The plan was alluded to by Defence Minister Willie O’Dea on his return from Brussels although he did not disclose that the Irish contribution would consist merely of foot sloggers or that the senior officers of the battlegroup would be British. Instead he spoke of committing Irish troops to a “front-line rapid reaction peacekeeping force” adding ruefully that he would have preferred if the battlegroups had been called “peace brigades”. His comments were duplicitous.

“‘Battlegroup’ is the precise word, because the discussion that took place in Brussels was based on a German report, entitled the *Venusberg Strategy 2004*. This

advocates a “holistic, strategic civil-military vision for the EU”. The *Venusberg Strategy* is alarming German liberals. While the basis of the strategy is ostensibly the EU’s response to the “war against terror”, the reality is that the creation of an EU military power is intended to be a counter to the US. It argues that in view of the dissension within the EU after the Iraq war, a super-power army would enable the EU to achieve its “rightful objective, world power potential”, and would enable the EU to act independently of the United States.

“...Prior to the meeting on November 22, the Germans upped the ante with the argument that unless the EU had its own transnational army, “the rest of the world would continue to see us as a continental power that does not assume its own responsibilities”.” (Archon, *Southern Star* 2.12.04)

For the moment the ‘Battlegroups’ plan has been postponed—after all, there is a referendum on the European Constitution due. But don’t be surprised to see the idea re-emerge after the vote.

### IRISH TIMES: KENNEDY AND PATTERSON

We note from the *Phoenix* magazine that there is a row between *The Irish Times* Editor Geraldine Kennedy and its Chairman, Brian Patterson. Apparently, Kennedy has been brainwashed by the propaganda of her own journalists! She actually believes that the Editor of *The Irish Times* is “independent” and that she doesn’t have to report to the Managing Director Maeve Donovan. Has she completely lost the plot we wonder?

Article 80 of the *Articles of Association* of *The Irish Times* clearly says that “the editorial policy to be followed by *The Irish Times* shall be decided by the Directors...”

Article 81 says “the Editor shall be responsible to the Managing Director for carrying out such duties commensurate with his/her office as the Chairman may from time to time prescribe”.

Game, set and match to Patterson! But not much of a game! He is obviously just trying to state a few facts of life in the face of falling sales.

Incidentally, we wonder who leaked the report to the *Phoenix*. Could it have been Kennedy herself? Surely not! Kennedy in common with all directors of *The Irish Times* Limited has to swear an oath before a Commissioner of Oaths every year which includes the following:

“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.”

We wonder what the Major must be thinking of this shambles. Damn it all, it’s just not cricket!

these was Charlie Haughey... I regard Charlie as a modern-day Talleyrand. Like Talleyrand he survived in circumstances where most other, if not all, politicians would have caved in... Above all there was the determination never to give in regardless of the circumstances. Where others would see only insurmountable difficulties, Charlie, like Talleyrand, would only see opportunities" (p332/3).

Alright, Frank, they others didn't acknowledge it but we will—you were the real Talleyrand, sure he was a priest too, and did a little bit of lucrative lobbying on the side. And yes, Charlie was Napoleon!

"When he was Minister for Finance he used various authors and journalists (including a young Englishman called Bruce Arnold) in the drafting of speech material" (p227). He also employed the *Irish Times* journalist, the late Tony Gray, and of course, Martin Mansergh:

"Mansergh was the antithesis of everything one expected of somebody working closely with a Fianna Fail Taoiseach, particularly Charlie Haughey, but Charlie was nothing if not cosmopolitan in his tastes, and he gave Mansergh his head. As time went on, he began to rely on him more and more for draft material on a number of issues. Mansergh was a one-man powerhouse of policy ideas and produced prodigious amounts of material for consideration not only by the Taoiseach but by other ministers also" (p203).

#### ARMS TRIAL

"My theory—and it's just a theory, but posited on the basis of having been around and closely involved with Fianna Fail for many years, and years not long after the arms crisis—is that O'Malley realized, when it was too late, that his idol, Jack Lynch, was implicated in the arms imbroglio, not by direct action but by the lack of it. I think he came to see that he could not discount Haughey's argument that the government as a whole had deliberately closed its eyes to the plan to import arms and I suspect that is what they spoke about at their private meeting in September, 1970 before the arms trial" (p315).

Dunlop is now planning to write another book on the machinations of power and how decisions are made at the highest level—and then perhaps a novel based on his time as a government spin doctor.

Jack Lynch's 'adopted' son may not know how to handle a *camán*\* but he can sure spin a yarn!

[\* A hurley. Lynch was a famous hurler in his time. Ed.]

## Peace Protest

As we merge into a new year, two instances of hysteria in the mainstream media merit some examination. One dealt with a Peace Protest at Shannon. The second was a somewhat bizarre attack on Roger Cole of the Peace and Neutrality Alliance.

In the first instance, one journalist by the name of Patrick Flynn must be given distinguished mention for getting the utmost out of a small story. Mr. Flynn supplied articles or version of events to both *The Irish Examiner* and *The Irish Sun* on 17th December 2001, referring to events of the previous Saturday. *The Irish Sun* also extrapolated this in an editorial the same day.

In the case of *The Irish Examiner* story: the title carried a headline referring to: *Garda Hurt In Airport Demonstrations*. In fact, nobody had to have any treatment on the day. The first sentence in the article mentions the arrest of two men. Of course inferring that they had been involved in fighting. In fact, the first man was arrested for jumping the wire net to a parked plan on the tarmac. His fellow traveller was arrest for taking down four feet of Shannon's barbed wire (not thirty yards as was reported).

All this preceded a short melee of pushing and shoving (which would not have looked out of place at an average Fianna Fail selection convention). During the course of which one female protester got carried away and banged one Garda with enough force to knock his hat off. A very inoffensive middle aged Garda was quite upset because his hat, which he only got in the last year, had been creased. Well, the poor 'Boys in Blue', I suppose, their pride was hurt.

*The Irish Sun* had a field day afterwards talking about sixty friends of Bin Laden trying to overwhelm an overstretched Garda unit. A good contingent (yours truly included) attended at a critical time for the war on terrorism. But our motley crew of singers, pacifists, socialists and intellectuals did manage to eyeball a contingent of grey uniformed US personnel, dressed for battle, walk down a glass corridor on their way to the killing fields of Afghanistan. So we protested their being facilitated by our Government.

Of course, we were undesirables: a hard crew of kids and grandparents who must be too stupid to understand great world events anyhow. Meanwhile Bin Laden has failed to make an appearance in Cork and Tony Blair is trying to civilise the poor South Asians in Pakistan.

Of a more literary bent, we might make a study of an attack on Roger Cole, Chairman of Peace and Neutrality Alliance

(PANA) in the Letters Page of *The Irish Times* of 24th December 2001. Composed by none other than Martin Mansergh, a key adviser to Bertie Ahern on "De North", and potential Fianna Fail candidate for South Tipperary.

Mansergh's composition goes into hysterics about the use of the word 'imperialist' to describe any actions past, present, direct or indirect involving Great Britain and, or the United States. Martin is under the illusion that imperialism is a Marxist word and therefore must be proscribed. He seems to think that only places like Hapsburg Austria used to feature repressed peoples and that they only achieved liberty by having war waged against them by Britain and her allies.

It would thus follow that Afghanistan is now liberated by the war declared on it by the United States. Mansergh does not explain why Roger Cole or PANA ought to be considered to be Marxist. Mansergh simply peppers his letter with the word as a general term of abuse for anyone disagreeing with himself.

He further more deems applicant countries to the European Union taking their time in accession negotiations as somehow threatening. Anyone who tries to hold the European Commission to account must be dangerous, reckless 'baddies'. He claims the people who voted against the 'Nice Treaty' must be undemocratic because they are not enthusiastic about the issue being revisited. He trots out the old argument that the EU has miraculously brought us bounty and goodness—so Euro-realists must be against bounty and goodness.

He also reverts to the rehashing the myth that the *No* vote to *Nice* is keeping the applicant countries standing in the cold and away from Brussels welfare. This humble writer tried to debunk this myth as a recent formal sitting of the Forum on Europe held in University College, Cork in early December.

In the end, Martin contradicts himself by attacking Roger Cole for not being Marxist enough. In other words, for not behaving in a preprogrammed, clockwork, predictable manner that would fit in neatly to Martin's out-of-date simplistic compartments for all people. Martin doesn't seem to imagine that someone might go beyond stereotypical definitions of the Seventies and be influenced by Marx or not. Some of us like to think for ourselves—of course this is potentially dangerous.

It would seem very unsettling for the Taoiseach's former Special Adviser, and threatening for other insiders such as Una Claffey, well-known for their rabid anti-republicanism. The cosy consensus in *The Irish Times* of course, lap this up and things may even get worse in the coming year. You heard it here, first!

John Ryan

of jungle politics... Jack and Garret largely agreed on Northern Ireland policy, and Garret was given regular briefings on the developing situation by his old department, Foreign Affairs. I am not aware that either Garret or the leaders of the other parties were briefed by Charlie [Haughey] during his various terms of office" (p223).

### THE COMEDY BUNCH

"The combination of personal arrogance from George Colley, Des O'Malley, combined with the political ineptitude of Martin O'Donoghue, drove Dunlop into the bosom of the rising star from Kinsealy" (Ruairi Quinn, T.D. Irish Times 2.10.2004).

"There is no doubt that a campaign of destabilization was in train. But where were the Lynch men—Colley, Collins, Faulkner, O'Donoghue? They either knew what was going on and were refusing to take a stand, or they were so politically obtuse that they didn't, or couldn't, read the signals... Had George Colley made a stand at the time of the by-election results, he could have rallied support—support that would have reduced the margin of error significantly in any impending leadership battle. But Colley remained aloof and, tragically for him, took the size of his support base for granted" (p120).

Haughey had the drop on them!

### SULTANS OF SPIN!

After the June 1988 Hunger Strike General Election, when the Haughey-led Government was defeated, Frank Dunlop had no trouble adjusting himself to the Fine Gael/Labour regime. He became Press Officer for the Department of Education and the Fine Gael Minister, John Boland.

When the Coalition Government fell six months later, he was reappointed as Government Press Secretary and returned to the Department of the Taoiseach—Mr. Haughey! And incredibly when Fianna Fail fell in December, 1982, he skirted back to John Boland in the Public Service ministry.

And what was Frank's answer: "*What they failed to understand was that politics never entered into it*" (p244).

Surely the most honest statement in the book!

Dunlop wouldn't have a spark of national spirit in him. The thrill of skirting around the fringes of power was the apex of his ambition. But then Dunlop is a mere reflection of a bankrupt profession! Its problems are particularly acute in this State—there is no distinct national press—

it is a grotesque parody of Fleet Street's imperial press. But, in the main, its participants—like a lot of similar vassals—aim to portray a strident and trenchant image.

"{Jodie' Powell couldn't get over the fact that we only had six journalists travelling with us. By his reckoning, six reporters would accompany the town dog-catcher on his rounds back in his home state of Georgia. He thought I had a doddle of a job. I refrained from telling his that the six who were accompanying us would probably eat twenty American journalists for breakfast" (Jodie Powell was President Jimmy Carter's Press Secretary; p117).

"Whereas in the past only a handful of press people covered Leinster House, in the late seventies and early eighties the numbers increased phenomenally. This media army gravitated to the bars and restaurants in the Dail and its environs, where, naturally, they heard all kinds of yarns, both true and apocryphal. In this changed environment political gossip was as likely to be considered newsworthy as a policy shift" (p281).

### 'ONE OF OUR OWN'

"*A lot like his book, he was interesting, gossipy, bitchy, wonderfully indiscreet and had a pretty good grasp of how journalists operated*" (Alison O'Connor Irish Independent 6.10.2004). Alison hadn't even read the book at that time, but she sure has a good measure of her own profession.

"I did buy the book although when I rang the publisher he expressed shock that a political correspondent had actually gone out and paid for it" (ibid).

"*Our own advice is: Don't buy this book*" (John Drennan Sunday Independent 3.10.2004). Here's a bit of better advice, refrain from paying Two Euros a week over the next couple of months for the *Sunday Independent* and go out and buy Dunlop's book!

"*Early in the book, Jack Lynch is portrayed as lazy, wife-dominated, limited, alcoholic and without principle*" (Irish Independent 2.10.2004). Thus wrote Tom Savage, who is a director of Carr Communications and, wait for it: "*...has provided communications consultancy to every Taoiseach since 1977*"!

Dunlop spilled the beans! Mind, he didn't turn the can over but he spilled enough to upset the incestuous and spineless world of the Dublin media! Frank 'blew the gaff'.

"Better still, on those occasions when I managed to be with the leader, the photographers and I selected the poses

thought most suitable for publication... the one area where we knew we would have problems, and did, was RTE. There was a well founded belief that Fianna Fail could not get sympathetic—or even fair—coverage from the station because most of its producers, those who actually controlled the content of the programmes, were from the far left, and they were determined not only to frustrate Fianna Fail... but to enhance the profiles of those on the left in general and those with anti-Republicanism sympathies in particular" (p71).

"RTE was a strange place at that time and was riven by internal politics, with news dominated by people with Nationalist sympathies, and current affairs the domain of the anti-Nationalist 'Stickies'... There were those who resented Wesley Boyd becoming head of news. That he was from County Fermanagh's Protestant tradition seemed to arouse the worst paranoia on the part of some of the more extreme nationalistic reporters... Boyd displayed an admirable even-handedness at all times, sometimes in the most pressurized circumstances" (p163).

### THE BOTTLES

"When he became a minister in 1961, Charlie Haughey started a practice of giving those journalists and photographers with whom he would have had most contact throughout the year a bottle or two at Christmas time. The gesture carried no obligations nor had it any import, other than the normal friendly expression of seasonal goodwill. When he became Taoiseach, Charlie asked me whether it would be appropriate for him to extend the practice to the political correspondents, whom he knew to be a prickly bunch. When I didn't demur, he included them on his Christmas list. There wasn't the slightest difficulty about this development until his second year in office, when one of the group, a relative newcomer, was accidentally overlooked. This was immediately interpreted, both by the person concerned and a number of the journalist's colleagues, as a coded message of displeasure and it became the subject of a gossip around Leinster House. The situation was resolved, apparently amicably, when the journalist was belatedly given a Christmas present. Far from softening an already less than friendly attitude, the festive bottle appeared to have the opposite effect and this journalist's reporting of Charlie subsequently was marked by a particular stridency" (p170).

### HAUGHEY

"As for the politicians with whom I worked, it will be no surprise if I say now that, for all his faults, the best of

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## THE LYNCH YEARS

After the collapse of the Sunningdale power-sharing arrangement in May, 1974, Jack Lynch, who was now in opposition, suggested on the RTE radio programme *This Week*: “that granting an amnesty to those involved in IRA terrorism should be considered” (p52).

“However comforting it might be to credit Jack Lynch with the political imagination to envisage the peace process of the 1990s, the fact of the matter is that he fluffed it... the view, there, that Jack had lost touch was coming dangerously close to the truth: he was well known for his careful use of language, he knew the dangers of a misplaced nuance in talking about Northern Ireland, and he had taken sole responsibility for party policy regarding the North on himself. The buck stopped with him” (p53).

## 1977 ELECTION

“Polling day was set for 16 June, 1977. Fianna Fail issued its manifesto less than twenty-four hours after the election was called. At a time when people were used to vague promises at general election time, its very specific and generous provisions—including the abolition of car tax and domestic rates, and a £1,000 grant to first-time house buyers—had a phenomenal impact... one of its greatest critics—though obviously he didn’t say anything publicly—was Charlie Haughey. When he read it he just raised his eyes to heaven, looked at me with a pained expression and said, ‘Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear!’ There were other scathing comments, to the effect that the document had been produced by Mairin, Jack’s wife...” (p68).

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“On another occasion, when we were chatting about the ups and downs of life, Charlie Haughey said, in an entirely matter-of-fact way, ‘Most people live miserable lives.’” The comment struck me as being very odd, but since his tone was anything but condescending, I presumed it came out of what he had seen over years of being a T.D” (p185).  
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When Lynch was returned to power in 1977, he appointed Martin O’Donoghue as Minister for Economic Planning and Development. O’Donoghue

“had successfully understood that Lynch couldn’t really be bothered with policy issues. Of course, Lynch regarded

policy as important, but he believed that the thinking regarding policy for the country as a whole wasn’t for the politicians. In Jack’s vocabulary—and in fairness, in the lexicon of most Fianna Fail politicians—policy meant any proposal or scheme that would help the party’s political profile” (p80).

“A few days after the formation of the government I had lunch with Charlie Haughey in the Dail restaurant and he was scathing about the move. In his opinion the mandarins in the Department of Finance would take a long view and gradually strangle O’Donoghue’s ministry to death” (p81).

“On such occasions he [Haughey] would rail at how Jack Lynch managed to con both the media and the electorate—with my connivance—with his hang-dog charm, and that if it hadn’t been for Lynch’s fiscal ineptitude, and Martin O’Donoghue’s economics, he would not have half the problems that he had now” (p262).

“Overshadowing everything Charlie [Haughey] did during his entire first period as Taoiseach was the dire state of the national finances. Even before he had taken over from Jack Lynch, Charlie had spoken incessantly in private about the disastrous fiscal prognosis. He was scathing about the effects of the Fianna Fail manifesto and blamed Martin O’Donoghue for its excessive pump-priming policies” (p218).

“Those rebels {Colley, O’Malley, Gibbons} who had served under Jack Lynch knew that they had been wrong to allow Lynch to indulge in the profligacy, however populist, of the first six months of the new government in 1977. Back then, when Charlie Haughey spoke out against the lunacy of actually keeping the manifesto’s promises, it was dismissed as sour grapes and attributed to a fear that Jack’s popularity would inevitably mean that his favourite, George Colley, would succeed to the leadership. By the autumn of 1982, those who had basked in the sunshine of public popularity five years earlier now wanted to forget their connections with the manifesto and put the blame for the undoubted ills of the country solely on the shoulders of Charlie Haughey” (p293).

“(It was only after the election, at a celebratory party in his home in Ballsbridge, that I learnt that, just like the rest of us on the committee, he [Senator Eoin Ryan] had not known any of the policy proposals contained in the manifesto until the day of its publication, less than twenty-four hours after the election was called... I found membership of the election strategy committee the most rewarding and exciting aspect of my job at that time.

Probably because it had no politicians as members,—except Ryan” (p65).

“*The beginning of the end for Jack*” was set in train during a trip to the US in 1979, around the question of British army pursuit of suspects into the Republic. “*Jack confirmed that the Irish government had given its approval to the British authorities to fly over the border in circumstances where suspected terrorists were involved*” (p121). The game was up for Jack Lynch.

“The notion of ‘hot pursuit’ was alien to Fianna Fail’s Republican tenets and unsavoury in the eyes of the Irish public generally. (Less important politically, but probably equally humiliating for the departments of Foreign Affairs and Justice, was that the disclosure seriously undermined the British authorities’ confidence in their Irish counterparts to maintain confidentiality regarding security issues.)” (p122).

## LYNCH AND THATCHER

One of the most pathetic episodes in the book centres around the visit of Jack Lynch to meet Mrs. Thatcher in Downing Street following the funeral of Lord Mountbatten in August, 1979. Lynch had met Thatcher only once previously:

“nothing could have prepared us for the onslaught that awaited us. She was incensed that Ireland was doing nothing... that we were refusing to extradite terrorists... providing safe haven for murderers. Nobody in the Irish delegation was expecting a tirade of such vehemence, and Lynch, who at this stage had lost the fire in his stomach on matters of this sort, was slow to reply. Thatcher saw his silence as agreement, tacit or otherwise, with her point of view. Jack Lynch did not speak or try to interrupt Thatcher as she ploughed on... I finally realized that Jack Lynch was coasting as Taoiseach. He was far too relaxed at a meeting that he had insisted on requesting and was allowing Thatcher to overwhelm him with questionable data—everything that we had come to expect from the British propaganda machine... It was a saddening experience” (p108).

A repetition of his ‘confrontation’ with Ted Heath on the night of 30th January 1972, after the slaughter on the streets of Derry.

## LYNCH AND FITZGERALD

“But Jack and Garret [FitzGerald] were like-minded people who moved in the same circles, met one another at the same diplomatic dinners and observed the same unwritten rules of behaviour while others mostly their own back benchers, indulged in the raw savagery

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BOOK REVIEW: *Yes Taoiseach: Irish Politics From Behind Closed Doors* by Frank Dunlop Penguin Ireland. 335 pp 22.99 Euros.

## I'm All Right, Jack!

The present writer was in the English Market in Cork prior to last Christmas Day, when I crossed the path of one of the most extraordinary phenomenon of contemporary 'democratic' politics—I was in the presence of a man who held the most powerful political position in Europe—well, had held the Presidency of the European parliament a few months earlier.

Today, Pat Cox, a former founder and general secretary of the Progressive Democrats, TD, MEP and President of the European parliament is a mere lobbyist, just like Frank Dunlop

Ironically, he shared time with Dunlop in RTE!

Cox may have been in politics but he was not of politics, that game was too dirty for Pat Cox. Here is a man who scaled the heights of political power and ambition and what did he achieve—he kept his hands clean : he did absolutely nothing else, not a single thing. His was a political career of glory without power.

Dunlop himself hits the nail in the head in his book in relation to the late John Boland's attitude to his Fine Gael colleague, Gemma Hussey:

"John regarded Gemma Hussey with ill-concealed contempt and believed that she was not a committed Fine Gaeler, that she had come into the party via a combination of coat-tailing on Garret's [FitzGerald] popularity and friendship with his wife, Joan, and that she would stay the course only for the duration of what he perceived to be her passing interest in parliamentary politics. A number of times I heard him ask her, apparently innocently, 'Tell me, how long have you been in Fine Gael now, Gemma?'"

She was elected in 1981, by 1989 as she said herself: "She took the rare step of voluntarily quitting political life". John Boland made his mark and went to an

early grave.

Dunlop's own political outlook can be summed up in a most succinct phrase:

"I never saw anyone behaving in a way that went against their own interest and I never heard anyone refuse to do anything because it was the wrong thing to do..." (Frank Dunlop on his years in public service, Ireland on Sunday 3.10.2004).

Of these people, it could be truly said: "I have done the state no service".

### FRANK DUNLOP

In May, 2000, it was revealed to the Flood Tribunal, that Dunlop, the 53-year-old Kilkenny-born son of a carpenter, who spent three years studying for the priesthood, had bribed a range of councillors and politicians on behalf of wealthy developers to achieve crucial rezonings and planning permissions, effectively buying the future development of Dublin.

Following a short stint in journalism with RTE, Dunlop was 'discovered' by Jack Lynch and in 1974 became Fianna Fail's first press officer. Lynch then appointed him as the State's first Government Press Officer in 1978, but

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not before Dunlop insisted he be appointed to the civil service as an Assistant Secretary, a permanent and a pensionable post. He served Lynch's successor, Charles Haughey and also served two Fine Gael/Labour administrations before leaving the civil service in 1986 to join a public relations company.

### THE REAL TAOISEACH

"But the categorization of Jack Lynch as some sort of latter-day political saint is as silly as it is fatuous. I believe history will not be as kind to Jack Lynch as his contemporaneous observers and supporters have been... I believe I'm in a better position than most to evaluate his personality" (p140).

"He [Seamus Brennan] and I had only one safeguard : Jack Lynch. Lynch invested a significant amount of trust in both of us and ignored the stated and unstated criticism of old stagers..." (p12).

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"THEN Jack [Lynch] asked if anybody had anything to say. The great vista of what was ahead of me opened up when

Paddy Smith—a veteran of many governments under de Valera, Lemass and Lynch—asked, 'What is it exactly you will be doing for us, young fella?'" (p8). It took the former Commandant of the Cavan Brigade of the IRA to see a phoney at first sight!

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It took a Kilkenny man to expose one of the biggest political bluffs of history—the golden reign of the 'Real Taoiseach' Jack Lynch—and the media do not like it: pliable Jack was a media Saint. "Dunlop's sleaziness is epitomised by his treatment of Jack Lynch who gave him every opportunity he corrupted... Dunlop prefers to try to turn a buck on the backs of the dead" (S. Independent 3.10.2004).

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