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# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

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## Haughey: *the hyenas howl*

Charles Haughey's funeral "*raises a big question about State funerals. The stark truth is that to give such an honour to a thief, a bully and a tax-evader is the behaviour of a banana republic*". that's former Irish historian and present ideologist of the British State, Ruth Dudley Edwards writing in the *Sunday Independent* (18 June).

In the British view Ireland, ever since its escape, has been a banana republic, with unwarranted pretensions. Surely then Edwards should approve of it when it appears to act in accordance with her estimate of it.

She asks: "*had he been proved in court to have been criminally on the take like Ray Burke*", would that have deprived him of the right to a State funeral? She doubts that it would, because from her vantage point in the British ruling class (to the extent that there still is such a thing) she sees the Irish as being thorough banana republicans to the core. The factual detail that Haughey was *not* proved to have been criminally on the take therefore fades into insignificance. (And the Burke investigation is still ongoing.)

Fintan O'Toole declared on RTE some years ago that it could no longer be doubted that Haughey had been on the take, and that the only question was whether he gave anything in return. In normal parlance being *on the take* means taking bribes—accepting money in return for favours. But O'Toole's usage bears out Edwards's description of the State as a banana republic. Something essential is missing from it.

Whatever about the State, there is something missing from Dublin 4. And O'Toole, in his Savanarola act, is unquestionably bananas.

He tells us that in the *decadence* of late Imperial Vienna [where so much of the world's music was created] a high-priced prostitute was a courtesan and a politician whose bribe was a country estate was a statesman, and in this sense Haughey was a statesman. He was a prostitute who "*kept an expensive mistress*", but was himself "*a kept man*". He was consumed by greed and dishonesty, but mastered the—

"art of hiding in plain sight. Instead of seeking to conceal the scandalous truth... he made it so obvious that it became simply an accepted aspect of Irish reality". "His one genuinely heroic quality was his brazenness in 1986, when the first divorce referendum was called, he returned from a weekend in Paris with his mistress Terry Keane to broadcast... his unshakeable belief in the importance of the family".

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## Flab Murphy?

John A Murphy is a most loquacious individual. A great one for the glib sweeping statement using the pompous title of Emeritus Professor—which only means he retired without being fired. However he goes very quiet, silent in fact, when confronted. In 2004 he realised he had made a bit of a fool of himself by associating with the Reform Society and made an attempt to recant and distance himself from it. He was immediately taken to task by Bruce Arnold who, *inter alia*, said that he had a mentality that was one of "*flabbiness when it fails to recognise the difference between whatever it is he means and the more rigorous discipline of the Protestant mind*" (*Irish Times*, 28.10.04)

Mr. Murphy went into silent mode and thereby accepted this insult that harked back to Protestant sectarianism in its pristine form of some centuries ago.

Sometime later, Arnold had a criticism of another son of Macroom, Dermot Desmond, about plans for the Abbey Theatre. Desmond did not go silent. He shot back and proved, in some detail, that Arnold was talking rubbish (see *Sunday Independent*, 16.10.2005). The response

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## Irish Commemoration Of The Somme

### *a reply to Daily Ireland*

Your "Nelson's Pillar" column (26th June) is enthusiastic about the production by *An Phost* of stamps commemorating the Battle of the Somme.

The only criticism of that battle was on military grounds—a lot of losses for little ground gained. It would have been another matter, of course, had the stamps portrayed rotting corpses being devoured by rats instead of the sanitised gallantry which they do portray.

The Somme represents Imperial Britain's unprovoked aggression against

Germany, and its extension of a continental conflict into a world war. Read the accounts by Connolly and Casement.

The glorification of that war would be distasteful at any time, but it is particularly so at this time when British Imperial aggression is on the rise again.

All this conceding to British war propaganda is designed, as your columnist says, to make friends with unionists. But they do not believe that you are sincere and I hope that they are right.

There are two ways of abolishing the

border, and one of them is to re-enter the Imperial fold!

Protestant Ulster has held the British Empire close to its heart. All it got out of it was to lord it over the Catholics for a couple of generations. The recent war has wiped out that situation in such a way that it can never, ever return.

The best that can be hoped for is that now the Imperialist impulse will wither in Protestant Ulster. Pandering to it does no good. Protestant Ulster is largely apolitical. So the best thing to do is to leave it alone to gradually come to terms with the new political reality.

**Conor Lynch**  
26th June 2006.

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He engaged in a “naked display of unexplained wealth”. He was notorious even amongst computers, whose spell-checkers proposed that his name should be “*haughty*”. He was “*a product of the Catholic lower middle classes who spent millions of pounds of other peoples' money in affecting the style of an Ascendancy gent*”. On the other hand he shopped at “*Charvet and Le Coq*” in Paris with the money of “*the plain people of Ireland*”, and kept up a “*seigneurial lifestyle at Abbeville*”.

Which was it? Protestant Ascendancy or French? They aren't compatible. And, as far as we know, Haughey's example had some effect in shifting the vision of Earthly Paradise of the *nouveau riche* from London to Paris, and that was not the least of the things held against him by Whitehall. Whether his French orientation was a matter of policy or an expression of taste, we don't know. We never had the consuming interest in his lifestyle that the envious petty bourgeoisie of Dublin 4 had.

We suppose that the money spent at Leg Coq Hardi did in a sense come from “*the plain people of Ireland*”—assuming that, in the socio-economic transformation he brought about, there is still a plain people of Ireland—but there is no doubt that money come to him through the medium of multi-millionaires, who got nothing in return but an occasional chat. It seems that they looked to him as a man of quality amongst the general rabble of the money-grubbing rich.

Ireland today has the highest *per capita*

rate of capitalist entrepreneurship in the world. The purpose of entrepreneurship is to become a multi-millionaire. O'Toole's complaints sound like an echo from the days of de Valera's vision of plain living, which has been much ridiculed by Dublin 4. Which is it to be? The plain people or Haughey's entrepreneurship?

O'Toole makes passing reference to “*the byzantine conspiracy that led to the Arms Trial*”, ignoring the verdict returned by the plain people in the jury in the face of uncontroverted evidence that arms imports were authorised by the Government, and that that the conspiracy which led to the Trial was not Haughey's but that of Lynch, O'Malley etc.

We are told that Haughey “*secretly sniggered at the people's credulity*”. He does not go on to say ‘while preserving the framework of public life that sustained it’. But that can be taken as read.

We don't know whether, or to what extent, Haughey was a sceptic, and we cannot see its relevance to public affairs. In matters to do with the existence of the world there is no solid ground of opinion on which to distinguish between credulity and scepticism. And if he was a private sceptic who chose not to affront the bishops of the society, then he acted in the way recommended by Edmund Burke.

We recall an argument between him and C.C. O'Brien in the early 1970s in which he said that O'Brien was propagating an empty liberalism which sought to destroy in which people lived while having nothing to put in their place.

In this, as in other aspects of life, he lived in the Continental manner, where to have an affair while preserving the structure of the family was neither abhorrent nor paradoxical. But the Irish newspaper world in that generation, led by Whitehall's *Irish Times* and the born again *Independent*, were becoming Puritan in the prurient English manner.

What the Tribunals have established at vast expense is what was plainly evident without them—that Ben Dunne gave Haughey a million pounds for nothing—or for something so intangible as to be beyond the grasp of the grubbing petty-bourgeoisie of Dublin 4. Other businessmen likewise gave money they could well-afford without receiving any specific business advantage.

Haughey gave the State European status for a while. The EU had become accustomed to treating it as Britain's banana republic. Haughey made it something else for a few years. He made EU leaders at Dublin Castle feel they were in an independent European capital, rather than a second-hand England. They later rewarded the experience with a gift of 8 billions (Punts) which could be well used because Haughey had laid the groundwork.

Haughey took the main functions of government into his own hands, using his Ministers as messenger boys, to bring about economic transformation. And he made a presentation to the European heads which opened the way for serious funding.

Brian Farrell, back in the 1970s, published a book on the office of Taoiseach (which means *chief*) discussing whether its incumbent was *Chairman Or Chief*. It wasn't much of a question. Everyone knew he was a Chairman. But, for that brief period under Haughey he was effectively the chief.

Perhaps now that he is dead the petty-bourgeois resentments of the big bourgeois with style will wither away, and the real history of the emergence of entrepreneurial Ireland will be written.

In the same issue of the *Sunday Independent* Eoghan Harris (*Death Of A Chieftain: The Enigma Was Empty*)—revealing himself to have been what everybody knew he was, a “*political apprentice*” of IRA Chief of Staff, Cathal Goulding—resurrects the old Sticky story that Haughey fostered the emergence of the Provisional IRA for the purpose of warding off social revolution in the South, which Goulding, Harris etc. were on the brink of achieving:

“Back in 1969, Cathal Goulding, leader of the left-leaning Republican Movement, was trying to wean the IRA away from the gun, prosecute a peaceful civil rights campaign in the North and shift Sinn Fein towards socialist politics in the South. As one of his political

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was rigorous enough to silence Mr. Arnold on his criticisms ever since.

However, help is at hand for the Emeritus Professor. A letter by Seamus Lantry in the *Irish Examiner* and a similar one in *The Corkman* has given the professional Corkman an opportunity to redeem himself and demonstrate a bit of mental rigour that might even impress Mr Arnold.

Mr Lantry wrote:

*"Third party needed to sort out conflicting claims*

"I was amazed at the charges made by Mr Lane against Peter Hart concerning the War of Independence in west Cork." {This was reprinted in *Irish Political Review*, June 2006.}

"These charges entailed interviewing survivors of the ambush after they had died, using a forged document as a legitimate source and selectively quoting from another source to claim the opposite of what that source actually said.

"These claims should not be left hanging in the air. I have neither the time nor the opportunity to check Mr Lane's claims, but may I suggest that some of our high-profile professional historians come to our assistance and give us their considered assessment of these charges. Pre-eminent among them is John A Murphy who must be thoroughly familiar with Kilmichael and the War Of Independence in west Cork.

"Is he not the ideal person to sort this out once and for all?"

*Seamus Lantry*" (29.5.06).

The beauty of this for John A. is that he does not have to do any research or any real work to answer Mr. Lantry's appeal. Mr. Hart and his books are well known to him and all the counter facts have been provided for him by Meda Ryan, Brian Murphy and the Aubane Historical Society in great detail. The issues concern events in his very own backyard, West Cork. And being 'Emeritus' he must have spare time on his hands. All he needs to do is say who he agrees with and why. Thus he would only need to display a small bit of what Professors are supposed to be good at—critical assessment of issues in their own discipline.

So why the silence?

Maybe it's that little matter of moral and intellectual backbone. But if he continues to avoid the issues surrounding Professor Hart—and just keep on spoofing in the abstract—then he is likely to confirm Arnold's jibe and be known hereafter as *Flab Murphy*—which seems at least as appropriate as the sobriquet attributed to his namesake, Slab Murphy.

**VOX POP**

## Truth About The Countess

The following letter appeared in the *Irish Independent* on 10th June:

Kevin Myers repeats his allegation that Countess Markievicz "fired her Mauser into" the unarmed Constable Lahiffe (*Irish Independent*, May 31), again using Caulfield's unsourced and dubious account.

I cannot find a reference to the incident in the paperback edition of Charles Townshend's 'The Easter Rising', so I cannot understand Myers's deference to that authority, but I believe a satisfactory account of events can be pieced together using a variety of other sources.

It appears that Markievicz was originally appointed as liaison officer between the GPO and St Stephen's Green. It is logical, therefore, that she would not have arrived with Michael Mallin's Stephen's Green contingent.

Markievicz related that at 12 noon, the time that Constable Lahiff was shot, she was delivering supplies to City Hall by car with Dr Kathleen Lynn.

Dr Lynn's statement to the Bureau of Military History confirms the detail and times given in Markievicz's account.

Maire Nic Shuibhlaigh related in her biography that, as the Jacob's factory contingent prepared to occupy the building, she saw the car go past, Markievicz shouting encouragement at them. When Markievicz arrived at St Stephen's Green, the occupation was well under way.

As I have already related (Letters, May 12), Diana Norman discredited the story of the St Stephen's Green killing, revealing that it was based entirely on innuendo and that no witnesses backed it up - aside from Caulfield's anonymous source.

Another Markievicz biographer, Anne Haverty, also casts doubt on the story.

In fact she offers clear evidence of the Countess having in fact intervened to save the life of a British soldier who had mistakenly entered the College of Surgeons thinking it had already surrendered.

In a separate instance, Frank Robbins of the St Stephen's Green contingent related that, as the College of Surgeons was being occupied, the doorkeeper let off a shotgun blast, nearly hitting Robbins.

Markievicz's intervention saved the man, whom Robbins and the others considered shooting.

Brian Barton has shown that false rumours of Markievicz's supposedly craven conduct at her court-martial were circulated alongside the rumour that she had shot PC Lahiffe.

Miss Mahaffy, daughter of Trinity College's Provost, who recorded them, unconsciously revealed their object: Markievicz was, she observed "the one woman amongst them of high birth and therefore the most depraved . . . She took to politics and left our class . . ."

This campaign of vilification is, Diana Norman believes, "an extreme example of a process by which women are denigrated until they disappear from history".

It is only necessary to bring to mind the example of Muriel MacSwiney, who has up to lately been maligned on the basis of false rumours and innuendo, to give credit to this assertion.

**Claire McGrath Guerin**

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# Haughey

continued

apprentices, I saw first hand how Haughey helped smash that strategy. In the autumn of 1969 Goulding was offered a Faustian deal. Haughey's cronies were ready to arm any reactionary rump of the IRA on condition that it stayed away from socialist politics in the South and abandoned civil rights in the North, and created a crisis in Northern Ireland. Goulding believed this would lead to civil war. He rejected the deal and refused to make arms available to sectarian citizen committees in Belfast and Derry. By putting up with the jeers and jibes of the Provo graffiti which proclaimed "IRA I Ran Away", he kept the heat down long enough for Lynch to be able to handle Haughey... By pushing away Haughey's poisoned chalice they [Goulding etc.] saved us from civil strife.

"Many media republicans have neither forgiven nor forgotten those of us who took a hard stand against Haughey... Thus the town is full of trainee hacks who think I was anti-Provo because I was a member of the Workers' Party, when the reverse was true—I was in the Workers' Party because I was anti-Provo. Hence my effective blacking from RTE by a new breed of producers who don't even know why I am on a green list...

"What did we and Haughey find out about ourselves at the Arms Trial? We found out that we were not as hard-boiled as we thought. Haughey found it out first. Faced by the Special Branch, he folded. He found out that a United Ireland meant so little to him that he preferred to perjure himself rather than risk his political career... Thank God for that. Because if Haughey had imported arms, proclaimed that he had done it for Ireland, and indeed would do it again, he would have been swept to power on a tidal wave of naked nationalism—and ruined the Republic. If acquitted, he would have been a Fianna Fail hero. But if found guilty and given a nominal jail sentence he would have become a national hero. In this Mussolini role he would have set the North aflame... and... reduced us to the ruinous condition of a Columbia or a Bosnia. By the grace of God, Charles Haughey faked it. When his bluff was called, he lost his nerve and he lied... At the Arms Trial, Charles Haughey realised that he not only lacked the courage of his convictions, but that he lacked any convictions at all. We were lucky that he lacked them. Lucky he settled down to a life of Charvet shirts instead of civil war. Lucky above all that, like the rest of us in the Republic at the time, he settled for the safe role of sneaking regard. The phrase of course comes from Conor Cruise O'Brien, the only public figure of my generation who genuinely deserves a State funeral... We had no right to deplore a State funeral for Haughey because until very recently we went along with his ambivalence

towards armed republicanism. Some of the media still do. RTE is the last refuge of the Haughey hush puppies..." etc. (Sunday Independent, 18.7.06).

This outpouring of bile is accompanied by a large cartoon by Tom Halliday of Haughey as a rotten egg which has been broken into a frying pan, with a chef holding his nose against the smell. In style, it is of a kind with a multitude of articles that appeared in both the *Independent* (which is a kind of Harris family magazine owned by a billionaire who lets them indulge themselves) and the *Irish Times*. The difference is that Harris, though now reduced to gutter journalism, played some part in the affairs he described, which Miriam Lord, for example, gloating over Haughey's corpse in the *Irish Times*, did not. She is a member of the chorus, while he was in some degree a perpetrator.

Harris's problem lies in an inability to see a situation while it exists and to act in it in a way that he can stand over later. It is the problem of his media generation in the Republic. And his way of coping with it is their way. They invent a different past from the past that actually existed, use their media positions to give it currency, and place invented versions of themselves in that invented past.

But this is an ongoing process, because the past was not re-invented in one fell swoop at some point in the 1970s: It is subject to continuous re-invention, and Harris has re-invented history, and himself as part of it, four or five times.

Some ancient Greek observed that one can never cross the same river twice, because the water in it is always different. And one might say that one could never meet the same Harris twice—or the same Rabbitte—or, for that matter, the same C.C. O'Brien.

If one takes the present Harris version in earnest, what does it say when when the

bile is discounted? That Haughey saved the state in 1970, and that he did so as an agent of divine Providence. It is not what he meant to say. He can never say what he means to because his mind is too volatile to formulate meaning and hold it, being essentially ephemeral. But that is what he says. And what he says is true after a fashion.

What actually happened in the Spring of 1970s that led to Haughey, a senior Cabinet Minister, being subjected to criminal prosecution by Lynch, is something that we do not know and that Harris does not know and that C.C. O'Brien does not know. But we have isolated the certainty that something happened between Lynch and Haughey, and we have set that unknown happening in the context of a network of definite facts. Harris, and the media of which he is a fair sample, give up any concern with ascertainable fact and they spin fantasies.

A certain fact is that Haughey did not organise an illegal import of arms with the object of distributing them to nationalists in the North. It was the Government that organised covert arms imports for Northern nationalists. It was not illegal since the Government did it—unless one holds that the Republic was still subject to British authority in the matter—which, if it was the case, has never been publicly acknowledged.

It seems to be a virtual certainty that Whitehall demanded that Lynch should stop this covert activity, and that it enlisted the services of the Fine Gael leader when Lynch held out against the direct British approach. A possible explanation of what happened then is that Haughey objected to compliance with a Whitehall ultimatum regarding a matter within the sovereign authority of the Republic, and that Lynch then had the bright idea of foisting the Government policy of the preceding six months onto Haughey and prosecuting it

## Rabbitte, Haughey And Arms For The North

The following letter appeared in the *Irish Examiner* of 16th June

Within hours of the death of Charles Haughey the leader of the Labour Party again brought up the infamous Arms Trial. He forgets that Mr. Haughey was cleared of any wrongdoing. And he was cleared on the basis that he was implementing Government policy. If there was any wrongdoing, and I don't believe there was, the man responsible was the Taoiseach and not Haughey.

Pat Rabbitte and I come from the same stable. He cannot be unaware that our former leader Cahal Goulding along with my father, who was then on the IRA Army Council, met with Mr. Haughey and pleaded with him to get weapons and to get them quickly.

Mr. Rabbitte may be ashamed of his past, though he has not accounted for it. Those of us who attempted to arm the minority in the North which was under siege from marauding B-Specials and RUC take pride in our past.

Rather than being a stick with which to beat Charles Haughey, the Arms Trial was one of his finest hours. He was not prepared to stand idly by.

**Conor Lynch**

as an illegal conspiracy.

Haughey entered an evasive defence pleading in the Arms Trials, apparently relying on the prosecutions to collapse before the effective defence mounted by Capt. Kelly—which happened.

As far as we know, defence pleadings are privileged under English law (which is the substance of Irish law) and do not come within the law of perjury. They are arguments made by a barrister, and it is nothing unusual for them to contain two mutually exclusive lines of defence, one of which must be untrue. And, in any case, Jesuitry is an inherent and necessary part of the conduct of law within the adversarial English system. Life without it would now be too primitive to contemplate.

If Haughey's over-riding concern was to save his political career, why did he not go along with Lynch's decision to pretend that there had been an illegal conspiracy to import arms and help to pin it on Army officers? And, since he did not do that, why did he not enter the cast-iron defence that the covert arms imports were done under Government authority? (State papers now in the public domain put it beyond all question that this was the case.)

A possible explanation is that he did not see it as being in accordance with the dignity of the state to slither away from Government policy under Whitehall pressure, inventing a conspiracy for the purpose; and that, when a prosecution was rigged against him, he was not prepared to blow the Government (and the Fianna Fail party) apart by giving evidence that the covert arms imports were authorised.

There may be a possible explanation of a different kind, but we have not seen it. There has been a great expansion of literary activity in Ireland since 1970, but none of it has engaged with this intriguing incident. It is a very poor thing compared with the American literature which it mimics.

In the matter of Charvet shirts: we recall that in the propaganda of Harris's republicanism in the late 1960s Haughey was singled out as the political figure who was selling out Fianna Fail to the bourgeoisie and had lost all sense of the destiny of the nation. We cannot recall if it was Charvet shirts then—which we had never heard of until now. And there were endless stories of how he rode horses with the gentry and frequented Madame X's brothel. He was hated with one of those utterly irrational hatreds which have often disabled the Left.

Brian Faulkner, in the North, was hated in the same way. Faulkner and Haughey were depicted as a bourgeois pair whose rise to prominence was making the Border an irrelevance.

During the autumn and Winter of 1969-70, the (Official) Republican story

was that Haughey and Fianna Fail were selling out the nation to "*Federalism*", under which Ireland would be reconnected with Britain through a Faulkner-Haughey collaboration.

And now Harris has it that Haughey sold out again in the interest of Charvet suits, in the Summer of 1970. That leaves about two months for him to have been something else. But there is an entire absence of evidence that he ever did become something else. He was of a piece throughout. And our attitude was that, as bourgeois things go, Faulkner and Haughey were of the better kind.

As to Goulding's political movement in which Harris was an apprentice: it was given money by the Dublin Government in the Autumn of 1969 in the hope that it would do something it was entirely incapable of doing—displace nationalist antagonism with some kind of socialism. What became the SDLP was also funded by the Dublin Government with the hope of fostering a constitutional nationalism, and this was seen as part of the sell-out by the Officials.

In August 1969, at the only time when it was possible to "*have set the North aflame*", the leaders of Harris's movement (MacGiolla etc.) addressed mass rallies in Dublin demanding that the arsenals of the state be thrown open for an incursion into the North, and we were the only active public voice on the other side.

The leaders of what became the SDLP were also demanding arms then, and later.

A new Republican movement was generated in the North out of the experience of the pogrom of August 1969. It owed nothing to Dublin patronage.

Harris is right when he says he is above all else an "*anti-Provo*". But one of the first acts of the Officials against the upstart Provisionals was to launch a rival war to the war declared by the Provisionals in 1970. They called it a "*national-liberation war*" as far as we recall. It was launched from outside the North and was conducted on ideological premises that floated beyond the social realities of the North. Its high points were the killing of cleaning women in an Aldershot canteen and the killing of a British soldier home on leave in Derry. And, as far as we could discover at the time, it fired the only shot not fired by the British Army in Derry on Bloody Sunday.

After its war was called off the Officials concentrated on the media and political activity in the South financed by bank robbery, forgery and foreign gold, and the Official IRA remained (and perhaps remains) in being for housekeeping. And its lunatic war of 1970-72 was removed from public awareness.

A media-vacuum arose in the Republic under Lurch and C.C. O'Brien. Traditional culture was banned from the

air waves with nothing definite to replace it. Long after the Arms Trial, Lynch continued to condemn the 'two-nations' view, and to hold Partition responsible for the escalating trouble in the North. He was therefore disabled ideologically against the new vigorous Republicanism in the North, and could only try to curb its appeal in the South by administrative harassment. O'Brien too rejected the proposal that the Ulster Protestants should be treated as a nationality, and in the Spring of 1974 he refused to take on the sovereignty claim on the North as a means of consolidating the only real possibility of a power-sharing arrangement there has ever been. But he set up a strict political censorship of culture in RTE that lasted for a generation. The effect of this was to make a gift to the Provos of the traditional culture of the independence movement. It was the madness of political bankrupts.

The Officials, having given up their war, and being motivated exclusively by hatred of the Provos, slotted themselves into the media vacuum, and were the dominant element in RTE for a while. Harris's complaint about being blackballed is in substance a complaint about loss of dominance.

Professor Girvin of Aberdeen University wrote about Haughey in the *Irish Independent* (16.6.06). Though now a British Professor, Girvin hails from Cork, and he has admitted to being driven by rebellion against a socialist Republican father. He was briefly associated with us long, long ago, but he parted company with us because we were not democratic enough in outlook for him. He did not explain where our conception of democracy was inadequate. In the course of becoming an academic he adopted the methodology of Althusser's variant of Marxism, which discounts experience, and appeared to us to be about as far from democracy as it is possible to get. But that was before Margaret Thatcher's counter-revolution. A few years ago he explained in introductory remarks to a book that he now holds the outlook of liberal universalism (or words to that effect). Liberal universalism, insofar as it is not merely contemplative, has the functional form of Thatcherism.

Professor Girvin is more restrained than Harris in his condemnation of Haughey:

"It is Haughey's nationalism that is the key to understanding his place in Irish history. His most creative use of it was his decision to endorse a social partnership when Fianna Fail was returned as a minority government in 1987. Fianna Fail quickly adopted the policy of the previous government, something acknowledged by Alan Dukes... Where Fianna Fail departed from Fine Gael and Labour in 1987 was

to establish a national social partnership with the trade unions and business community to negotiate the modernisation of the Irish economy. Haughey played a key role in building the consensus... He provided the political commitment and muscle to persuade economic interest groups that the State would deliver on its promises if they co-operated.. A wide-ranging consensus was quickly achieved, one that has been maintained to the present and secured the rapid expansion of the Irish economy. This need not have been the case. An Irish version of Thatcherism could have been successfully applied but the cost to national cohesion would have been greater."

In Professor Girvin's liberal internationalist vocabulary, nationalism is a bad thing—one of the baddest. But his condemnation of Haughey's nationalism here is so restrained that readers of the *Independent* may not have understood that it was a condemnation at all.

The description of worker/employer Agreements, sponsored by a Government for purposes of economic development, as an expression of nationalism is not something that would come naturally to a run-of-the-mill academic nowadays, especially when the Celtic Tiger is its offspring. And an intellectual to whom it does come naturally must have it in mind that it is a form of fascism. It is one of the basic institutions of the corporate state, and it served as a hallmark of fascism for a couple of generations of liberal universalists.

Thirty years ago attempts were made by Ted Heath and Harold Wilson to set up arrangements of that kind for the British economy. Mrs. Thatcher raised the banner of revolt and saved free-market capitalism. And, by making an issue of the corporate state aspect of it, she was supported by elements of the Labour Left and the Communist Party who knew that corporate institutions which included both employers and workers were fascist.

Haughey did not merely "endorse" the social partnership. He established it in collaboration with Phil Flynn, an entrepreneurial Provo Trade Union leader.

Dublin 4 has been groping for ways of characterising Haughey as a fascist, but is disabled by its very limited understanding of the world. And Professor Girvin, who lives in a different dimension, refrains from using the word, though it can hardly have been absent from his mind. Could it be that he remains connected with the world of experience by a residual common-sense, and senses that a strict application of liberal universalist ideology in this matter just wouldn't play?

(A few years ago he described Ireland's entry into the European Union as an escape from stultifying Protectionism into liberating Free Trade. Jack Lane pointed out that for the basic Irish industry,

agriculture, it was the other way about. Prior to the EU, Irish agriculture was a Third World supplier of raw produce to the British free trade area. On entering the EU it gained for the first time the benefits of a protected market, and began to diversify and flourish.)

Girvin commends Haughey for his hard work and intelligence in his early ministerial career, but "*there is considerably more ambiguity in respect of the Arms Crisis and his tenure as leader of Fianna Fail... These will remain tentative until historians can provide a nuanced assessment of his role in these events*".

It is probably the necessary ideology of an academic that rigorous and dispassionate investigation by historians determine how political figures are regarded. Experience leads to the contrary view—that academic historians fall into line with the accomplished facts of politics. What Girvin really means is that prudent historians should wait and see how Haughey's reputation settles down before committing themselves. But he tries a tentative assessment:

"Haughey might have liked to be compared to his father-in-law Sean Lemass. Yet Lemass was a more pragmatic figure than his son-in-law. This is surprising as Haughey served in the Fianna Fail Committee, chaired by Lemass in 1955, which produced a path-breaking reassessment of Northern Ireland policy. Predictably, de Valera vetoed this innovative move, but unfortunately Haughey did not pursue Lemass's strategy. Instead he adopted a most intransigent position in respect of Ulster Unionism and Northern Ireland. One of the consequences of this is that Fianna Fail became deeply divided over the issue, with more moderate elements being silenced or expelled during his leadership."

Girvin does not mention what the "*Northern Ireland policy*" was that Haughey rejected. It is evident that in the crisis of 1969 the Government had no policy. Or it found that what it thought was a policy had no bearing on political events because it was not grounded on an understanding of what Northern Ireland was as a Constitutional entity. Lemass's heritage was a set of illusions which he had concocted with Capt. O'Neill.

De Valera had a policy: to let Northern Ireland be, without giving up the ideal of unification, and to make the South independent. Lords Craigavon and Brookeborough in the North also had a policy: to minimise political activity in "*the Northern Ireland state*" because it was not a state and there was no possibility in it of evolutionary political life.

Lemass and O'Neill rejected these approaches, and by doing so caused the explosion from which everything else has followed. (Lemass did not reap this

harvest: his policies having been continued under Lynch and his Cabinet, including Haughey, until the backlash blasted them out of the water.)

Lemass pressed the Nationalist Party to take on the role of Official Opposition at Stormont, and that was the beginning of the end. The Nationalists knew in their bones that it was nonsense, but evidently Lemass did not.

Girvin do not say what Haughey's "*most intransigent position in respect of Ulster Unionism and Northern Ireland*" after 1969 consisted of. In fact, he said very little when others were saying a lot. And the little he said was that Northern Ireland was not a viable political entity. We would have thought that was an indisputable statement of fact, amply borne out by events.

Lemass took it to be a viable political entity and obliged the Nationalist Party to participate in his illusion. "*Pragmatism*" is hardly the right name for that. The thing about pragmatism is supposed to be that it works. The thing about Northern Ireland is that it did not work, and if one applied a realistic idea of democracy to it the reason it did not work soon became evident. It was a semi-detached fragment of a democratic state excluded from the political life of its state, and its own semblance of political life was in essence only a referendum on which state it should belong to—but a referendum whose condition was that the Protestant two-thirds should rule the Catholic third in what was basically a police operation.

There was no material for political development in the devolved administration. The matters which were the substance of political development elsewhere were "*reserved*" matters in Northern Ireland—they were dealt with by British democracy through party conflicts from which the Northern Ireland was excluded, and the outcomes were applied administratively in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland election-referendums always decided to retain this bizarre mode of attachment to Britain. Then after the election there was really nothing more to be done but wait for the next election. But Lemass, the "*pragmatist*", couldn't see that pragmatic fact, and he forced the Nationalist Party to play a make-believe game of Government and Opposition at Stormont. And the pragmatic effect was to blow away the Constitutional fig-leaf which the preceding generation had kept in place by inaction.

We cannot say whether Haughey saw before 1969 what Northern Ireland was, but he described it soon after as a failed political entity. Naturally we agreed since it was the view we had come to. As far as we recall Haughey did not formulate a policy for the failed entity. We did. We advocated doing away with Northern

## "Tough Love" And Joint Stewardship—An empty threat, or is Hain serious?

Back in April, Secretary of State Peter Hain laid things on the line for the Northern Ireland parties in astonishingly blunt terms. The current impasse on the political arrangements was to be met with a determined "tough love" strategy.

In the *Guardian* of 6th April, Hain noted:

"Currently, I and four Ministers from Westminster take all the decisions. The people of Northern Ireland can approve or disapprove, but cannot hold us directly to account...."

"It would be ludicrous to again elect politicians who won't do their jobs to an Assembly that doesn't exist... Members of the Assembly now being paid salaries and allowances—amounting to £85,000 per year—will lose them. ... So, if local politicians will not do their jobs, British direct-rule Ministers will work with our counterparts in Dublin on common sense North South Partnerships: practical co-operation on policing, tackling child offenders, establishing a single energy market and a common mobile phone tariff. I and my Ministerial team will drive forward reforms to abolish the 11+ and open educational opportunity for all. We will cut the number of Councils from 26 to 7 and public bodies from 154 to 75. We will introduce water charges and raise household rates to British levels.

"If locally elected politicians don't like all this, the solution lies in their hands: taking their places at Stormont and, for the first time in three years, earning their salaries by exercising self government."

I don't remember a Secretary of State speak in as unrestrained a manner, but does he mean it? The Northern Ireland Office "tough love" strategy is based on the notion that, if the "Northern Ireland parties" do not consent to the restoration of the Executive by November 24th they'll get "joint stewardship" between the British and Irish Governments.

Since then, Hain and his team have had to act to save the Education Order from almost certain defeat in the House of Lords. The prospects of a defeat were enhanced by the decision of Liberal Democrats peers—on the basis of "democracy"—to oppose the end of selective education. Can anyone remember the last time the House of Lords defeated a Northern Ireland Order? In order to buy off the Liberals, the central part of the Education Order, the end of academic selection (the "11+"), has been temporarily shelved as an issue which could be determined by a Northern Ireland Executive. In essence: 'Set up the Executive by November 24th' and the end

of the '11+' will be yours to determine. Otherwise, the '11+' will go on the 24th November.

It has been hinted too that the Review of Public Administration, and the 7 Council model, can be up for grabs if the Executive is restored. None of these carrots appears to be working, as the oddly titled Stormont committee *The Restoration of Devolution Committee* is currently bogged down in procedural wrangling, with the DUP doing most of the bogging down.

The DUP does not consider the threat of joint stewardship to be a credible one. Content with the focus of life at Westminster, and content for Jim Allister to describe Blair as a "lame duck", there appears no good reason for the DUP to make rash moves. And who could blame them?

Gordon Brown's visit to Belfast on 20th June—as part of a pre-Prime-Ministerial tour of the Kingdom pledged at the last Labour Party conference—was used to reinforce the 24th November deadline. The Rev. Paisley however took Mr Brown to be a Scot who would "go the second mile" for Protestant Ulster—a son of the manse prepared to provide the "Fair Deal" for Ulster pledged by the DUP.

"I think we can take some comfort from the fact that perhaps the next Prime Minister will go the second mile with us... The second mile, in my view, is let's be fair to Northern Ireland... He is a Scotsman and knows more about the real differences that do exist in Northern Ireland" (Belfast Telegraph, 20 June).

No sign there of Rev. Paisley being overwrought about joint stewardship.

Former Policing Board Vice Chair, Denis Bradley, recently noted in his *Irish News* column that, if civil servants within the British Irish intergovernmental secretariat busy were drawing up papers and schemes to "fill out" joint stewardship, then leaks would be rife and there would be plenty of rooftop noise from the DUP.

Joint stewardship looks like something which will only start to be considered around the 25th November—if, of course, the 24 November deadline hasn't shifted. Our assessment for some time has been that Plan "B" should consist of deeper British and Irish collaboration in government, with enhanced local; government being the most stable means of "moving things on". But there is, as yet, barely a sketchy notion of a Plan "B" in the heads of either the British or Irish Governments.

Mark Langhammer

## Editorial Commentary July 2006

UUP leader *Sir Reg Empey* has been deluged with criticism for bringing David Ervine of the Progressive Unionist Party, and by extension the Ulster Volunteer Force, into the Ulster Unionist Party fold in the Stormont 'assembly'. The UVF is not on Ceasefire and has not decommissioned. The aim of David Trimble's successor was to increase by one the Ministries held by the UUP in any revived power-sharing Executive under the Good Friday Agreement. The extra Ministry would be taken from Sinn Fein, an added bonus. Without such a manoeuvre the d'Hondt system would give 6 Unionist Ministers to 5 Nationalist (IN 15.6.06). All this is theoretical, as the Executive may not be re-established on 24th November, Hain's deadline.

Subsequently a Special Branch 'asset' was shot and nearly killed by his UVF colleagues, increasing the pressure on Empey. *Mark Haddock*—facing criminal charges—was about to reveal details of past UVF operations. Roy Garland of the PUP commented on the shooting: "*Mount Vernon UVF is literally out of control albeit with elements controlled by Special Branch*" (IN 5.6.06; implicit here is that the Special Branch was complicit in the crime).

UUP defections followed. Peter Bowles, a former Chairman of the Young Unionists, said: "*The Ulster Unionists used to be the party of law and order and now it is linked to the UVF*" (IN 12.6.06). Bowles was followed into the small Conservative Party group by Philip Smith, a former Ards Councillor; Tim Lewis, a "prominent businessman"; and Grant Dillon, ex-Mayor of Castlereagh. *Liam Fox*, Shadow Tory Defence Secretary, held a Belfast press conference to announce these accessions (at which Jeffrey Peel, the local Vice-Chairman, claimed that "*we are the only party that has real influence at Westminster*" (IN 13.6.06). Lady Sylvia Hermon, the sole UUP MP (and wife of the former police chief), has also publicly objected to the alliance with the PUP.

Unionism is angered because Empey's move lays bare the sectarian grounds for refusing to share power with Sinn Fein in the past. It is Fenianism, not paramilitarism, which is objected to—but that could be camouflaged under a heavy 'law and order' overlay up to now. That is why the Democratic Unionist Party has been as vitriolic as elements within the UUP. Peter Weir, the 'baby barrister' who defected to the DUP in protest about Trimble's alleged 'softness' towards Sinn Fein, declared that:

"For the UUP to take on board a member whose party represents the UVF, a group not even on ceasefire, which deals in murder and prostitution in loyalist districts is "assisted suicide" for the UUP" (as summarised by Brian Feeney, IN 17.5.06).

Commentator Brian Feeney, formerly of the SDLP, has been scathing about the UUP/PUP alliance, but on different grounds. He accuses the PUP of succumbing to pan-Unionism at the expense of socialism:

"...it's a return to basics. Unionism used to be a tribal all-class alliance.

...Ervine can emit all the vapour he likes... but he will not get a single motion through the group. The UUP has captured him and his party..." (IN 17.5.06).

On the other hand, Mitchel McLaughlin, Sinn Fein General Secretary, is bitter about the double-standards now made explicit:

"The UUP repeatedly brought down the political institutions on the issue of IRA decommissioning.

"Yet, in an attempt to obtain an extra minister in a new Assembly, they are seeking to have the PUP leader join their Stormont group when the UVF has refused outright to decommission and continues to engage in violence.

"[This]... underlined unionist ambivalence towards loyalist violence in the starkest terms possible.

"The double standards of the UUP are breathtaking" (IN 15.6.06).

Fighting for survival for himself and his Party, Sir Reg Empey has argued on two flanks, neither of which will please traditional unionism. First of all he suggests that mainstream Unionism bears some responsibility for the continuing existence of Loyalist paramilitarism. In an interview in the *Irish News*, Empey was asked: "You defended the PUP deal by saying that throughout the Troubles mainstream unionism had 'used' loyalists. What did you mean?" The Unionist leader responded:

"Well what I meant was exactly that. If you get up in the Ulster Hall and if you wear paramilitary headdress and stand at the table and call for mobilisation, and say that structures have been created, and that 'this will lead to a show of strength', what do you think an impressionable young person at the back of that hall would deduce you were saying?

"If you appear on the streets, again with paramilitary headdress, and are accompanied by people in combat jackets carrying swagger sticks, what does that look like to somebody standing in the crowd?

"If you are being seen to inspect rows of men who are masked and are wearing Parker [sic] jackets in a field somewhere and using that to try and strengthen your case against the government, that's what

I mean by 'using paramilitaries'.

"If you bring them into your house, and ask them to block roads in enforcement of a strike, what is that?

"Now, while primarily it's no secret that I believe Ian Paisley has a very large responsibility for that, I would have to say, even our own party in those days was less condemnatory than it ought to have been.

"Now because we didn't get involved and wear combat jackets and do all that sort of thing doesn't entirely absolve people of responsibility. So while our responsibility may be less than his, I don't think it is something you can cast aside..." (IN 12.6.06; Empey went on to point out that the UUP had a 14-year voting alliance with the PUP on Belfast City Council and had sustained its Hugh Smyth as Mayor).

In this interview Empey stresses the DUP's involvement with paramilitarism. Elsewhere (IN 27.5.06) he has 'regretted' his own involvement in Vanguard, the resistance movement created by Bill Craig (in which David Trimble was also active). (It will be recalled that the present UUP is a rejectionist split-off from Brian Faulkner's Official Unionist Party, which signed the Sunningdale Agreement for weighted majority power-sharing. And Ian Paisley's present platform ostensibly amounts to a return to Sunningdale power-sharing (but without the Council of Ireland), which he vehemently opposed in 1974.)

Unionism's culpability did not end in 1974. There can be no doubt that loyalism would have embraced the GFA, had it not been given a 'steer' otherwise by the politicians.

Empey did not mention that mainstream Unionist politicians set the modern UVF going and ordered a bombing campaign in the mid-1960s, at a time when the pre-split IRA was militarily insignificant and under the influence of Cathal Goulding and Roy Johnson. The Unionist object was to bring down Terence O'Neill who was obliging his Ministers to cooperate with their Irish counter-parts in all-Ireland initiatives of a minor nature. The militarist backlash gathered force as the Catholic civil rights movement became militant. Ian Paisley was a more marginal figure in those days, though the Protestant Volunteers he inspired did cooperate with UVF military actions. Loyalist militarism was brought into being by Unionist politicians, who continued to guide and direct it from a shadowy distance. (The IRA and Sinn Fein always had a quite different relationship.)

The first plank of Empey's defence is therefore to point out that Unionism itself did not have clean hands as far as paramilitarism was concerned, and was therefore in no position to criticise his alliance with David Ervine. The second

is to assume the consequent responsibility for politicians to lead loyalism back into constitutional paths by providing political outlets.

A sign of the direction in which Empey is attempting to lead is the election of the first SDLP Mayor of Larne, Danny O'Connor. The Deputy Mayor is Mark Dunn of the UUP. Power-sharing was agreed last year. It is very much a token exercise as the SDLP has 2 Councillors out of 15. Accompanying these initiatives has been a sharp decline in sectarian attacks on Catholic homes in the area (IN 13.6.06).

**'Devolution' Committee:** Peter Hain has established this sub-committee of the 'assembly'. Sinn Fein is not boycotting the Assembly: it just refuses to participate in its pointless debates. The SDLP has been attending debates. Both parties are attending the 14-member, oddly-titled *Preparation For Government Committee*, colloquially known as the 'Devolution Committee'. The NI Secretary undertook a delicate balancing act in establishing it: hence the title which attempts to reconcile two opposing positions: the SDLP refused to participate in it unless the remit included negotiating the return of the GFA Executive and Assembly, while the DUP insisted that it would only be dealing with Government on this issue. The form of words allows each side to claim a victory. When the Committee could not agree a Chair, Hain issued an *Order* appointing two Deputy Speakers from the Assembly, Jim Wells (DUP) and Francie Molloy (SF), but as "impartial deputy presiding officers and not as party representatives" (Hain, IN, 13.6.06).

A NIO Press Release sets out that the task of the Committee is "to scope the work which, in the view of the parties, needs to be done in preparation for government". It "may choose to develop this remit by consensus over time or to establish sub-groups to address particular issues".

Tom Kelly, the SDLP-inclined commentator, agreed "110%" with the Gerry Adams approach of keeping Sinn Fein from participating in the assembly (*SDLP Seems Too Eager For Government Scraps* (IN 15.5.06). He is scathing about the Devolution Committee:

"A 'business committee' outside of a functioning executive, which has its agenda set, guests invited and venue set by the secretary of state is a feudal if not imperial form of governance" (IN 15.5.06).

Michelle Gildernew (SF MLA) states that she sat through three days of Devolution Committee proceedings "and

it was clear not just to me but to everyone else around the table that the DUP had no interest in progress". That Party is "anti-agreement" and wants "a shadow assembly with no power" (letter, IN 13.6.06).

Sean Farren (SDLP) has said that the DUP is setting 12 pre-conditions for restoration of the Power-sharing institutions, which makes SDLP eagerness to participate in the assembly all the more puzzling.

'Assembly': Robert McCartney complained to Speaker Eileen Bell that the media was calling the new body "the Assembly", which was confusing the public:

"You, madam speaker will be aware that this is not the Assembly to which members were elected in 2003.

"It is simply a body to which the members then elected have been invited by the Secretary of State to attend."

Bell replied:

"...this is 'the assembly'.

"Under the act it is not the Northern Ireland Assembly and won't be the Northern Ireland Assembly until we restore full devolution...

"Everything in here, all matters of business are at the direction of the secretary of state..." (IN 16 & 17.5.06). The confusion is of course intentional.

Brian Feeney wrote that in this—

"virtual assembly... the SDLP... appear intending to provide credibility... Do they not realise it is a lollipop for unionists who love any flummery which makes them believe they've got a parliament... They love having a speaker. They love playing at all this nonsense of 'Will my honourable friend agree with me...'

"Yet the SDLP, after first saying they wouldn't, have now decided to cooperate with the British administration to act as bit players while unionists preen themselves...

"...during the so-called debate on the economy... [the] DUP and UUP... simply ignored the SDLP whose members forlornly pleaded to be taken seriously..." (IN 24.5.06).

**Libya** made its peace with US/UK a couple of years ago. As part of the deal Col. Gadaffi gave some low-level information about Iran's civil nuclear programme which caused that country some embarrassment. He also paid over a munificent bribe to the families of Lockerbie victims, even though Libya was probably not responsible for the bomb which destroyed the plane. Now 160 victims of the IRA campaign have filed an unlikely suit against Libya in America, alleging they were damaged by Libyan subsidy and arms shipments to the IRA in the 1970s and 1980s. As in the *Omagh Bombs* civil case brought by

relatives, the leading lawyer is Ulster solicitor, Jason McCue of the London-based *H20*. This kind of civil action appears to swallow up huge sums of money in costs. In the first instance the Omagh relatives raised funds through a UK-wide newspaper publicity drive. When that was insufficient, Lord Chancellor Lord Falconer committed £800,000 of taxpayers' money under the *Access To Justice Order 2006*.

At the same time alleged Real IRA member Michael McKevitt, one of those the relatives accuse of complicity in the Omagh bombing, curiously had his legal aid to defend himself withdrawn after he was jailed on unrelated Real IRA charges (on doctored evidence, but that is another story). McKevitt brought a legal challenge in the NI High Court to the committal of public funds to a private legal action and was upheld in August 2005. But the Lord Chancellor is not to seek repayment of the £400,000 already paid to McCue's firm and says he will seek legal ways of continuing to subsidise the case (see IT and IN 10.9.06).

All this money is being wasted. The insurmountable problem for Omagh relations is that *agents provocateurs* were involved in the Omagh Bombing—which is why no criminal prosecution has yet been brought and why the Government is sponsoring the soft option of a civil case in which the standard of evidence would be lower. The defence is likely to bring out this fact in any court hearing. As for the Libyan action, whoever is funding that, it will not suit UK/US to have its deal with Libya unravel by encouraging extra demands.

**Richard Monteith** (48) of Dromore Road, Lurgan, has been accused of common assault by his estranged wife. He was defended by former DUP representative Alan Kane. The case continues. A lawyer himself, the defendant won a libel suit against Sean McPhilemy for allegations in his book, *The Committee*. In recent years Monteith has represented Orangemen seeking to march on the Garvaghy Road before the Parades Commission and acted for defendants in the Robert Hamill and James Morgan killings (IN 5.5.06).

**Round-up:** On appeal Peter Hain has obtained a reversal of a previous legal decision against his appointments to the *Parades Commission*. Hain argued there was no necessity to have nationalist objectors to parades represented on the Commission, nor was there any need that the Commission be representative (IN 25.5.06, 10.6.06). Objectors may bring a further appeal to the House of Lords.

The **Organised Crime Task Force** has leaked the fact that it will report to the International Monitoring Commission that "*The IRA is moving away from organised crime*" (it 19.6.06).

Allegations by the *Sunday World* that **Martin McGuinness** was a British spy code-named *J118* were rejected by Sinn Fein as a further attempt to disrupt the Peace Process. The *Sunday Times* had previously refused to publish the Martin Ingram claim as unfounded. The story was then picked up by another of Sir Anthony O'Reilly's papers, the *Sunday Tribune*, which claimed that McGuinness's codename was *The Fisherman* (IN 29.5.06, 4.6.06).

**Ulster Television** is to drop the word *Ulster* from its "*brand identity*" and is to be known as *UTV* with the U not being the initial of Ulster (IN 27.5.06).

*Willie O'Dea*, Irish Defence Minister, has denied the claim of Labour Defence Spokesman *Joe Costello* that *Irish troops* are illegally serving in Kosovo. Present legislation allows participation only in actions in which the UN is involved; O'Dea says that new legislation will phrase this provision more loosely, but still maintain a triple lock on defence missions abroad (IN 12.6.06).

**Labour News**, Labour's official newsletter, now describes itself as the paper "*of the Labour Party in Ireland*".

The death has occurred of **Fr. Faul**, notable for campaigning on prisoners' rights. An *Irish Times* editorial criticised his opposition to integrated education (23.6.06).

## Bilderberg

This purports to be a guestlist from Ireland for the current meeting of the Bilderberg Group:

Dermot Gleeson of AIB,  
Denis O'Brien of  
Communications Group &  
Peter Suderland of Goldman  
Sachs.

But was this a comprehensive list?

For Irish attendees See pages 4 5 & 6 in: <http://www.prisonplanet.com/articles/june2006/110606Attendees.htm>

TO'S

# Shorts

from

## the *Long Fellow*

### THE IRAQ SHAMBLES

The distinguished journalist Robert Fisk summed up the situation in Iraq following the elections: Iran has increased its influence in Baghdad. That has been the effect of the invasion of Iraq.

In 1979 Iraq was a bulwark against fundamentalist values following the Iranian revolution. The regime of Sadaam Hussein remained secular and sympathetic to the West. Having fought a war against Iran, Iraq was manoeuvred into a war against the West in 1991. It is difficult to know why the US adopted such a policy. The only conclusion I can come to is that a strong independent state in the Middle East, even one sympathetic to the West, is unacceptable to the US.

On this basis it could be said that the invasion has not been a complete failure from the US point of view. It has succeeded in smashing the Iraqi State. And, as in Afghanistan, no amount of heart-warming pictures of people voting at the polls can hide that fact. In a country without a state, democracy is meaningless. The problem for the US is that it is not the only country exercising influence in the political vacuum following the fall of Sadaam Hussein, which explains why the US has its sights on Iran.

### SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

It was sad to see Montenegro vote by a narrow majority to secede from its Serbian brothers. Sad but understandable given the military onslaught which Serbia has suffered.

The dominant personality in post-World War II Yugoslavia was Joseph Bros Tito. Tito was a Croat whose political base was in Montenegro and became the leader of a communist state with its capital in the Serbian city of Belgrade. In the heady days following the victory of communism in Eastern Europe it was thought that nationalism could be consigned to the dustbin of history. For a brief period it looked like Joseph Stalin's successor might come from outside the Soviet Union and that the Soviet Union would merge with the other communist countries in Eastern Europe. The most likely candidates to succeed Stalin were Tito and the Bulgarian, Georgi Dimitrov, who was then the leader of the communist international. But it was not to be. In 1948 Yugoslavia and China split from the Soviet Union and Stalin's successors in 1953 were some mediocre leaders from the Ukraine such as Khrushchev and then Brezhnev.

### AMERICAN CHARITY

But not everyone was saddened by the final dismemberment of Yugoslavia. Wexford woman Claire O'Riordan was "ecstatic" at the result of the narrow majority in favour of secession from Serbia (*Sunday Tribune*, 28.5.06). O Riordan works for the American "not for profit" organisation ORT (Organisation for Educational Resources and Technological Training). She is:

"...in charge of the Montenegro Advocacy programme that strives to change laws and impact on public policy."

That's the way she is described in the *Sunday Tribune*. Another description would be that she is a political activist in the pay of American imperialism.

### FRENCH POLITICS

It used to be said of French politics that between De Gaulle and the Communist Party there was nothing. Mitterrand changed all that in the 1980s by implementing the Communist Party's economic programme but developing an independent foreign policy, which was not entirely to the liking of either the Soviet Union or the US.

But Mitterrand's successors have not the same substance. Ten years after the Socialist President's death it might be wondered whether there is anything now between Nicholas Sarkozy and the Communist Party. Much has been made of the socialist candidature of the beautiful Segolene Royal. The opinion polls show her leading the neo-liberal Sarkozy, but opinion polls at this stage are meaningless. In France there is often a very dramatic change in voters' preferences as polling day draws near. Most people don't think seriously about politics until they are called to vote.

In recent months Royal has made pronouncements questioning the 35 hour week and calling for greater security in the suburbs. Some observers have suggested that if such policies are right, why not vote for the person who has been advocating them for years: Nicholas Sarkozy?

### IRELAND'S MITTERRAND?

It might seem too fanciful to suggest that De Valera was Ireland's De Gaulle and Haughey was its Mitterrand. But there are parallels.

Mitterrand, like his friend Haughey, had his scandals including the tapping of a *Le Monde* journalist's phone which the French President never denied—indeed justified on the grounds that the journalist's revelations were undermining French foreign policy. Both Haughey and Mitterrand have left an enduring political legacy. Mitterrand strayed far from his conservative political roots in adopting communist economic policies during the 1970s. The socialist leader Guy Mollet was dismissive of this change suggesting that Mitterrand

had "learned a new language"; to which the latter replied: "you must admit I speak it rather well".

The "Gregory deal" gave a hint as to what Haughey was capable of. It was a pity that the Labour Party could not overcome its infantile moralising and make a deal with Haughey to implement a socialist programme for the country. Of course, Haughey could have done to the Labour Party what Mitterrand did to the Communist Party: destroy it by moving his party to the left.

### HAS THE IRISH TIMES CHANGED?

The *Irish Times* coverage of Haughey's death was no worse than other newspapers. Ed Moloney had a reasonable article on Haughey's contribution to the peace process (the usual rubbish about the "Arms Trial" not withstanding). Last month the *Irish Political Review* suggested that the newspaper had been forced to "*reculer pour mieux sauter*". Kevin Myers has departed and there have been suggestions by Myers himself that it was not just about pay. Could the inability of the Governors of *The Irish Times Trust Limited* to deal with any of the questions that the *Irish Political Review* put to them in personal letters be an indication of vulnerability?

We are not the only ones to notice a change. The *Dubliner* magazine had an article by the excellent Harry Browne asking: "has *The Irish Times* moved to the right?" But, with all due respect to Browne, the real question about *The Irish Times* is: "why has it never been a straightforward bourgeois newspaper?" The answer is that it has always been the newspaper of the decadent Anglo-Irish class. Its role since independence has been to denigrate all national developments. It has never hesitated to castigate national leaders, such as de Valera and Haughey, with an aptitude for building on independent developments since the War of Independence. It has used Northern unionists as an alibi for its opposition to non-British developments. But it has never had a wide readership within that community.

The stray lefties that it employs have been useful to the newspaper in its task of giving the society a bad conscience about itself.

Fintan O'Toole in a discussion programme on Newstalk 106 described Haughey as being part of an "*organised criminal conspiracy*". He suggested that the grief that many people felt at the death of Haughey was a sign of the country's immaturity.

If *The Irish Times* is not merely running for cover but developing on normal bourgeois lines, I can only welcome that development. We will have to wait and see. One suspects that, if there is substance to the change, the 'stray lefties' after a few faltering starts will have no difficulty learning the new tricks.

## What If A Patriot Priest Has Been Traduced? In Defence Of Father O'Flanagan

Diarmuid Ferriter's latest offering—*What If? Alternative Views of Twentieth-Century Ireland*—has met with mixed reviews. But at least it can be said to be a relatively harmless book insofar as it is quite explicitly an exercise in counter-factual historical speculation. It is quite a different matter, however, when facts are stood on their head in what is presented to readers as actual history. It is in his much-acclaimed book *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (2004) that Ferriter champions the falsehoods of others, going out of his way to praise Peter Hart for "valiantly" questioning—

"the unchallenged accounts of such events as Tom Barry's Kilmichael ambush... In Hart's view it was a brave ambush that ultimately became a cowardly massacre which involved the deliberate killing of already surrendered soldiers" (p227).

There is no need here to repeat for *Irish Political Review* readers the total demolition of such Hart falsehoods—so beloved of Ferriter—that has been systematically accomplished by Tom Barry's biographer, Meda Ryan, supported by *IPR* correspondents themselves, as well as by *Indymedia*. What I am concerned with in this article is Ferriter's own creation of a completely new falsehood based on the misuse of a Bureau of Military History Witness Statement.

Meda Ryan has, of course, chronicled Tom Barry's own objections to the approach adopted by the BMH in compiling such statements. In my view, Barry went over the top in his complete opposition to the whole exercise. Without the BMH Seán Moylan might never have been persuaded to produce his own powerful memoir of the War of Independence, since published by the Aubane Historical Society. Nonetheless, no BMH Witness Statement should ever be swallowed unquestioningly without first being compared with alternative accounts of the same events contained in other Witness Statements, as well as with all other available sources.

It is indeed to the credit of the BMH that it placed on file, at his own request, a Witness Statement from Commandant General Tom Barry himself (WS 1743) that consists of little more than a declaration of why he was in fact refusing to submit any such statement! Barry argued: "There will be no records until a quarter of a century at least has elapsed. Any individual is entitled to make any claim he likes and defame any officers he likes..."

Or defame anybody else for that matter. It is indeed a bitter irony that the first such statement to have its inaccuracies distorted into character assassination by Ferriter is that of the General's own wife (WS 1754). Ferriter writes:

"Mrs. Tom Barry's statement to the BMH recorded that at the time of the Rising in 1916, Fr. O'Flanagan... relented and agreed to travel across town to assist with the injured. Barry was disgusted that when she and O'Flanagan were on their way to the GPO and they passed a drunken tramp who had been shot, 'the priest did not stop for him', but did give absolution to another wounded man. 'You see the difference', she wrote, 'here he knew a man who was respectable'... (and she said to the priest) ... 'Isn't it extraordinary you did not kneel beside the other man?'..."

Checking out the Witness Statement itself, we find that coming to terms with her first violent death had been an understandably unnerving experience for Mrs. Barry (née Leslie Price). On Easter Wednesday she had been with the Army of the Irish Republic in occupation of the Hibernian Bank on O'Connell Street when Captain Thomas Weafer was shot in the stomach and she had been particularly upset on having to leave his body behind when forced to evacuate that building. She further recounted that next day, Thursday "at 4pm", Tom Clarke said to her in the GPO: "You are to cross O'Connell Street to the (Pro-Cathedral) Presbytery and get a priest". (And this from the one Rising leader who would himself adamantly refuse to have any dealings with a priest at the time of his own execution!). Mrs. Barry further elaborated: "He had the intention of bringing a priest in and keeping him on the premises".

When she was received in the Presbytery, the priest said to her: "You are not going to the Post Office. You are staying here. No one will go into the Post Office. Let these people be burned to death! They are murderers". Mrs. Barry observed: "I knew then, by some other remark Fr. O'Flanagan made, that it was the linking up with the Citizen Army he did not like". But her response to him was: "If no priest is going to the Post Office, I am going back alone. I feel sure that every man in the Post Office is prepared to die, to meet his God, but it is a great consolation to a dying man to have a priest near him". Mrs. Barry concluded that her defiant statement must have had some effect, as the priest replied: "Very well! I will go".

Mrs. Barry recounted that on their way to the GPO they came across a man in Moore Street,

"who had been shot and was dying on the road, but he had drink taken. The priest did not stop for him. I was horrified. Further down Moore Street ... a white-haired man was shot but not dead. He was lying, bleeding, on the kerb ... It was (Irish Volunteer officer) Eimear O'Duffy's father or grandfather. He was an old man. I remember the priest knelt down and gave him Absolution. You see the difference: here he knew a man who was respectable". When they got to the GPO, "Tom Clarke... said on no account was he (the priest) to be let out of the Post Office".

However, that same Pro-Cathedral priest, Fr. Flanagan himself, has provided us with a somewhat different account:

"My first visit to the GPO was paid on Monday night at nine o'clock in a response to a request from Patrick Pearse... and I was there engaged hearing confessions until half past eleven. During the ensuing two days I attended several men shot in the streets. The military began to close in, on Tuesday evening, and machine-gun and rifle fire made it unsafe to be about". On Wednesday morning, "immediately after Mass, while on my way to attend two boys shot at 6 Lr. Malboro Street, I had some difficulty persuading a crowd of people that I would be safer alone, and they would be safer at home... Subsequently I got down to Jervis Street (Hospital) and with several other priests had a busy day attending the wounded..."

It was on Thursday morning that Mrs. Tom Barry was to call to the Pro-Cathedral:

"I admitted a young lady who had come from the GPO with an urgent request for a priest to attend a dying Volunteer. It did not seem a very responsible request, considering the way from the Post Office to Jervis Street Hospital was comparatively safe, and that we had stationed two of our priests there specifically to meet such a contingency. However, I accompanied the messenger back to the GPO by a very circuitous route... We experienced more than one thrill in Malboro Street and while passing by the Parnell Statue. In Moore Street an old friend was shot down just beside me, and I anointed him where he lay. Some brave boys, procuring a handcart, bore him to Jervis Street Hospital where, after a couple of days, he died..."

"On my arrival at the Volunteers' Headquarters, I looked among the wounded for the patient to whom I had been called, and received a hearty welcome from as gay and debonair an army as ever took up arms. They evidently had felt their organisation incomplete without a Chaplain! and I immediately entered on the duties of my new position, which kept me pretty busy all day. My services were also in request

for the soldier prisoners, one of whom was mentally affected by the unexpected events of the week. We had our first serious casualty about one o'clock when James Connolly was brought in with a nasty bullet or shrapnel wound in the leg. He endured what must have been agony in grim fortitude. Soon I had another to anoint, and though we had many minor wounds to attend to, these were the only two serious cases... Friday dawned to the increasing rattle of rifles and machine guns. I succeeded in getting... into a house in Middle Abbey Street where I prepared for death a poor bedridden man whose house soon became his funeral pyre..."

Fr. Flanagan's own account has been republished this year in Keith Jeffrey's book *The GPO And The Easter Rising*. It had first been published in the *Catholic Bulletin* in August 1918 and was consequently available for inspection by Ferriter, had not this professional historian been so prejudicially dismissive of such a source, even though it emerged as the most authentic "paper of record" of the Rising. Flanagan's account has the immediacy of having been written only two years after the event, unlike Mrs. Barry's account four decades later, not to mention the fact that her BMH Witness Statement remained under lock and key for a further half a century—and not just the prospect of a quarter of a century that Tom Barry himself had railed against!

I fully accept Mrs. Barry's account that Fr. Flanagan had initially denounced the Rising as the work of "murderers" and would share her suspicion that he had been particularly prejudiced against Connolly's Irish Citizen Army. He may well have been cut from the same cloth and have shared the same social prejudices as the character of the extremely priggish Fr. O'Connor who is portrayed in James Plunkett's novel of the 1913 Lockout, *Strumpet City*. But Fr. Flanagan had nonetheless been educated by his experiences of Easter Week, and not least by the heroic demeanour of James Connolly.

What Mrs. Barry's statement omitted to reflect on, however, was that on Tom Clarke's instructions she had effectively set out to "kidnap" Flanagan so that he might be compelled to serve as GPO Chaplain, by spinning him a false story in order to exert moral blackmail. When recalling that the priest had hurried past the dying drunk on Moore Street, Mrs. Barry forgot that he was in fact rushing to the GPO in order to attend to the fictitious "dying Rebel" for whom she had summoned him in the first place. True, he had indeed then stopped to attend to a good friend en route, but this was as much in an actual attempt to save his life.

I must confess that before first reading Jeffrey a few weeks ago I had little concern with that Pro-Cathedral priest's reputation until I then realised that there was a wider issue at stake in respect of the uncritical use of BMH Witness Statements. It was something quite different that had initially so infuriated me: Ferriter's abuse of an apparent coincidence of names in Mrs. Barry's statement, and his resulting defamation of an entirely different priest. Ferriter proceeded to put an outrageous spin on the name that Mrs. Tom Barry remembered in error (an error that persistently recurs in her statement) from the moment her narrative reaches the Pro-Cathedral Presbytery and she recounts:

"I was let in by a priest, Father Michael O'Flanagan".

The following is Ferriter's spin (p151):

"The Rising presented the Catholic Church with its own problems, including a fear that it would undermine the bourgeois consensus between constitutional nationalism and the Church's representatives. Mrs. Tom Barry's statement to the BMH recorded that at the time of the Rising in 1916, Fr. Michael O'Flanagan, later vice-President of Sinn Féin, had remarked of the fighters in the General Post Office: 'let these people burn to death, they are murderers'... But Church disapproval was by no means unanimous".

Apart from the *Catholic Bulletin* primary source itself, Keith Jeffrey's book is not, however, the only secondary source that makes it crystal clear that the name of the Pro-Cathedral priest in question was actually Fr. JOHN Flanagan. More than four decades ago, in 1964, Max Caulfield's book *The Easter Rebellion* had already detailed Fr. John's role as "unofficial chaplain to the garrison" in the GPO.

Ferriter's character assassination of Sinn Féin's Father MICHAEL O'Flanagan was as unprofessional as it was unconscionable. In actual fact, among the works cited in Ferriter's own bibliography is Denis Carroll's fine 1993 biography *They Have Fooled You Again—Michael O'Flanagan, Priest, Republican, Social Critic*. Even if there had been another Michael O'Flanagan based in Dublin's Pro-Cathedral—which there wasn't—an elementary check would have established beyond doubt that it could not possibly have been the same Fr. Michael O' Flanagan whom Ferriter sets out to revile, since he had remained a curate based in the Roscommon parish of Crossna right throughout 1916. Moreover, O'Flanagan had never been a "constitutional nationalist"—to quote Ferriter's value-laden term for Home Ruler—but was already a member of Sinn Féin's Executive.

Far from being a priest who could ever have been horrified by the Irish Citizen Army, as Mrs. Tom Barry presumed "her" Fr. Flanagan to have been, the Roscommon priest had already been to the fore in supporting Jim Larkin's Sligo dockworker members when they had gone on strike in 1913.

Indeed, O'Flanagan had been a uniquely perceptive and farsighted Sinn Féin leader, as his biographer Denis Carroll details under the sub-title of "*two nations theory*" (pages 44 to 50). It was O'Flanagan who had argued over the course of a series of articles between June and October 1916:

"The island of Ireland and the national unit of Ireland simply do not coincide... Geography has worked hard to make one nation out of Ireland, history has worked against it... The Unionists of Ulster have never transferred their love and allegiance to Ireland... We claim the right to decide what is to be our nation. We refuse them the same right... After 300 years, England has begun to despair of compelling us to love her by force. And so we are anxious to start where England left off and are going to compel Antrim and Down to love us by force... If anyone wishes to know another's nationality, the ultimate test is: Ask him... The only sense in which I am partitionist is that I claim the right of the people of East Ulster to decide whether they are to throw in their lot with the Irish Nation or not. That there should be any doubt about their doing so is at least as much our fault as it is theirs... We have to come to an agreement with the Ulster Covenanters, even though it be only an agreement to differ. We have to begin to treat them as fellow men. If we go a little further along the road, we may find that after time they will be willing to treat us as fellow countrymen... The Ulster difficulty is Ireland's opportunity. When we solve the Ulster difficulty we shall realise the dream of past generations of Irishmen... When we are in a position to assert that such double interference (of Church in State and vice versa) has not merely ceased but that we have provided against all reasonable possibility of its recrudescence, then we shall stand upon that clear and solid ground... for us to educate and win Ulster".

For uttering such heresies O'Flanagan drew the particular ire of the Hibernian House Home Rule leader, John Dillon, who denounced him as a partitionist. And yet in February 1917 it was to be O'Flanagan, in his native Roscommon, who would drive the first post-Rising nail into the coffin of Dillon's own Party by initiating, organising and masterminding the victorious Plunkett by-election campaign. Southern Unionist alarm was expressed in the *Irish Times* reports that for twelve days O'Flanagan had been "up

and down the constituency, going like a whirlwind and talking in impatient language to people in every village and street, corner and cross-roads", as he proclaimed that it "would be better and easier for young men in Ireland to carry their fathers on their backs to the polls to vote for Plunkett rather than have to serve as conscripts in the trenches in Flanders". A horrified *Irish Times* foresaw that, as a consequence of O'Flanagan's initiative and leadership, Irish democracy was poised to sweep the polls and Dillon's Parliamentary Party "would be swept out of three quarters of their seats in Ireland by the same forces that carried Count Plunkett to victory in north Roscommon, believed to be so peaceful and so free from Sinn Féin and the rebellion taint" (Carroll, pp56-58).

Carroll recounts O'Flanagan's no less significant role during the 1918 General Election campaign itself:

"At a rally in Ballaghaderreen, the home town of John Dillon, O'Flanagan contrasted the record of the Irish Party with that of 'the men of Easter Week who really saved Ireland'. On the one side were those who strove to enlist the young men of Ireland in the British Army. On the other side were the insurgents of 1916 as well as some old Fenians and 'some mad curates with them'. While the leaders of 1916 were dead or in prison, their followers were free. While the leader of the Irish Party and his two sons were very much alive 'his followers (were) dead in the Dardanelles or in Flanders...' The protest of 1916 had ensured that many thousands resisted enlistment... At Gurteen (Sligo)... O'Flanagan rehearsed the supinity of the Irish Party in regard to England's war policy. Although John Dillon, rightly, did not let his sons join the British Army 'it was disgraceful for him to ask other men to send their sons'... It was, he declared, the rising of Easter Week which showed the world that Ireland was not free. Like nestlings, the Irish Party had kept eyes closed and mouths open to take whatever England gave—the worm of Colonial Home Rule... Police reports of the time state no more than the truth: 'He (O'Flanagan) is undoubtedly the only platform speaker of power in the (Sinn Féin) party... and he remains the first apostle of the anti-British faith and no one has laboured more strenuously or effectively against recruiting'..."(pp91-97).

Small wonder, then, that when Cathal Brugha presided over the inaugural meeting of Dáil Éireann in January 1919 and began by calling upon Father O'Flanagan to open the proceedings, he hailed him as "the staunchest priest who ever lived in Ireland"—a fitting riposte to the character assassination of Ferriter's make-belief "history".

**Manus O'Riordan**

## Kazakhstan

Letter to communist supporters in Kazakhstan regarding the death of Michael O'Riordan, Spanish civil war veteran and legendary Irish communist leader, and requesting information.

Dear Comrades

I have been given a set of e-mail addresses of experienced communist journalists in Kazakhstan. I want to open up a channel of communication for exchanging information on matters of mutual interest. I would firstly like to thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Having recently returned from a six week stay in Kazakhstan, my attitude to communism has been radically changed. Before visiting your country I knew very little of Kazakhstan and what little I knew was prejudiced by the typical Western view of the collapse of the Soviet Union. I expected to find a defeated people adapting to the blandishments of Western capitalism. What I found was a culturally vibrant multi-national state, openly proud of its Soviet inheritance, and keenly aware of the corrupting influence of globalist capitalism.

The fate of the people of Kazakhstan is precarious. They must weave their way through a multitude of hostile foreign influences: political pressure from the US Government, economic pressure from Western multi national corporations, the threat of being swamped by the encroaching Chinese economic colossus, pressure from resurgent Russia, and not least the potential threat of disruptive Islamic fundamentalism. But so far the Kazakh political leadership, principally Nursultan Nazarbayev, has adroitly steered a safe course through all of this.

Having enjoyed my time in Kazakhstan and having changed my attitude to communism as a result, it was apt that my first political act on returning to Ireland was to attend the funeral of Michael O'Riordan, a man who was the public face of communism in Ireland for as long a anyone can remember.

Before visiting Kazakhstan I disapproved of Michael's political creed, seeing it as intellectually barren. He believed in the Soviet Union and he toed the line put out by the Soviet leadership. Toeing the line in that manner does not call for great powers of intellectual discernment. I also considered that dogmatic adherence to the Moscow line would have prevented me from becoming fully engaged in Irish politics. I still

believe that but in dismissing the political position of the Irish Communist Party I was missing an important point. Soviet communism remained loyal, to a lesser or greater extent, to a vision of human social development, fundamentally at odds with capitalism. The Soviet Union and communist China were societies dedicated to the fundamental principles of socialism. The degree to which they succeeded in realising socialist principles will always be debateable but compared to their challenge, all other anti-capitalist politics has been minor tinkering. In modern politics which are necessarily international, it is necessary to distinguish between fundamental principles and tactical strategies. I am familiar with the tactical, strategic side of politics. What I had forgotten is the primacy of fundamental principles.

In today's world when the Amerangian axis (the US and Britain) is intent on manipulating the world market in its own favour, when globalisation is meeting little effective resistance, and human existence in the liberal West is being reduced to a set of commercial transactions, one must be clear on the fundamentals. We are now further from achieving a society in which the welfare of people is at the centre of socio-economic activity than sixty years ago. While the Soviet Union was in existence, socialism was developing across a large section of the globe, and reformist social democracy was mildly effective in moderating the effects of capitalism; the survival of the Soviet Union showed that development based on a system other than capitalism was possible. If the Soviet Union was still in existence, new Right monetarist politics would not now be winning all before it in Europe and elsewhere. There may have been circumstances where the interests of the Soviet Union did not correspond with the best interests of socialism, but for the most part they did so correspond. In short Michael O'Riordan was mainly right to toe the Soviet line; he should be respected for basing his political position on fundamental socialist principles; and despite the restriction placed on him through his alignment with Moscow, he still managed to positively influence Irish working class politics.

Strangely enough as I was driving to the funeral I was made aware of the first aspect of society in Kazakhstan that impressed me: the extent of the public transport system. For five weeks I stayed in a city in North East Kazakhstan called Ust Kamenogorsk, a city of over 300,000 people, much smaller than Dublin, in which the most conspicuous aspect of city life was the large number of buses and trams. Dublin in contrast is a transport black spot. The traffic gridlock that goes

on even in the suburbs of Dublin epitomises the madness of capitalism. It is well known that the companies that build roads and sell cars have traditionally donated large sums of money to the main Irish political parties. So, even though there has been a public awareness that Dublin needs a huge improvement in its public transport system, going back at least twenty years, very little has been done to alleviate the problem. Given the scale of the problem the introduction of the two new tram lines represented an improvement in service for only a tiny percentage of the Dublin's population.

Certainly there is a danger when travelling in a foreign country of making judgements on the basis of superficial impressions. That is why I am hoping to find out from you more hard information about Kazakhstan, a state which receives very little attention in Europe but which occupies a strategically important position in current geopolitics. As a traveller one notices small things: when changing money to the local currency there is no commission and the rate of exchange is listed on a sign outside; when buying goods the price is labelled on the item and the price is the price—no haggling even in the outdoor markets; theft of personal belongings is extremely rare.

I also had occasion to use the health service. I had a chest infection. I was treated with antibiotics, vitamins and various herbal remedies like garlic. The infection cleared up quickly and I was not charged. Soviet medicine had its idiosyncrasies but it worked. The traditional Soviet emphasis on good quality education and sport was also much in evidence. The riverside walks and parks in Ust are most impressive. Computer services in the libraries is excellent, an achievement for a city that is only starting to pick itself up from the catastrophe that accompanied the introduction of capitalism.

The facet of Kazakh life that would most impress a Western visitor, however, is the extent of racial harmony. The number of cross-racial friendships and relationships was striking. Together with this mixing of races and nationalities there is also a very noticeable bonhomie or sociable atmosphere. I asked a number of people I came in contact with whether they would ever travel to the capital, Almaty or further afield to places like Moscow and invariably the reply was that they were content to stay in Ust.

The manner in which May Day and May 9th (the end of the Second World War) are celebrated was also an eye opener for me. The Republic of Kazakhstan is now independent of Russia but the Soviet

victory over Nazism is still celebrated in a grand style, red flags and hammers and sickles to beat the band! The heart of the celebrations is always alternating acts from the Russian and Kazakh traditions. Watching these acts and how they were received by audiences I was struck by how the fusion of cultures in Kazakhstan is so much more than the sum of the parts.

There are of course disheartening developments unfolding in Kazakhstan. After the Soviet collapse people were given ownership of the apartments they lived in for small amounts of money. Now the apartments are becoming very expensive. In Almaty an average apartment costs \$100,000. Health care is becoming a commodity. People I spoke to told me that Kazakhstan enjoyed prosperity for a brief period from the sixties until the time of the collapse; after the collapse the economy went into rapid decline; all construction ceased for about ten years.

So, I have started to gather information about Kazakhstan and I can get a lot of it on the Internet. But I will need to supplement this information with accounts from well informed people in Kazakhstan, which is why I hope you can send me material which you think I will find useful.

You may consider me daft for proposing support for the Soviet Union sixteen years after its collapse! But I think the course of events since the collapse has been revealing. The US, Britain and other Western powers have reverted to aggressive imperialism under the banner of the "New World Order". Promises issued by liberal ideologues that the Soviet peoples would quickly enter an era of affluence as soon as free market conditions prevailed, came to nothing. On this point I would be interested to hear the verdict of public opinion in Kazakhstan.

The manner in which the Soviet defeat of Nazism is still celebrated, along with other aspects of the Soviet system, has led me to believe that many people throughout the former Soviet Union feel duped by the West and would welcome a return to socialist policies. Before the Soviet collapse many people were unsure about the socialist case against capitalism; since the collapse, in my opinion, that case has been borne out.

Some of you may never have heard of my country, Ireland. In recent years it has capitulated to the forces of globalist capitalism in a shameful manner and I can tell you about that if you're interested. But there still is a tradition of dissent mainly associated with the republican and socialist movements here. A useful indicator of the standing of socialism in

Ireland was the amount of public notice taken of Michael O'Riordan's death.

Michael's death was a prominent news item and the news bulletins quoted a tribute from the Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, among other tributes. A number of public representatives from the largest political party attended the funeral, as did the current leader and a former leader of the Irish Labour Party. A former Minister in the post Apartheid South African Government, Kadar Asmal, travelled from South Africa for the funeral. Many prominent members of the Irish trade union movement were present and all sections of the Irish Left were represented. Notwithstanding the sadness of the occasion, the funeral had the effect of a unifying socialist event.

So long as the memory of a communist like Michael O'Riordan is honoured, there is hope for the future of politics in Ireland.

Fraternal good wishes

David Alvey

## In Remembrance Of Two 'Fools'

A number of media obituaries have referred to the fact that—while my late father Micheál O'Riordan had been born in 1917 during the first week of Russia's Bolshevik Revolution—he was to survive the formal death of the USSR itself by almost 15 years. But his wife did not. My mother Kay Keohane O'Riordan had died exactly a fortnight short of that New Year's Eve of 1991 when the Red Flag was ceremoniously lowered and banished from Moscow's Kremlin by Boris Yeltsin. My father's response to Yeltsin was to organise his own counter-ceremony by ringing in 1992 with a midnight hoisting of the Red Flag over Dublin's Connolly House. "*Our flag is still red*", was his own New Year's Eve announcement on a radio news feature that otherwise sought to celebrate the burial of Communism.

Just as my father's funeral was of one who remained both a convinced atheist and a convinced Communist to the very end of his life, so my mother's funeral ceremonies had been those of a convinced Christian as well as a convinced Communist. Her favourite poem was *The Fool* by Patrick Pearse. This was her life's credo and—in common with Pearse himself—she accepted and wore the label of "*Fool*" as a badge of honour. It was therefore appropriate that this was the poem that I recited in her memory at her December 1991 funeral service.

While that poem fully reflected my mother's perspective, it could only partially

appeal to my father, in view of its undoubtedly religious inspiration. I vividly recall his excitement therefore, when in January 1992—just a bare month after my mother's death—he came across a rough English translation of a composition by the Cuban Communist songwriter, Silvio Rodríguez, simply entitled *El Necio*.

His excitement was primarily due to the fact that this Spanish title also translates as *The Fool*, while there were also a number of concepts in common with some of those that had been expressed in Pearse's powerful poem of the same name. But there were also some fundamental differences. In this Cuban song Rodríguez refuses to engage with any concept of the divinity of "Our Father", opting instead for the humanist credo of "Our Son". In 1994 my elderly father went on to tramp the streets of Havana before he could find a shop with a recording of the original of that song performed by the composer himself, which he duly brought home and presented to me. I, in turn, worked on my own English translation of *El Necio* and went on to perform it at a tribute concert in my father's honour that was organised by Christy Moore in January 2002.

Down through the years whatever political differences I had with my parents had always been expressed publicly. While my father was General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ireland, during periods when I had been Chairman of the Dublin branch of the British and Irish Communist Organisation in the 1970s and Chairman of the Dublin North-West branch of the Democratic Socialist Party in the 1980s, we each expressed our differences in print and for the record. Precisely because such differences had been placed in the public arena there was no need for them to enter the private domain, so that personal and family bonds remained intact. And for the last decade and a half of my father's life we more and more acted together in respect of issues that we could espouse in common. These included solidarity with Cuba and the struggle against historical revisionism in Ireland—the latter exemplified in particular by my father's journey to Aubane in January 2004 for the launch of *Seán Moylan In His Own Words*, his review of those same Moylan memoirs and its inclusion in the second edition of his own book *Connolly Column*, and completed on his last weekend of public activity in October 2005 by his attendance—accompanied by three other International Brigade veterans of Spain—at the Dublin launch of Meda Ryan's biography, *Tom Barry*.

While both of my parents were lifelong CPI members, they did have a domestic political relationship that was as robust as it was dialectical. My mother's polemics in personal correspondence with Seán

O'Casey with regard to the 1956 Hungarian Rising have been drawn upon in a recent biography of the playwright in order to illustrate what the arguments on that same issue must have been like between O'Casey and his soon-to-be-deceased son Niall, but they just as much mirrored the arguments between my own parents themselves. My parents had indeed been

comrades-in-struggle, but such comradeship represented a complementarity rather than an identity. So, in parallel with his own acknowledgement of my mother's identification with Pearse's perspective on political commitment, my father could now at long last also wholly identify himself with a Cuban Communist "Fool".

**Manus O'Riordan**

## The Fool

by Patrick Pearse

Since the wise men have not spoken, I speak that am only a fool;  
A fool that hath loved his folly,  
Yea, more than the wise men their books or their counting houses,  
Or their quiet homes,  
Or their fame in men's mouths;  
A fool that in all his days hath done never a prudent thing,  
Never hath counted the cost, nor recked if another reaped  
The fruit of his mighty sowing, content to scatter the seed;  
A fool that is unrepentant, and that soon at the end of all  
Shall laugh in his lonely heart as the ripe ears fall to the reaping-hooks  
And the poor are filled that were empty,  
Tho' he go hungry.

I have squandered the splendid years that the Lord God gave to my youth  
In attempting impossible things, deeming them alone worth the toil.  
Was it folly or grace? Not men shall judge me, but God.

I have squandered the splendid years;  
Lord, if I had the years I would squander them over again,  
Aye, fling them from me!  
For this I have heard in my heart, that a man shall scatter, not hoard,  
Shall do the deed of to-day, nor take thought of to-morrow's teen,  
Shall not bargain or huxter with God; or was it a jest of Christ's  
And is this my sin before men, to have taken Him at His word?

The lawyers have sat in council, the men with the keen, long faces,  
And said "This man is a fool", and others have said, "He blasphemeth";  
And the wise have pitied the fool that hath striven to give a life  
In the world of time and space among the bulks of actual things,  
To a dream that was dreamed in the heart, and that only the heart could hold.

O wise men, riddle me this: what if the dream come true?  
What if the dream come true? And if millions unborn shall dwell  
In the house that I shaped in my heart, the noble house of my thoughts?  
Lord, I have staked my soul, I have staked the lives of my kin  
On the truth of Thy dreadful word. Do not remember my failures,  
But remember this my faith.

And so I speak.  
Yea, ere my hot youth pass, I speak to my people and say:  
Ye shall be foolish as I; ye shall scatter, not save;  
Ye shall venture your all, lest ye lose what is more than all;  
Ye shall call for a miracle, taking Christ at His word.  
And for this I will answer, O people, answer here and hereafter,  
O people that I have loved shall we not answer together?

## *El Necio*—The Fool

by Silvio Rodríguez

as translated from the Spanish by Manus O'Riordan

So as not to smash my icon into pieces so fine  
To grant me salvation as some oddity or loner  
To trade me a place on Parnassus sublime  
With, as added inducement, on their altars a corner

They come and invite me to become their prize penitent  
To surrender as loser to the masterful element  
They come and invite me to give up my commitment  
They come and invite me to such a mountain of excrement.

Though I don't know  
What Fate may hold  
I chose this road

My life to mould.  
God's divine  
He may see to his own remit  
This life is mine  
I'll die just as I've lived.

So I'll keep on playing the loser's game  
Preferring to play on the Left, not the Right  
A Congress of the United I want to proclaim  
And the "Our Son" with conviction I wish to recite.

They say it's no longer in vogue to be mad  
And people are deemed unworthy and bad  
But I'll keep on dreaming dreams of such mischief  
To multiply in this life the loaves and the fishes.

Across rocks, across crags  
I've been told I'll be dragged  
When the Revolution comes down with a crash  
That my eyes they'll gouge out  
Tear the song from my throat  
That my hands and my mouth they will smash.

At my birth there was born alongside and within me  
A foolishness shaping the life of this fool  
A foolishness daring to take on the enemy  
A fool choosing to live with no price on his soul.

Though I don't know  
What Fate may hold  
I chose this road  
My life to mould.  
God's divine  
He may see to his own remit  
This life is mine  
I'll die just as I've lived.

## Sean Kearney

The death of Sean Kearney took an unusual amount of confirming. I checked the issue of *Fortnight*, to which he contributed a regular column on the Irish language, after he was supposed to have died, only to find another article by him!

But over Easter I was given a copy of *The Humanist* which carried an obituary—the beginning of which was written by Sean himself as death approached. In essence it said that if you have lived the life you wanted to live you need have no fear of death.

Sean had a turbulent relationship with *The Humanist* over several years—which was the kind of relationship he had with everything and everyone else. He was an extraordinarily disciplined individual with no capacity for political discipline of even the most basic kind.

The *Humanist* obituary was OK as far as it went but didn't go very far and didn't really do justice to Sean Kearney.

It mentions that he had been to jail but implied that this had to do with his socialism. Sean was a member of the IRA during the Border Campaign of 1956-62.

This Campaign, following on from the all-Party Anti-Partition League, was meant to bring the British occupation of the Six Counties to the attention of the world. It specifically forbade activity in Belfast because it certainly didn't want to bring the national divisions it knew very well existed to the attention of the world.

The politically undisciplined Sean Kearney wouldn't have this and tried to blow up a barracks in Belfast. For this he was expelled from the IRA. The *Humanist* also omits Sean's membership for many years of the British & Irish Communist Organisation. He left the group for reasons which are obscure to me and ended up taking what appeared to be an extreme Unionist position in Northern Ireland—with a special hatred for the Provisional IRA.

Through all these phases, however, Sean's abiding interest remained the Irish language. In his B&ICO days

he produced a regular magazine in the Donegal Gaeltacht around Bunbeg called *An Lamh Dhearg* (The Red Hand). Here he dealt with socialist and Trade Union politics in the local dialect which he had mastered.

He was appalled by the standardization of Irish which the Government embarked on in the 60s. This Government Irish and the lack of normal employment in the Gaeltacht would result in the death of the language.

There has been a revival of Irish speaking not only in West Belfast but among quite young people down in Tipperary and Cork. One girl I met in Cork spoke the dialect of Ballyvourney and was angry that her oral exam for the Leaving Certificate was conducted by someone who only spoke Official Irish and was in no position to judge her.

Sean's main achievement was in helping to bring industry to the Donegal Gaeltacht and unionizing the workers there. Much of the industry is now gone. But the culture if emigration was broken. That was the thing that most struck me when I stayed there last Autumn. If Sean has a legacy then that is it.

Conor Lynch

## Book Review

*ENVOI: TAKING LEAVE OF ROY FOSTER* by *Brendan Clifford, Julianne Herlihy, B. Murphy osb and David Alvey*, ISBN 1 903497 28 0

Aubane Historical Society, 204 pp,  
Euro 15 / £11

## The Dismemberment Of An Oxford Professor or *An Exocet from Aubane*

The cover of this chunky paperback bears an image of Professor Roy Foster looking distinctly "alone and palely loitering". It is not really an apt image as Julianne Herlihy points out, in her essay, *Selling The Product: Some Observations On Roy Foster's The Irish Story, Telling Tales And Making It Up In Ireland*, he has a large circle of critics who greet each of his products with squealing hysteria. A rarefied, genteel version of Beatlemania—the main difference being that the Beatles had actual talent.

A whole book about Foster's *Irish Story* may seem a bit over the top, but he has been hailed as the 'greatest living' and even the 'greatest ever' Irish historian. This Exocet from *Aubane* proves that he isn't even competent. There is also the fact that Ms Herlihy and Brendan Clifford's contributions are rare entertainment. Clifford's is *Mangling Irish History: Professor Roy Foster's Achievement Surveyed*. He makes the waspish point that whatever Foster touches turns to rubbish. On the whole, his attitude is that of a kindly, humorous elementary school teacher trying to get the class dunces to perceive his blunders. The effect is mordantly (it means 'deadly') funny, partly because Foster is waspish and contemptuous, and clearly believes what his coterie write about him.

First up is A.M. Sullivan's *The Story of Ireland*. Foster implied it was almost required reading for good little Catholic Nationalists until he came along. It has been out of print since the start of the last century. A more precise accusation was that Sullivan left out bits of history—

matter that complicated his narrative of 'oppressed Irish' and 'Saxon oppressor'—so that his Story (Foster emphasises the name with its overtones of fiction) would flow. The problem is that Sullivan did deal very thoroughly with the incident Foster mentions. It was a massacre, as Clifford puts it, of the Gaelic and Norman aristocracy of Laois, by Sir George Cosby, "*the English military commander in Queens County*". Yes there were two views of how Ireland was to be ruled, but one party did not feel the need to slaughter the other. Roy lives in Kentish Town, in the same Borough (Camden) as the British Library, and works in Oxford which has a copyright library—could he not just nip out and read the damned book? The *Massacre of Mullaghmast* was the subject of a ballad which Clifford quotes, and Cosby was killed in Glenmalure by Faich McHugh O'Byrne (about whose adventures there is also a damned good ballad—*Follow Me Up To Carlow*).

There are a number of other instances of Foster making it up (he was clearly bluffing his way—no research whatsoever went into most of his assertions), Readers can relish Clifford's deconstructing of Foster at their leisure. The question of the Christian Brothers needs highlighting. Foster and the whole revisionist circus took up the cry that they were excessive, narrow Nationalists. The accusation being based on the premise that all forms of Irish Nationalism were narrow and insular in the first place. In both its major forms Christian Brothers was a movement with international connections, not merely in the Irish 'diaspora' but with other national movements, India's and Cuba's among others. The accusation is that the Christian Brothers were the authors of a racist and sectarian exclusivist Nationalism (the word 'fascism' is usually unuttered, but we are to understand that this fatal condemnation is being withheld—for the time being). But, dealing with the youth magazine published by the Brothers from 1914, *Our Boys*, Clifford demonstrates that they were Redmondite to the core and supported the Imperial effort in the Great War. *Our Boys* had a monthly chronology of the War which Brendan Clifford claims is one of the best pieces of sustained writing on the matter. He proposes to publish this—will the revisionist neo-Redmondites welcome the Christian Brothers into their company? The Brothers shifted their position when an Irish State became a *fait accompli*, Redmondism was dead—though I would comment that, in Belfast, they kept burnished the reputation

of Joe Devlin, a classic product of their approach to the education of working class Catholic males.

Julianne Herlihy's approach is more acidulous, satiric—poor Roy is like a "*patient etherised upon a table*". Though Ms Herlihy probably would not be flicking the odd pinch of salt into the cuts she is delicately opening up in Foster's reputation. She gives a potted biography of Roy, noting the inconsistencies and gaps in his CV; he seems to have sunk below the radar on a number of occasions for years at a time. We also get a history of the Carroll Chair at Oxford, presumably Foster engaged in skull-duggery to get his Professorship. That is hardly news, but it is Foster's air of ballooning moral superiority that is so off-putting—and which is so thoroughly deflated here.

An oddity of Foster's psychology, which is underlined, is his obsessiveness about being an Irish Protestant. He constantly refers to it, but accuses others who take him up on the matter of being not merely sectarian (as opposed to curious) but racist. He and his '*Reviewing Circle*' as it is described here also obsess about the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland. Characteristically they misinterpret the matter. 'Terrorism' to them is totally illegitimate, but the only terrorists mentioned are the Provisionals. (Some of the circle may have guilty consciences about the Official IRA, and its idiot offspring the INLA. More suspiciously none of the 'Loyalist' organisations are ever mentioned. Despite the fact that the UVF and UDA both pre-date the founding of the Provisional IRA. The fact that the latter no longer exists must be very trying for them.)

Terry Eagleton, and others who questioned the absolute genius inherent in the *Irish Story* were dealt with by Kevin Myers and Eoghan Harris as mere begrudgers. Eagleton even got a special mention by Foster as "*newly Irish*" (he is second generation Birmingham-Irish and now lives in Ireland—unlike Foster.) Others of the starry-eyed reviewers she mentions are simply journalists doing a job, even pretentious ones like Jonathan Freedland, of the *Guardian*, whose expertise on Ireland is zero. There is clearly a 'line' in the 'quality' press on Foster and Ireland. Anne McHardy did a review for the *Observer*, and while she stuck to the line she makes muffled objections to Foster's more swingeing assertions. McHardy has reported on Ireland and 'Irish' court cases in Britain

since the early 1970s for the *Guardian / Observer*.

Edna Longley is mentioned by Ms Herlihy, and dealt with a length by Mr. Clifford: no doubt it will be interpreted as an 'attack'. But I was struck by Professor Longley's assertion that yet another Professor—W.B. Stanford—wrote (the date is given as 1958) that "*southern Protestants*" were "*excluded from public life*". If they were, W.B. Stanford certainly made up for it. I recall an article of his in the *Irish Times* in the 1960s where he complained that the upper class Anglican Ascendancy (of which he was a particularly vigorous remnant) were not doing their social duty. The Quakers, who educated Foster, are rarely noted in such writing, nor is the plebeian end of the Protestant spectrum, the Methodists; the Presbyterians; most C of I members; and the other tiny sects.

Professors Longley and Foster advocated historical amnesia for the Irish people. The Irish people in many ways already suffer from historical amnesia. In Northern Ireland, State schools often avoid Irish history, leaving school students with a knowledge of, essentially, English history. (And if the complaint is about 'making up' history, I remember being taught that the English nation began with Hengist and Horsa—I can't recall if they were Jutes, Angles or Saxons.) And that was one of the separate Catholic schools Edna Longley complains about. Irish history was taught, but it was confined to what was on the curriculum, and handled in a rather antiseptic way. 'Rebel songs' of course are still part of the folk cultural life of Taigs in the North. The narrative story of Ireland culminating in national independence has been discarded in the Republic for the same sort of antiseptic approach referred to above. There is also a rather large problem with rendering any people historically amnesiac. Such a piece of social engineering would produce persons resembling zombies, rather than Alliance Party voters. It is also the case that such experiments, usually on the part of imperialist powers, have a long history of backfiring on the experimenters. Julianne Herlihy points out that, as the professional historians get wrapped in technique and revisionism, local history societies thrive as never before.

There is plenty more meat in this essay, which reminds me of the American composer Virgil Thomson's approach to his critical work, he wanted it to be "*classy*"

*butsassy*". Ms Herlihy's essay is definitely classy and sassy—and shrewd, she describes Foster as a *poseur*. Before I leave it, I want to draw attention to one critic—John Lloyd. His diatribe is dealt with very well here (though his aside about "*subsidised and rewarded*" artistic product in independent Ireland is good for a laugh. He is essentially writing about the theatre, Scotland—his homeland—only acquired a national theatre last year. The British National Theatre was set up forty years after the Abbey first received its State subsidy. From the mid-1920s, the only agency which subsidised artistic output was the BBC, and it enormously expanded the cultural horizons of the British, mostly in regard to drama and music. There is equally no doubt that it was heavily censorious, for instance 'classical' composers who had any dealings with the British Communist Party—or were rumoured to be members—simply did not get their work broadcast. RTÉ did the same in Ireland, despite the endless bitching about it from the revisionists, and became censorious when Conor Cruise O'Brien became its boss in the mid-1970s).

Julianne Herlihy has Lloyd's measure—but it is worth stating that he is essentially a neo-imperialist, and clearly sees Ireland's revisionists are part of his overall scheme for the world. The imperialists of a century ago realised that if Ireland escaped the Empire the whole fabric would unravel. Lloyd probably can hardly believe his luck in finding a Fifth Column entrenched in the Republic.

There is a vein of dry satirical humour in the essay that brings this book to its conclusion: *Past Events And Present Politics Roy Foster's Modern Ireland*, by Brian Murphy, which is another examination of Foster's sources. This Appendix is very short (thirteen pages) and it is quite astonishing how Foster gets matters entirely wrong, mostly by not bothering to investigate original sources. Brian Murphy, being a professional historian, does not make the point that Foster has a blatant political agenda: the Gaelic Revival, the Rising, and Irish Nationalism in general are racist and sectarian. Murphy demonstrates that they were neither racist nor sectarian.

Brian Murphy takes up the 'two nations theory' as expounded by Mahaffy, of TCD, who was an aggressive Ascendancy publicist, in the early twentieth century. This 'theory' was a racist distinction between the Anglo-Irish likes of himself

and the 'mere Irish' who had forgotten their place. He is reported as saying that the coercion of Ulster was "*unthinkable*" (though he did not object to the widespread use of coercion against the mere Irish in the course of the previous century). I shudder to think what Mahaffy really thought of the rank and file of the UVF. Like the other contributions, there is plenty of meat in this essay. The 'two nations theory' identified with this publication and Athol Books has nothing to do with the erstwhile Ascendancy, but with the people living in, essentially, the Lagan valley, who have experienced a radically different economic (and cultural and religious) history from the rest of the people of this island.

Dave Alvey's *Irish Revisionism, School History, And The Invisibility Of Women. A Review Of Roy Foster's Modern Ireland* appears as a second appendix. What he proposes is a strategic alliance between 'Athol Books' and other live elements in Irish 'histriography'—in the main feminist historians. They have been less than impressed by the revisionists who are positively misogynist—the women involved in 1916 getting a particularly rough handling. Markievicz (née Gore-Booth) is the object of calumny, largely about her shooting somebody in the course of the Rising, and her alleged begging for mercy at the Court Martial. The revisionists' attitude is not far removed from that of the Mum of Neville Shute the novelist. She was a middle class English (Gladstonian Liberal) lady who lived through the Rising and wrote a small book about it which was republished by a major 'revisionist' historian David Fitzpatrick in 2001. Mrs. Norway was particularly exercised by Markievicz / Gore-Booth's class treason, and hoped she would suffer the same fate as the likes of MacDiarmada the bus-conductor or Clarke the tobacconist.

Dave Alvey makes out a very strong case for this project, and for education working *with* the grain of society. Despite the endless wailing of the revisionists, there is nothing in the least unusual about a people giving themselves a history of glorious struggle crowned with triumph. The only real difference between the Irish and Poles and the rest is that the narrative reflects very closely actual historical fact. History, as it is taught in Irish schools today, is dreary and off-putting mush which is driving students away from the subject. Applications to University History Departments are in free-fall (while,

as noted above, amateur history societies are burgeoning). But there is the problem, emphasised by Dave Alvey, that the destruction of a national consensus on where we came from will be replaced with intellectual mush. And on such intellectual mush anything can be imposed. (It is not in the least problematical that many revisionists were Brezhnevites not too long ago). What they plan to impose is West Britishness: entry into the Commonwealth (British Empire Lite) probably still is on the agenda, as is a full-scale State visit from Queen Elizabeth, and conceivably re-entry into the United Kingdom. Certainly the Irish State is a participant in the destruction of Iraq, and indeed in the policing of the Middle East, Israeli soldiers were allowed to use Shannon airport earlier this year. US service personnel have passed through it in their hundreds of thousands since the run-up to Operation Shock and Awe.

This book is a very important part of the fight against this state of affairs: it is not an arcane dispute about 'old, forgotten far off things and battles long ago'—it is essentially about what will happen tomorrow. Buy it, read it, and absorb its message.

Seán McGouran

### **Three Other New Books:**

**Six Days Of The Irish Republic** (eyewitness account of 1916), by *L.G. Redmond-Howard*. Contains a profile of Roger Casement, written during his trial; the Irish Case for the League of Nations; and a play written jointly with Harry Carson (the Ulster leader's son). Intro. by *Brendan Clifford*. Index. 256pp ISBN 1 903497 27 2. AHS, March 2006. **€16, £12.**

**The Origins and the Organisation of British Propaganda in Ireland 1920** by *Brian P. Murphy* *osb.* Foreword: *Prof. David Miller*. ISBN 1 903497 24 8. 100pp, Illus. Bibliog. Index. AHS + Spinwatch., Feb. 2006. **€9, £6.**

**Charles Gavan Duffy: Conversations With Carlyle.** Reprint of the classic of 1892. With Introduction: *Stray Thoughts On Young Ireland* by *Brendan Clifford*. Index. 220pp. ISBN 1 0 85034 114 0. Athol Books, Dec. 2005. **€16, £12.**

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## Reflections On Tom Barry's *Guerrilla Days*

I first read Tom Barry's book *Guerrilla Days In Ireland* in 1955 when it was reissued by Anvil Books and printed by The Kerryman Ltd, Tralee, Co Kerry. In his preface, written in 1948 for the 1949 edition published by The Irish Press Ltd, Tom Barry says:

"At the same time those Guerrilla Days are sufficiently near for any reader who seeks confirmation, to interview witnesses and examine the documents and newspaper issues of those days which are still available."

Now that all are truly dead dead dead the academic vultures descend.

In 1955 the 1939-1945 War was still being vividly remembered by the British.

When working on a building site in London I lent the book to an Englishman—a former military conscript for WW2 and now a Leftist and militant Trade Unionist—and waited for his comments. He had heard of the Black and Tans but wasn't aware of the Auxiliaries. They were composed of the officer ranks of the British Army, highly experienced in warfare through the 1914-1918 War and were thus battle-hardened, armed to the teeth, able to roam at will, take whole villages hostage, order old and young alike to line up in the street, make the men strip naked in front of their families, beat-up at least half a dozen, loot, drink themselves stupid, and then drive off, seeing a man working in a field take pot shots at him for sport and if he is hit jeer. This had been going on for four or five months in West Cork before Barry decided something had to be done about it.

The comments I got from the Englishman was that Auxiliaries acted like the SS units during his 1939-1945 war and deserved everything they got and more.

At that time, with the revival of the book in 1955, letters began to appear in the *Daily Express*, supposedly from former Auxiliaries reiterating what Field Marshall Lord French, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland said on 10th of December 1920, when declaring his Martial Law Proclamation:

"Because of the attack on Crown Forces culminating in an ambush, massacre, mutilation with axes of 16 cadets by a large body of men wearing trench helmets and disguised in the uniform of British soldiers, and who are still at large, now I do declare Martial Law proclaimed in The County of Cork, East and West Riding, the City of Cork, Tipperary, North and South Riding, the City and County of Limerick.."

The *Daily Express* letters didn't expand this argument in the media. Soldiers who had served in Ireland during that period didn't want to be identified. In all my time in England I have never met anyone who said they served there during the War of Independence. Maybe on reflection many of them saw it as a shameful war.

The IRA were highly respected by several leading Trade Unionists at the time, like Arthur Horner, later to become the General Secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers, to name but one, who said, when talking with Connolly Association members in a pub in Willesden after a meeting he attended in the 1950s, that he once carried a double-bass case down the Strand in London, helped by another Trade Union official. The case was full of revolvers for the IRA. At one point the case burst open and a few dozen revolvers and ammunition spilled on to the pavement. A policeman passing by helped to put them back into the case thinking they belonged to a nearby shooting club. In actual fact they had been stolen from such a club by one of its English members.

The British *Guardian* newspaper, in reviewing Ken Loach's film *The Wind That Shakes the Barley*, makes a comment about the Black and Tans being traumatised by the 1914-1918 War. So did their condition improve by murdering the Irish?

Every murderous incident, atrocity and massacre we hear being carried out by the American and British occupation forces in Iraq is being put down to post-traumatic stress or battle-fatigue. So the recent massacre in Haditha by the US Army is sort of okay because they were on *speed*, alcohol and were engaged in surreal barrack-room rituals in welcoming new additions to the marine corp. So that's okay then when women, children and men had their blood splattered up the walls and ceiling of a house. Don't blame them, blame the drugs and alcohol.

The US Army are so desperately in need of recruits that they accept drug and alcohol addicts if they go away and stay off the substances, under their constant monitoring, for a year. Of course people with addictive personalities can't stay off the substances forever unless they understand their condition fully and as a consequence are willing to stop. The US Authorities would be aware of this.

So if they abuse and massacre the citizens of Iraq and Afghanistan, as

required by their government, remember is not who is to blame but what is to blame.

Tom Barry describes the Auxiliaries as being drunk by the time they returned to their barracks at night, through looting and thieving from licensed premises. Put that down to stress—post-traumatic stress syndrome, you academics.

My most formative years were spent during the 1939-1945 in the Six Counties.

All over the area of Carryduff in County Down where I lived there were British and American military camps. Military traffic passed our door night and day throughout the war. On the way to school we would throw stones on to what looked like acres of a giant spring bed. It turned out to be an early radar station. On a number of occasions we clearly heard German bombers fly over our immediate area on their way to bomb Belfast.

I had cousins on my father's side of the family in the British Army. They were professionals who had joined during the 1930s. They had been in Burma, Iraq, Palestine and Iran. When I met them after their demob in 1946 they were anything but traumatised. They couldn't wait to get back into uniform, be it the RUC, Territorial Army, the B-Specials or the Fire Brigade.

I was then to meet up with and work with ex-soldiers from WW1 and WW2 when I entered the Belfast shipyard in 1946. Again, they had been professionals, and I wasn't aware of any of them being traumatised. In fact they seemed to handle every day life better than others.

The men that Tom Barry and his units had to fight were professional soldiers of the ordinary regiments who had seen serious action. He says of them:

"Practically all those British troops had battle experience during the 1914-1918 war. They were highly trained and well accustomed to fighting and bloodshed. Armed with most modern weapons they had a plentiful supply of machine guns, field artillery, armoured cars, engineering material, signalling equipment and motor transport. The finances of the world's largest empire was behind them."

Barry himself had been in Mesopotamia (Iraq), to the Russian border, Egypt, Palestine, Italy and France. Born in 1898, he was a teenage soldier. In 1920 he would still be only 22 years old when he took command at Kilmichael. A remarkable maturity when some of us at 22 were vomiting our guts up outside London pubs and clubs in the early hours of the morning.

Barry mentions that some people in his units didn't even have the most basic training. Here, at Kilmichael, they were lying in ambush in a stony bare environment without ditches or walls for 36 hours,

hungry, thirsty, soaked through on a freezing November day and night.

Barry was aware of what he calls *the tricks of war*. From his chapter headed *Drill Amidst the Dead* he says:

"The Auxiliaries were lying in small groups on the road firing back at No 2 Section, at about twenty-five yards' range. Some men of No 2 were engaging them. Waiting only to reload revolvers and pick up an Auxiliary's rifle and some clips of ammunition, the three riflemen from the Command Post, Murphy, Nyhan, and O'Herlihy, were called on to attack the second party from the rear. In single file we ran crouched up the side of the road. We had gone about fifty yards when we heard the Auxiliaries shout: "We surrender." We kept running along the grass edge of the road as they repeated the surrender cry, and actually saw some of the Auxiliaries throw away their rifles. Firing stopped but we continued unobserved, to jog towards them. Then we saw three of our comrades on No 2 Section stand up, one crouched and two upright. Suddenly the Auxiliaries were firing again with revolvers. One of our three men spun around before he fell, and Pat Deasy staggered before he too, went down.

"When this occurred we had reached a point of twenty-five yards behind the enemy party and we dropped down as I gave the order, "Rapid fire and do not stop until I tell you."..."

In the next paragraph the Auxiliaries are again shouting to say they were surrendering. Barry has no other option than to give the order to keep firing until annihilation.

The Auxiliary treachery had cost the lives of Michael McCarthy and Jim O'Sullivan. Patrick Deasy, a sixteen-year old boy, lay dying.

Some of the Flying Column showed signs of strain, he says, and a few seemed on the brink of collapse. For five minutes he marched them and drilled them past the Auxiliary corpses so as "*those men be jerked back to their former efficiency, particularly as another engagement with the British might well occur during retirement*".

It must have been an eerie scene with the two Auxiliary lorries ablaze:

"like two huge torches they lit up the countryside and the corpse-strewn blood-stained road, as the Flying Column marched up and down, halted, drilled and marched again between them."

Barry then goes on to end this most descriptive chapter by countering the British propaganda about the bodies of the Auxiliaries being mutilated with axes.

"The mutilation allegation was a vicious and calumnious lie. Well may one ask from where Lord French got his information. Of the eighteen Auxiliaries, sixteen were dead, one reported missing (after he had been shot, he crawled to the

bog hole near the side of the road, where he died and his body sank out of sight) and one dying of wounds. The last mentioned never regained consciousness before he died. There were no spectators to the fight."

With the Truce in July 1921 Sir Alfred Cope, then Assistant British Under-Secretary for Ireland, called on Barry in Cork asking for a written statement that the IRA had killed the Auxiliaries at Kilmichael, since this was essential before the British Government could pay compensation to the dependants. It seemed they had no evidence as to how these men had met their death as there were no survivors to testify in court. The claim about the mutilation of the bodies would surely have been mentioned at this meeting if only as a threat at official revelation in the press if Cope didn't get a statement. Even then photography was advanced well enough to take good pictures. Barry sent him on his way empty-handed.

I would say that this Flying Column had enough to do to keep themselves psychologically together than to go axing wounded or dead bodies. If the Auxiliaries had managed to win, none of the Flying Column would have survived. They were well known for not taking prisoners in shoot-outs.

Barry mentions the death of a couple of members who died *while cleaning their firearms*. In my opinion that is shorthand for suicide. There are people like that—after taking a life—even an enemy one—they can't live with it.

I think what needs to be examined is De Valera's need to have Tom Barry report to him and thus have him make the dangerous journey to Dublin. The issue seemed to be about hostage-taking. Barry was rightfully of the opinion that a British Naval Rear-Admiral as a hostage was equal to the British holding a West Cork farm labourer. I don't think Dev agreed.

It has been often been said that Dev didn't go to Downing Street to discuss the Treaty because he wanted to stay in Dublin and choose for himself what the best option would be. And of course there must have been some discussion with Collins and the rest of the party before they set off. It's possible that Collins and the others couldn't win no matter what agreement they brought back. Dev was already acting as the polished politician.

Barry was still a young man when the Truce was signed and had a long way to go. He was already a brilliant guerrilla leader and tactician and was getting into his stride in West Cork. If the War would have been prolonged then Barry must surely have advanced throughout the country.

This notion of the Truce being signed under threat of a most terrible punitive

war to come by the British aggressors didn't stop a most terrible tragedy that saw anti-Treatyites being cut down in a very violent manner with British-borrowed armaments and fresh supplies of rifles and ammunition. After all, the Boers, implanted into Black South Africa as a belligerent white nation, survived the British concentration camps in the end. Ireland's civilian population had yet not reached the five percent demise that other nations have had to suffer through resistance to an occupier and final victory. It is also unlikely that Irish-America and the Irish overseas would tolerate that level of savagery in Ireland. South Africa at the beginning of the 20th Century was still an out-of-reach exotic location. It was thanks to McBride that the Boers had any reach to the outside world in communicating the conflict. The Irish resistance, on the other hand, had excellent communications during 1919 - 1923.

Tom Barry then went on to spend the most of his life a hero in a paper-back wilderness. With the Provisional war breaking out in the North he must have known that the Treaty had only postponed the terrible suffering that was to be endured for the next thirty years. It too was beginning to have its successes, like in South Armagh for example, when a final ceasefire was called. Maybe this was due to an uneven development between war and politics. Sinn Fein politics at the moment seem to be developed enough now to rule out a re-occurrence of war. But only at the moment, in my opinion. Hopefully Whitehall will come to accept Sinn Fein fully, though by their tactics at the moment they are just fuelling other dissident IRA groups, who would be liable to bring about a much more brutal war through the machinations of our old friend Perfidious Albion.

Cut off in full flow Tom Barry was never going to be allowed to sort out the bloody chaos in the aftermath of the signing of the Treaty.

Carpet bagger academics are now showing their wares to those who can print their books, give them sinecures, and possibly a title or two. They turn the Kilmichael event into the equivalent of an axe attack behind the school bike sheds. They maliciously instil sectarianism into what was the major struggle of a occupied country for nationhood. What other occupied nation on earth would tolerate the collaboration of a small minority with the enemy, no matter what faith they profess? What other nation tolerates such oafishness and allows them to sully the name of Tom Barry right in the capital of Barry country?

**Wilson John Haire**

9th of June, 2006

## Barry's Column

From East to West, from North to South,  
They tried to hunt the column out  
But the Tans were forced to go without  
The boys of Barry's Column

In armoured cars they came to stay,  
And wipe the Irish cowards away  
But oh, the lovely holiday  
Was stopped by Barry's Column

Oh but isn't great to see  
The Tommies and the R.I.C  
The Black And Tans and the Staters flee  
Away from Barry's Column

By, George might have some wily tricks  
And have the volunteers to fix  
Yet all his Black And Tans go sick  
When they think of Barry's Column

His ships all come in red and black,  
No tanks or war equipment lack  
Yet o'er the sea, they'll ne'er get back  
If caught by Barry's Column

Along the lonely road they wind  
Armed in front, and armed behind  
"We're sorry, but that bridge is mine"  
Said the lads of Barry's Column

They stopped to rest just for a spell  
Some hand-grenades upon them fell  
"Here sort them out among yourselves"  
Said the lads from Barry's Column

Oh but isn't it great to see,  
The Staters and the R I C  
The Tommies and the Tans all flee  
Away from Barry's Column.

Use Value, Part 4:

### A Vanished Arcadia

The destruction of the aboriginal societies of the Americas began directly with European contact. In British North America the preferred method was extermination by destruction of their food supplies, the method devised for use against the Irish by the genocidal Elizabethan poet Edmund Spenser and by Cromwell's chief adviser, the Rev. Hugh Peters who warned against wasting time and money in normal warfare "*about Castles and Forts*", recommending instead that, since "*the wild Irish and the Indian do not much differ, and therefore would be handled alike*" by a scorched earth policy that would "*burne up the Enemies provisions every where*". Peters had spent seven years in the British colonies in America so he knew what he was talking about.

In Spanish and Portuguese Latin America, extermination was not the declared objective. Instead the civil powers preferred enslavement, which was generally a death sentence since Indians did not usually survive very long in slavery. Theoretical justification and authorisation for Spanish and Portuguese colonialism came from the Pope, who, theoretically, prohibited slavery. The official Catholic Church position, formally backed by the Catholic monarchies but defied by their colonial subjects, was that conquest of South American peoples was justified in the cause of saving their souls by bringing them to the true faith. But the colonists were more interested in the bodies of the Indians than their souls (and in the legends of El Dorado, hoards of gold and silver supposedly still in existence after the original looting) and the prohibition against slavery was ignored.

Ignored, that is, except by the Jesuits, a military-style religious order set up to restore and strengthen the Catholic religion after the setback of the Reformation. The Order engaged with all aspects of the secular world—especially education—in order to bring it back under the sway of the Papacy, and pioneered missions to Asia and Latin America. The Jesuits had the advantage in Latin America that they were international—German, Irish, English as well as Spanish—and therefore not identified with the colonials by the Indians. In an area covering present-day Paraguay (an inland territory of forests and plains, drained by the rivers Paraguay and Parana and bounded by Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia) and adjoining territories, a handful of Jesuit missionaries created an Indian society of up to 200,000 people that functioned on communist lines of production for use, in thirty townships (called *reductions* or *missions*) based on advanced educational, cultural, military and industrial systems, which prevented encroachment, conquest and enslavement by the colonials of Sao Paolo, Asuncion and Buenos Aires, the cities which are now capitals of Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina. Pressure from the civil powers in these colonies was withstood by the Guarani Indians in their communist-Jesuit towns for nearly two centuries, until the war broke out in 1754, in which the Indians resisted the forces of both Spain and Portugal until their defeat in 1756. Officially the Jesuits were submissive to the Spanish and Portuguese monarchies and their colonial representatives, while continuing their religious pastoral services to the Indians. But the military leader of the Indians was, in effect, the Irish Jesuit

Thaddeus Ennis (according to R.B. Cunninghame-Graham)\*, who, until his capture in 1756 kept a war diary in Latin which was later translated into Spanish as part of the successful campaign by the Catholic European powers against the Jesuits, leading to their suppression and expulsion in 1760.

After the suppression and expulsion of the Jesuits from Paraguay, the Indian townships disappeared and their inhabitants melted back into the forests. It was as if this amazing social system had never existed.

In an era of developing capitalism the Jesuits were resented because of their prestige and influence. The protectionist policies of the Papacy and the Jesuits (towards the Indians) were attacked on liberal grounds, just as economic protectionism is attacked today in the name of globalisation. Though their Paraguay missions were not a Soviet Union, attitudes to the Jesuits seemed to resemble the strong feelings provoked by the Communist Parties of western countries from the 1920s to the 1980s. The hostility of worldly, liberal Catholics to Opus Dei also comes to mind.

But two centuries under Jesuit tutelage provided the Guarani Indians with means (including guns and literacy) of coping and surviving in the new order. By the end of the 19th century the colonists had been absorbed by the Guaranies, and today's population of around six million consists of the resulting mixture, so that Paraguay is the only country in the world which has an Indian tongue as an official language, including publication and literature. In recent years, native Indians have achieved

leadership in several South American countries—Venezuela and Bolivia, for instance. But the last purely Spanish autocrat in Paraguay was the early 19th century Dr. Francia. It is said that the Indians, who preferred to be naked, were obliged to acquire hats so they could doff them when Francia and his retinue passed by. But the indigenous people have had political leadership in Paraguay ever since the Lopez father and son came to power in the 19th century, after Dr. Francia died. The colourful Irishwoman Elisa Lynch was mistress to the latter Lopez, and buried him herself when he was speared at the end of Paraguay's War of Independence against a Triple Alliance of its giant neighbours Argentina and Brazil and Brazil's satellite Uruguay. At that point Elisa was legally owner of most of Paraguay and its contents, but after losing everything under the Brazilian occupation she died in poverty in Europe. Most of the Paraguayan males, children as well as adults, and practically all the men of purely Spanish descent, died in the war. Paraguay survived by playing off Argentina and Brazil (and in the 20th century, the US) against each other. By the twentieth century the population had recovered sufficiently to resist Bolivia, which had lost its Pacific coastline to Chile, and fought for access to the Atlantic via the river Paraguay. The Guaranis military inheritance from the Jesuits was crucial to the survival of Paraguay against the conscripted Indian soldiers of Bolivia, and in the previous war against the Triple Alliance.

Unlike other parts of Latin America, Paraguay's latifundia estates were broken up in the thirties, and land distribution and social services established; though the country is poor even by Latin American standards. Government by "strong men" (who, in the past were the fathers of the people in the literal sense) has been the pattern for several centuries, though the system is regulated by a constitution. The current President, Nicanor Duarte Frutos, is a former journalist who was elected in 2003.

The history of the Jesuit missions in Paraguay is described in *La République Communiste Chretienne des Guaranis* (C. Lugon, 1949) and in *A Vanished Arcadia* (R.B. Cunninghame-Graham, 1901).

#### CUNNINGHAME-GRAHAM

Robert Bontine Cunninghame-Graham (1860-1936) was a British aristocrat born in Scotland to a half-Spanish mother. As a child he spent time in Cadiz and acquired a command of Spanish. His father lost his mind as a result of a riding accident and Robert emigrated to South America at 17 in order to try his hand at ranching. He visited Paraguay soon after the War of the Triple Alliance had ended, and apparently made hay among the women, most of

whose men had been killed. He was unsuccessful in his ranching, but gained a great knowledge of and sympathy towards the Indians, even though they burned him out of one of his ranching enterprises in Texas. For a while he made a living as fencing teacher, horse-trainer, and Spanish interpreter in buffalo-hunting expeditions in the southern USA and Mexico. He returned home when his father died and, as a further exploratory expedition, acquired a seat in Parliament where he aligned himself with the Socialists and the Irish—I suspect in the same spirit that he aligned himself with the Indians—and began writing about his experiences. When he lost his seat in Parliament he went prospecting unsuccessfully for gold in Spain on the strength of a passage in Pliny's description of ancient Lusitania. His subsequent adventures in Morocco, where he passed himself off as an Arab, are described in his book *Mogreb-el-Aksa*. Though critical of Imperialism, at the age of 62 he tried to sign up for the Great War. Perhaps his real position was that of the hero of one of his stories (*His People*) who, entering a church in his native Toledo: "*Half furtively he dipped his hand into the holy water stoup and crossed himself, muttering it was a superstitious act, yet glad to yield to it, for a true Christian ought to testify, even though God for some mysterious reason of His own has not vouchsafed him faith.*" On the other hand, perhaps he was just as committed to the Great War as his political friends among the Socialists and the Irish Party. His war work consisted of acquiring horses in South America for the army. He became the first President of the Scottish National Party in 1928. When he was 73 he made the first of two exploratory expeditions, on horseback, alone, in Venezuela. He died in Argentina in 1936.

Based on his travels in the area, and on a variety of historical sources, in 1901 Graham wrote an account of the Jesuit missions in Paraguay of the 17th and 18th centuries. But first, here is an extract about contemporary (1900) conditions:

"A recent writer in the little journal published on yellow packing-paper in the Socialist colony of Cosme, in Paraguay ('Cosme Monthly', November, 1898), has a curious passage corroborating what I have so often observed myself. Under the heading of 'A Paraguayan Market', he says: 'The Guarani clings stubbornly to the Guarani customs. This is irritating to the European, but who shall say that the Guarani is not right? ... European settlement cannot but be fatal to the Guarani, however profitable it may be to land-owning and mercantile classes... The Paraguayan market is a woman's club... they will come thirty or forty miles with a clothful of the white curd-cheese of the country, contentedly journeying on foot along the narrow

paths. They will cut a cabbage into sixteenths and eat their cheese themselves rather than sell it under market price.' Long may they do so, for so long will they be free, and perhaps poor; but, then, in countries such as Paraguay freedom and poverty are identical."

Graham's writing style is occasionally sardonic or flippant. On the 17th-18th century Jesuit missions, he says:

"Rightly or wrongly, but according to their lights, [the Jesuits] strove to teach the Indian population all the best part of the European progress of the times in which they lived, shielding them sedulously from all contact with commercialism, and standing between them and the Spanish settlers, who would have treated them as slaves. These were [the Jesuits'] crimes. For their ambitions, who shall search the human heart, or say what their superiors in Europe may, or perhaps may not, have had in view? When all is said and done, and now their work is over, and all they worked for lost (as happens usually with the efforts of disinterested men), what crime so terrible can men commit as to stand up for near upon two centuries against that slavery which disgraced every American possession of the Spanish crown? Nothing is bad enough for those who dare to speak the truth, and those who put their theories into practice are a disgrace to progressive and adequately taxed communities. Nearly two hundred years they strove, and now their territories, once so populous and so well cultivated, remain, if not a desert, yet delivered up to that fierce-growing, subtropical American plant life which seems as if it fights with man for the possession of the land in which it grows. For a brief period those Guaranis gathered together in the missions, ruled over by their priests, treated like grown-up children, yet with a kindness which attached them to their rulers, enjoyed a half-Arcadian, half-monastic life, reaching to just so much of what the world calls civilization as they could profit by and use with pleasure to themselves. A commonwealth where money was unknown to the majority of the citizens, a curious experiment by self-devoted men, a sort of dropping down a diving-bell in the flood of progress to keep alive a population which would otherwise soon have been suffocated in its muddy waves, was doomed to failure by the very nature of mankind. Foredoomed to failure, it has disappeared, leaving nothing of a like nature now upon the earth. The Indians, too, have vanished, gone to that limbo which no doubt is fitted for them.

"The actual condition of the rich district of Misiones (Paraguay) at the time I visited it, shortly after the conclusion of the great war between Paraguay and Brazil in 1870, does not enable me to speak with authority on the condition of communities, the guiding spirits of which were expelled as far

back as the year 1767. The actual buildings of the missions, the churches in a dismantled state, have indeed survived; in many instances the tall date-palms the Jesuits planted still wave over them. Generally the college was occupied by the Indian Alcalde, who came out to meet the visitor on a horse if he possessed one, with as much silver about the bridle and stirrups as he could afford, clothed in white, with a cloak of red baize, a large 'jipi-japa' hat, and silver spurs buckled on his naked feet. If he had never left the mission, he talked with wonder and respect of the times of the Jesuits, and at the 'oracion' knelt down to pray wherever the sound of the angelus might catch him. His children before bedtime knelt all in a row to ask his blessing. If he had been to Asuncion, he probably remarked that the people under those accursed priests were naught but animals and slaves, and launched into some disquisition he had heard in the solitary cafe which Asuncion then boasted. In the latter case, after much of the rights of man and the duties of hospitality, he generally presented you with a heavy bill for Indian corn and 'pindo' which your horse had eaten. In the former, usually he bade you go with God, and, if you spoke of payment, said: 'Well, send me a book of Hours when you get to Asuncion.'

...  
"It may be that all Indian races are destined to disappear if they come into contact with Europeans; certainly, experience would seem to confirm the supposition. The policy of the Jesuits, however, was based on isolation of their missions, and how this might have worked is matter at least for speculation. It was on account of the isolation which they practised that it was possible for the extravagant calumnies which were circulated as to their rule and riches to gain belief. It was on account of isolation betwixt them and the authorities, both clerical and lay.

...  
"In this rich territory the Jesuits, when, after infinite trouble, they had united a sufficient quantity of Indians, formed them into townships, almost all of which were built upon one plan. In Paraguay itself only some three or four remain; but they remain so well preserved that, by the help of contemporary accounts, it is easy to reconstruct almost exactly what the missions must have been like during the Jesuits' rule.

"Built round a square, the church and store-houses filled one end, and the dwellings of the Indians, formed of sundried bricks or wattled canes in three long pent-houses, completed the three sides. In general, the houses were of enormous length, after the fashion of a St. Simonian phalanstery, or of a 'miners' row' in Lanarkshire. Each family had its own apartments, which were but separated from the apartments of the next by a lath-and-plaster wall, called in Spanish 'tabique' but one veranda and one roof served for a hundred or more families. The space

in the middle of the square was carpeted with the finest grass, kept short by being pastured close by sheep. The churches, sometimes built of stone, and sometimes of the hard woods with which the country abounds, were beyond all description splendid, taking into consideration the remoteness of the Jesuit towns from the outside world. Frequently—as, for instance, in the mission of Los Apostoles—the churches had three aisles, and were adorned with lofty towers, rich altars, super-altars, and statuary, brought at great expense from Italy and Spain. Though the churches were often built of stone, it was not usual for the houses of the Indians to be so built; but in situations where stone was plentiful, as at the mission of San Borja, the houses of the Jesuits were of masonry, with verandas held up by columns, and with staircases with balustrades of sculptured stone. The ordinary ground-plan of the priest's house was that of the Spanish Moorish dwelling, so like in all its details to a Roman house at Pompeii or at Herculaneum. Built round a square courtyard, with a fountain in the middle, the Jesuits' house formed but a portion of a sort of inner town, which was surrounded by a wall, in which a gate, closed by a porter's lodge, communicated with the outside world. Within the wall was situated the church (although it had an entrance to the plaza), the rooms of the inferior priest, a garden, a guest-chamber, stables, and a store-house, in which were kept the arms belonging to the town, the corn, flour, and wool, and the provisions necessary for life in a remote and often dangerous place. In every case the houses were of one story; the furniture was modest, and in general home-made; in every room hung images and pious pictures, the latter often painted by the Indians themselves. In the smaller missions two Jesuits managed all the Indians.

...  
"The greatest difficulty which the Jesuits had to face was the natural indolence of their neophytes. Quite unaccustomed as they were to regular work of any kind, the ordinary European system, as practised in the Spanish settlements, promptly reduced them to despair, and often killed them off in hundreds. Therefore the Jesuits instituted the semi-communal system of agriculture and of public works with which their name will be associated for ever in America.

...  
"But, even settled in their new homes, the Indians were defenceless against the Mamelucos [slavers from Portuguese Sao Paolo], as it was a state maxim of the Spanish court that the Indians should never be allowed the use of guns. This was a wise enough precaution, without

doubt, for the Indians of the Encomiendas [Spanish settlements], who lived amongst the Spaniards and owed them personal services; but arms for the Indians of the missions were a necessity of life. Therefore, before he started for Madrid, the [Jesuit] Provincial impressed upon Montoya [founder of the mission towns] to approach the Council of the Indies and the King, and represent to them that it was impossible to guarantee the existence of the reductions [towns or missions] against the Mamelucos unless the Indians were allowed to provide themselves with arms. So Father Montoya, though he was charged to press for various reforms, was most especially impressed upon this point. He was to tell the King that the Indians were not to be allowed to keep their arms themselves, but that they would be kept by the Jesuits, and served out to the Indians in case of an attack; then, that the arms would not cost a penny to the treasury, but be all paid out of the alms collected for the purpose by the Company; lastly, and this was a true stroke of Jesuit policy, that, to instruct the Indians how to shoot, they would bring from Chile certain Jesuits who in the world had served as soldiers. One sees them brought from the frontiers of Araucania, and from the outposts of the trans-Andean towns, half sacristan, half sergeant, instant in prayer, and yet with a look about them like a serious bull terrier—a fitting kind of priest for a frontier town, and such as could alone be found amongst the Jesuits.

...  
"As well as agriculture and 'estancia' [ranch] life, the Jesuits had introduced amongst the Indians most of the arts and trades of Europe. By the inventories taken by Bucareli, Viceroy of Buenos Ayres, at the expulsion of the Order, we find that they wove cotton largely; sometimes they made as much as eight thousand five hundred yards of cloth in a single town in the space of two or three months. And, in addition to weaving, they had tanneries, carpenters' shops, tailors, hat-makers, coopers, cordage-makers, boat-builders, cartwrights, joiners, and almost every industry useful and necessary to life.

"They also made arms and powder, musical instruments, and had silversmiths, musicians, painters, turners, and printers to work their printing-presses: for many books were printed at the missions, and they produced manuscripts as finely executed as those made by the monks in Europe.

...  
"Strangely enough—but, then, how strangely all extremes meet in humanity!—the Jesuits alone (at least, in Paraguay) seem to have apprehended, as the Arabs certainly have done from immemorial time, that the first duty of a man is to enjoy his life. Art, science, literature, ambition—all the frivolities with which men occupy themselves—have their due place; but life is first, and in some strange, mysterious way the Jesuits felt it, though, no doubt, they would have been the first to deny it with

a thousand oaths. But in a Jesuit mission all was not feasting or processioning, for with such neighbours as the Mamelucos [slavers from Sao Paolo] they had to keep themselves prepared. As for their better government in home affairs each mission had its police, with officers chosen by the Jesuits amongst the Indians, so for exterior defence they had militia, and in it the 'caciques' [chiefs] of the different tribes held principal command. Most likely over them, or at their elbows, were set priests who before entering the Company of Jesus had been soldiers: for there were many such amongst the Jesuits. As their own founder once had been a soldier, so the Company was popular amongst those soldiers who from some cause or other had changed their swords to crucifixes, and taken service in the ranks of Christ. As it was most important, both for defence and policy, to keep the 'caciques' content, they were distinguished by better treatment than the others in many different ways. Their food was more abundant, and a guard of Indians was on perpetual duty as servants and as messengers to summon distant companies of Indians to the field. Their method of organization must have been like that of the Boers or of the Arabs; for every Indian belonged to a company, which now and then was brought together for evolutions in the field or for a period of training, after the fashion of our militia or the German Landwehr. Perhaps this system of an armed militia, always ready for the field, was what, above all other reasons, enabled their detractors to represent the Jesuits as feared and unpopular. Why, it was asked, does this community of priests maintain an army in its territories? No one remembered that if such were not the case the missions could not have existed for a year without a force to defend their borders from the Paulistas [slavers from Sao Paolo]. Everyone forgot that Fathers Montoya and Del Tano had obtained special permission from the King for the Indians of the missions to bear arms; and, as no human being is grateful for anything but contumelious treatment, the Spanish settlers conveniently forgot how many times a Jesuit army had saved their territories. The body of three thousand Guarani sent at the expense of the Company [Jesuits] to assist the Spaniards against the Portuguese at the attack upon the Colonia del Sacramento on the river Plate, in 1678, was quite forgotten, together with the innumerable contingents sent by the Jesuits at the demand of Spanish governors against the Chaco Indians, the Payaguas, and even against the distant Calchaquis, in what is now the province of Jujuy. Even when an English pirate, called in the Spanish histories Roque Barloque (explained by some to be plain Richard Barlow), appeared off Buenos Ayres, the undaunted neophytes shrank not a moment from going to the assistance of their co-religionists against the 'Lutheran dog'. Lastly, all Spanish governors and writers, both contemporaneous and at

the end of the eighteenth century, seem to forget that if the Jesuits had an army of neophytes within their territory the fact was known and approved of at the court of Spain. But it appears that Calvin had many coadjutors in his policy of '*Jesuitas aut necandi aut calumniis opponendi sunt.*' [The Jesuits must be killed [Refuted??] or opposed by calumny.] When a Jesuit army took the field, driving before it sufficient cattle to subsist upon, and with its 'caballada' of spare horses upon its flank, it must have resembled many a Gaucho army I have seen in Entre Rios five-and-twenty years ago.

...  
"An army from the Jesuit missions consisted almost entirely of cavalry. It marched much like a South American army of twenty years ago was wont to march. In front was driven the 'caballada', consisting of the spare horses; then came the vanguard, composed of the best mounted soldiers, under their caciques. Then followed the wives and women of the soldiers, driving the baggage-mules, and lastly some herdsmen drove a troop of cattle for the men to eat. When Jesuits accompanied the army, they did not enter into action, but were most intrepid in succouring the wounded under fire, as Funes, in his '*Historia Civil del Paraguay*', etc., relates when speaking of their conduct at the siege of the Colonia in 1703. For arms they carried lances, slings, 'chuzos' (broad-pointed spears), lazos, and bolas, and had amongst them certain very long English guns with rests to fire from, not very heavy, and of a good range. Each day the accompanying Jesuits said Mass, and each town carried its particular banner before the troop. They generally camped, if possible, in the open plain, both to avoid surprises and for convenience in guarding the cattle and the 'caballada'. In all the territories of South America no such quiet and well-behaved soldiery was to be found; for in Chile, Peru, Mexico, and Guatemala, the passage of an army was similar to the passing of a swarm of locusts in its effect.

...  
"The celebrated Dr. Francia, dictator of Paraguay, used to refer to the Jesuits as 'cunning rogues', and, as he certainly himself was versed in every phase of cunningness, perhaps his estimate—to some extent, at least—was just. A rogue in politics is but a man who disagrees with you; but, still, it wanted no little knowledge of mankind to present a daily task to men, unversed in any kind of labour, as of the nature of a pleasure in itself. The difficulty was enormous, as the Indians seemed never to have come under the primeval curse, but passed their lives in wandering about, occasionally cultivating just sufficient for their needs. Whether a missionary, Jesuit, or Jansenist, Protestant, Catholic, or Mohammedan, does well in forcing his own mode of life and faith on those who live a happier, freer life than any his instructor can hold out to them is a moot

point. Only the future can resolve the question, and judge of what we do today—no doubt with good intentions, but with the ignorance born of our self-conceit. Much of the misery of the world has been brought about with good intentions; but of the Jesuits, at least, it can be said that what they did in Paraguay did not spread death and extinction to the tribes with whom they dealt. So to the task of agriculture the Jesuits marshalled their neophytes to the sound of music, and in procession to the fields, with a saint borne high aloft, the community each day at sunrise took its way. Along the paths, at stated intervals, were shrines of saints, and before each of them they prayed, and between each shrine sang hymns. As the procession advanced, it became gradually smaller as groups of Indians dropped off to work the various fields, and finally the priest and acolyte with the musicians returned alone. At mid-day, before eating, they all united and sang hymns, and then, after their meal and siesta, returned to work till sundown, when the procession again re-formed, and the labourers, singing, returned to their abodes. A pleasing and Arcadian style of tillage, and different from the system of the 'swinked' labourer in more northern climes. But even then the hymnal day was not concluded; for after a brief rest they all repaired to church to sing the 'rosary', and then to sup and bed. On rainy days they worked at other industries in the same half-Arcadian, half-communistic manner, only they sang their hymns in church instead of in the fields. The system was so different to that under which the Indians endured their lives in the 'encomiendas' and the 'mitas' of the Spanish settlements, that the fact alone is sufficient to account for much of the contemporary hatred which the Jesuits incurred.

"Imagine a semi-communistic settlement set close to the borders of Rhodesia [Graham was writing this in 1900], in which thousands of Kaffirs passed a life analogous to that passed by the Indians of the missions—cared for and fed by the community, looked after in every smallest particular of their lives—and what a flood of calumny would be let loose upon the unfortunate devisers of the scheme! Firstly, to withdraw thousands of 'natives' from the labour market would be a crime against all progress, and then to treat them kindly would be heresy, and to seclude them from the contamination of the scum of Europe in the settlements would be termed unnatural; for we know that native races derive most benefit from free competition with the least fitted of our population to instruct. But besides agriculture the enormous cattle-farms of the mission territory gave occupation to many of the neophytes. The life on cattle-farms gave less scope for supervision, and we may suppose that the herders and the cattlemen were more like Gauchos; but Gauchos under religious discipline, half-centaurs in the field, sitting a plunging half-wild colt as

if they were part of him, and when on foot at home submissive to the Jesuits, constant in church, but not so fierce and bloodthirsty as their descendants soon became after the withdrawal of the mission rule.”

As in other Latin American countries, many socialist and religious colonies were founded in Paraguay, like the 1872 Lincolnshire Farmers (in reality, “800 needy artisans from the streets of London”), and New Australia (a co-operative utopia of about 500 people on 450000 acres of fertile land “to show the world that, under fair conditions, even workers could have a life worth living”, after the collapse of the Australian Federation of Labour’s general strike of 1890). And like the Mennonite settlement of about 5000 people in the 1930s, and the Hutterites in the 1940’s.

But the Jesuit project made more impact. Was it a small Cuba with religion? Or was it a large monastery with an army? Is there a difference? How can we understand the mission system of production for use? What about the Indians last stand under Fr. Ennis? A further article will examine these matters.

**Pat Muldowney**

\* While it is true that the Missions were founded by the Limerick Jesuit Thomas Fields with two companions, Cunningham-Graham, may be mistaken in assuming, from the form of the surname, that Fr. Thaddeus Ennis was Irish. In fact “Ennis” was from Bohemia it seems. R.B. Cunningham-Graham was a founder of the British Labour Party, according to Philip Caraman in his 1973 book about the Missions, *The Lost Paradise*.

## Haughey

concluded

Ireland and making the Six Counties part of the functional democracy of the British state. It is unlikely that Haughey agreed with us, but he did not go in for the kind of hysterical denunciation of our project that was directed at it by many others, prominent among them those who Girvin describes as moderates.

This journal, produced weekly, was in the thick of the conflict in the North during the 1970s and 1980s. Our view of the entire spectrum of Dublin politics was that it had no understanding of the North and no policies capable of doing any good there. Then we saw that Haughey at least was not making mischief. He knew that it was not a viable entity and therefore he did not stir things up in it.

But the ‘moderates’ all rejected as ‘extremism’ his view that it was not a viable entity, and they all did their best to interfere, and every interference was in effect a piece of mischief-making which accelerated the polarisation of the com-

## Imagine If We Were Still In The UK

Letter to *Irish Examiner*

Brian McCaffrey (Irish Examiner letters, May 17) speculates that Home Rule "might have been as good" if not better "than what ensued from 1916".

Let's try to imagine what kind of Ireland might have ensued. It would be still tied at the hip to the UK. It would have been bombed during World War II and possibly invaded (as it almost was by the Allies themselves).

It would be directly involved in an illegal and immoral war in both Iraq and Afghanistan, just as the UK government is against the wishes of the majority of its people.

Irish people and resources would still be used ultimately for the benefit of the UK imperial project. Ireland would have no separate representation at either the UN or European Parliament.

Our passports would not open doors worldwide.

But speculation aside, Mr McCaffrey is incorrect on a number of points.

He describes John Redmond as a man of 'non-violent disposition'. Surely he's not thinking of the same man who encouraged hundreds of thousands of Irishmen to flock to the slaughter in France? They went there to kill people, not to play hurling.

Revisionists often overlook the fact that these same British/Irish soldiers were responsible for hundreds of thousands of victims: German soldiers, their widowed wives and orphaned children plus the inevitable civilians caught up in shelling and crossfire (a similar charge is frequently levelled against the 1916 Rebels).

In terms of bloodshed, the Great War produced about 50 times more Irish casualties than the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence and the Civil War combined.

The dent in recruitment to the British army caused by 1916 may actually have saved Irish lives.

Partition was neither caused nor copperfastened by 1916, having already been achieved by threat of armed unionist rebellion in 1912 and through the machinations of a unionist-dominated cabinet during the early stages of World War I.

Mr McCaffrey asks: "What about 30 years of sectarian slaughter unleashed by the Provos who chose the men of 1916 as mentors?"

Indeed—what about it? Only willful ignorance of recent history could lay the blame for the Troubles on 1916.

Had unionist thugs, the RUC and B-Specials not laid into nationalist civil rights marchers with clubs, bricks and batons as they demanded not independence, but simply to be treated as equal citizens of the UK, there would have been no Troubles to speak of.

The Easter Rising wouldn't have mattered a jot.

Critics often claim that it "and republicans" introduced the gun into 20th century Irish politics, and of 'unleashing sectarian slaughter', as Mr McCaffrey puts it.

That is fundamentally incorrect. The 'honour' goes to the unionists in 1912. It's their legacy we live with today.

**Nick Folley**

munities. And Dr. FitzGerald, the most active and unrelenting moderate, did most of the mischief, aided and abetted by Dr. O'Brien in 1974 and by Dick Spring in 1985. The communal polarisation brought about by his 1985 initiative was pretty well total—but it did not dent his obtusely self-righteous sense of moderation.

Professor Girvin does not seem to understand that moderation is not a policy but a mode, and that politics consists of policies. A policy might be implemented more effectively by vigour in one instance and by moderation in another. But, without an implementable policy in a crisis, there can be no such thing as moderation.

Referring back to Edwards's assertion that Ray Burke was criminally “on the take” and that Haughey might have been, it needs to be pointed out that Burke was

not convicted of taking bribes, and was imprisoned only for being held in contempt of the new inquisitorial mode of law brought into Irish affairs by the Tribunals. This new law does not formulate charges to which one can plead guilt or innocence. It requires confessions to be made. Our criticism of Burke was that he did not bring the confessional system into contempt by holding out against it in prison. We remember that the major criticism of the Moscow Trials hinged on the fact that confession by the accused played a central part in them. This was set to be a throwback to mediaevalism. And if Communist Moscow why not in capitalist Ireland? Do the enlightened ones of the *Irish Times* not think that, in becoming capitalist, Ireland has replaced the private confessional with a public one?

free market"—Milton Friedman (Nobel prize-winning economist and leading champion of free-market capitalism).

And Galbraith's rejoinder?

"The modern conservative is engaged in one of man's oldest exercises in moral philosophy; that is the search for a superior moral justification for selfishness."

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## C. J. Haughey

On the occasion of the death of Charles Haughey on 13th June 2006, his leading role in establishing social partnership was recalled by Trade Union representatives.

The late former Taoiseach oversaw the first partnership negotiations, which led the signing of the Programme for National Recovery by employers, unions and farm bodies in 1987.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions said it noted "with regret" the former Taoiseach's passing. "*The executive council of congress enjoyed a good working relationship with Mr Haughey during his time in office*", it said.

"He will be particularly remembered for his courtesy and for his vision in engaging with the unions, employers and farmers in 1987 to initiate the Programme for National Recovery. This initiative was a unique adaptation of the European social dialogue process and it led to the social partnership model which we have today. It is a model which has given Ireland an unparalleled era of economic and social progress."

SIPTU President Jack O'Connor also said he had heard of Mr Haughey's death with regret.

"Despite the many controversies in which he became embroiled and the criticisms he attracted, sometimes justifiably, it will always remain to his credit that he had the foresight and determination to seek a negotiated solution to the enormous difficulties facing our economy in the late 1980s", Mr O'Connor said.

"At a time when many of his contemporaries were beguiled by the futile politics of Thatcherism, he recognised the importance of organised workers in the trade union movement as a key element in tackling the problems facing our economy, laying the foundations for sustainable development and helping create our current prosperity."

# The Captain Kelly Petition

*Personal Appeal from Mrs. Sheila Kelly*

Since the death of my husband in 2003 a petition to clear his name has been put on the Internet. Even though acquitted in the Dublin Arms Trials 1970 his reputation was smeared and the family suffered greatly as a consequence. In 2001 new revelations came to light and documents were found which proved that Captain Kelly should not have gone forward for trial. A few politicians issued reports and tried to minimise the impact of these documents, especially after an RTE Prime Time TV programme showed that the statement of Colonel Hefferon was altered by lawyers working for the Attorney General of the time. Around 20% of the Colonel's pre-trial statement was deleted. I have now got all these documents together and presented them to the Taoiseach's office.

Some of them were deliberately withheld from the trial, which meant that all evidence relevant to the accused was not available. The person who played a large part in the setting up of the website for Captain Kelly's case to be highlighted is Mr. Fionnbarra O'Dochartaigh, an author and historian. He is a civil rights veteran who lives in Derry. Since '03 he has done Trojan work and it is through him that I can make this appeal for your solidarity.

I wonder if you would use your contacts to get people to sign the petition?

It is located at [www.captainkelly.org](http://www.captainkelly.org) Paper petitions are also available on request. Currently on-line there are fifty two pages with 25 names per page already but we need more to keep up the pressure. It is now a civil rights issue and needs to be highlighted as a matter of urgency.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you in anticipation.

Kindest regards,

**Sheila Kelly**

c/o [rights.civil@googlemail.com](mailto:rights.civil@googlemail.com)

## *Message from Capt. Kelly Justice Campaign manager*

As the 3rd anniversary of the demise of Capt. James J. Kelly falls on July 16th, on behalf of the 1968 civil rights veterans' network, I have decided to write to you personally to ask if as an individual, or as part of a media outlet, or as a member of an organised group, you would be interested in marking such, in whatever way you think you can? Interested sections

of the media can be furnished with Mrs. Kelly's e-mail and telephone details, and the phone numbers for Mr. John Kelly, (not related) a co-accused in the 1970 Arms Trials.

What follows is merely some background on the Captain Kelly Justice Campaign, which really needs a major boost, as explained in Mrs. Kelly's letter. As with most voluntary and genuine grassroots civil rights' initiatives, we have very limited resources, and thus cannot afford the luxury of widespread advertising etc. However, we believe we have assembled a valuable resource aimed at securing action from the Irish State, assembled by way of press reports, videos etc which we cordially invite you to study within our dedicated website: [www.captainkelly.org](http://www.captainkelly.org)

**Fionnbarra O'Dochartaigh, B.A**  
[rights.civil@googlemail.com](mailto:rights.civil@googlemail.com)

## *Towards 2016:* main points

*Pay, the Workplace and Employment Rights Compliance:*

- 10 per cent pay increase in four phases over 27 months;
  - (a) an initial rise of 3 per cent; (b) 2 per cent after six months; (c) 2.5 per cent after further nine months; (d) 2.5 per cent after further six months, to cover final six months of agreement.
- Additional half per cent increase for those earning Euro10.25 or less;
- Minimum wage increase to be agreed by September 1st and applied from next January;
- Green Paper on pensions to be published within 12 months;
- Office of Director for Employment Rights Compliance (ODERC), to be established, staffed by 90 labour inspectors;
- New legislation to prevent employers from making people redundant in order to replace them with cheaper labour;
- New penalties of up to Euro250,000 and/or prison for breaches of employment law.

*Social and macroeconomic measures:*

- Lowest social welfare rate to be raised to 30 per cent of gross average industrial earnings in 2007;
- 27,000 social housing units to be provided in next three years;
- Provision of 500 primary care teams;
- Family carers strategy to be developed by end of 2007.

(The Irish Times, 15.6.2006).

**An analysis of the new Social Partnership agreement will appear in next month's Labour Comment.**

## GALBRAITH continued

monetarist doctrines of Milton Friedman, and Arthur Laffer's notion that cutting income tax on the rich would increase government revenue.

"As Galbraith tirelessly pointed out during the 1980s, President Reagan's policy of cutting taxation at the top end of the scale, and welfare benefits at the bottom, was based on the curious assumption that the rich were not working properly because they had too little money, the poor because they had too much.

"He was fond, too, of characterising the trickle-down economics of the Reagan-Bush era as advocating feeding the horse more oats because some would pass through to the road for the sparrows" (The Guardian, 1.5.2006).

In his most famous book *The Affluent Society* (1958), he argued that overproduction of consumer goods was harming the public sector and depriving Americans of such benefits as clean air, clean streets, good schools and support for the arts.

### THE CONTENTED MAJORITY

The interests of many of those who do not vote (50% in presidential elections, more in congressional contests) are barely represented, Galbraith argued, in the process of government decision-making. The better-off classes—the "contented majority"—whose votes both Republicans and Democrats must seek, demand that taxes be kept low, and used to finance, not measures to help the underclass or even to repair America's crumbling infrastructure, but programmes that help the contented classes themselves: social security, Medicare, and the insurance of their bank and building society deposits, many of which would otherwise have been wiped out by the financial scandals and collapses which marked the 1980s.

Happiness, he wrote in *The Great Society*, does not require an expanding economy.

In his last major work, *The Great Society* (1997), Galbraith gave his definition of the perfect political system. The rich accepted high rates of taxation, immigrants were welcome and education was seen as important as an end in itself. Happiness, he said did not require an expanding economy.

### MANUAL LABOUR

John Kenneth Galbraith was born on October 15, 1908, on a small farm near Iona Station in the Canadian province of Ontario. Farm life he later wrote helped him appreciate the nature of manual labour.

"A long day following a plodding, increasingly reluctant team behind a harrow endlessly back and forth over the uninspiring Ontario terrain persuaded one that all other work was easy", he wrote. "This early life could hardly have been in greater contrast with life at Harvard, where more than six hours of teaching a week is often considered a grave impairment of academic freedom."

### A MAN OF THE LAND

In 1931, Galbraith managed to obtain a research grant to study agricultural economics at the University of California, in Berkeley.

Galbraith's study of economics at Berkeley confirmed what he had already learned about agriculture from casual observation. And it was a lesson many economists still refuse to accept. And a lesson many economic observers in Ireland want to ignore.

What Galbraith came to understand was that farming was fundamentally different from other forms of economic activity. Even if you accepted prevailing economic orthodoxy of the way markets operated—and Galbraith did not then, and still did up until his death—markets for farm products do not operate according to orthodox theory.

Farmers, large numbers of them producing undifferentiated products, would always be facing organised buyers capable of manipulating prices down to ruinously low levels. It was necessary for the farm sector to be shielded from the inevitability by government action of one sort or another.

Galbraith maintained that view to the end of his life.

The curious thing is that orthodox economic opinion denies Galbraith's fundamental proposition; yet those in political power in the US—who in all other respects oppose what Galbraith stood for—continue to provide support for farmers in ways which accord with Galbraith's ideas. The EU does the same for European farmers—in the face of concerted opposition from most of the economics profession.

### MAINSTREAM ECONOMIC DELUSION

Galbraith believed that mainstream economic opinion rested upon a delusion. It assumes, in the face of all the evidence to the contrary, that the operation of market forces can or should be the decisive factory in shaping economic life. Providing that governments keep their hands off the levers of economic power, the market will supposedly deliver the best, fairest and most enduring economic outcomes.

Galbraith totally rejected this thesis throughout his life. As an untenured academic at Harvard, he was producing articles which, for the first time, calculated the amount of the total cost of goods which was outlayed on advertising and marketing. His point was that expenditure, which amounted to between 20 and 30 per cent of the selling prices of goods, had as its purpose the corruption of the operation of the market. Given that business persisted with this activity, then presumably it was successful in that purpose.

Galbraith's second proposition, no less telling, was developed in his 1967 book, *The New Industrial State*. Here, Galbraith challenged the idea behind classical economics: that is, that the US economy met the requirements for a classical market economy. Those requirements presumed many small manufacturers facing many small buyers with none on either side able to influence prices.

### LARGE SCALE MANUFACTURING

Galbraith maintained that mere observation disproved the entire theory. Buyers were being served by a few large manufacturers who could, and would, have the capacity to influence price.

He added that not merely was this a fact, but it was highly desirable. Large-scale manufacture, organised in exactly that way, made it possible for consumers to be supplied with the best products at the lowest price—provided only that manufacturers were prevented from exercising their market power to influence the price. This could be achieved by appropriate regulation over monopoly power.

### SOVIET HONOUR

Neither a communist nor a socialist, it is said that Galbraith confessed that he was disappointed at the collapse of communism, and took mischievous pleasure in being one of the few Westerners to be honoured by the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

With Soviet economist Stanislav Menshikov, he wrote *Capitalism, Communism And Coexistence: From A Bitter Past To A Better Prospect*. Published in 1988, the book was a compilation of informal discussion between the two men.

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"Many reformers—Galbraith is among them—have as their basic objections to the free market that it frustrates them in achieving their reforms, because it enables people to have what they want, not what the reformers want. Hence every reformers has a strong tendency to be adverse to a

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**LABOUR**

# Comment

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## J.K. Galbraith

A real enemy of the Celtic Tiger passed away on 29th April 2006. John Kenneth Galbraith died in his ninety-seventh year. A price fixer. An outright opponent of the 'Free Market'. A Prices and Incomes man to the bitter end. A man who believed that 'consumer sovereignty was a myth' and that the happiness of human-kind didn't depend on a continually expanding market.

An evil Dr. Moriarty agin' the Tiger's Sherlock Holmes! But at least Galbraith wasn't a Fenian! He came from a Calvinistic Scottish-Canadian background.

His first big job came in 1941 when at the age of 32, he was put in charge of price control in the US at the Office of Price Administration, which was arguably the most powerful civilian post in the management of the wartime economy.

At first, as one of the earliest and most enthusiastic American disciples of the British economist John Maynard Keynes, he thought that only selective price controls would be needed to supplement the general measures of taxation and compulsory saving that Keynes had called for in his famous 1940 pamphlet: *How To Pay For The War*. Later, he came to realise that general price controls were required, and, with President Roosevelt's backing, they were introduced in April 1942, with astonishing success. Between then and the end of the war the inflation rate was kept to about two per cent a year, although output rose by almost a third, and unemployment was virtually non-existent.

After two years, Galbraith and his staff had placed virtually all goods and services in the United States under his control. But

he had *"reached the point that all price fixers reach—my enemies outnumbered my friends"*.

In the mid-term elections of 1942, the Democrats lost seats in Congress and business interests were demanding a clipping of Galbraith's economic wings.

The experience had two profound effects on Galbraith's thinking. First, he became one of the earliest and staunchest advocates of a prices and incomes policy as an essential ingredient of an economic policy designed to combine full employment with a reasonable degree of price stability. Secondly, it drew his attention to the extent of industrial concentration and oligopolistic pricing practices in the US—*"It is relatively easy"*, he remarked, *"to fix prices that are already fixed"*.

Although Galbraith has never explicitly said so, there remains the impression that he believed that some measure of control over prices and wages is necessary if capitalism is to deliver the best economic outcomes. Without that, it

becomes impossible to contain potential inflationary pressures without harm to one or another part of society.

### PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EXPENDITURE

This gross imbalance between public and private expenditure Galbraith attributed mainly to the fact that one of the foundations of orthodox economic analysis, consumer sovereignty, was simply a myth. The market did not respond eagerly to the wishes of individual consumers, as expressed by their freely-taken decisions about how to spend their money. On the contrary, large corporations which invest huge sums in the design, planning and manufacture of some new product have to be sure that it will sell, and this they do by creating a want for it.

This notion was, of course, thoroughly subversive: if wants are created by those who satisfy them, in what sense does this process increase welfare? How far is an increase in the output of the economy a measure of an increase in human satisfaction or happiness?

No wonder such strong hostility was directed towards him by some elements of his own profession, particularly by the neo-classical economists who disliked his debunking of the unrealistic assumptions on which their models were based, and dismissed his approach to economics as *"unrigorous"*.

"His contribution was to apply fine judgement, experience and spirited writing to making the case for an intelligently run mixed economy. In the process, he produced devastating criticism of the ability of extreme market forces—or "the invisible hand"—to deliver the goods promised by the classical economists and their modern apostles, the propagators of Reaganomics and Thatcherism" (The Times, London, 1.5.2006).

"His irony and wit were persistently deployed against the absurdities of the

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