

# IRISH POLITICAL REVIEW

June 2013

Vol.28, No.6 ISSN 0790-7672

and **Northern Star** incorporating **Workers' Weekly** Vol.27 No.6 ISSN 954-5891

## Irish, Poles And Czechs Plump For German EU Leadership

In a recent tribute lecture on the contribution of the late Garret Fitzgerald to Ireland's role in Europe, Brendan Halligan, of the Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA)—the think tank that drives Irish foreign policy—described the dramatic strategic choices Irish EU and eurozone membership has entailed and continues to entail:

"... if a country elects to join [the EU] then it does so in the full knowledge that France and Germany are at the core of the project and largely determine the pace and direction of its progress, as well as the manner of its responses to political and economic challenges as they emerge."

Ireland achieved the position of a European 'insider' by the choices it made that put it at odds with Britain, notably when it broke with Sterling and joined ERM in 1979, supported the Intergovernmental Conference in 1985 that set the course for the single market and monetary union, and committed to the Treaty on European Union in 1992:

"To these could be added the decision of Taoiseach Enda Kenny at the European Council in December 2011 to sign up for ... the Fiscal Compact... In practical terms, the Eurozone will become the core of the Union, a core which will get progressively larger. Those outside the core will constitute a new form of Union membership as yet undefined, with Britain as its most prominent, perhaps its only, member.... but membership {of the Eurozone} will raise two sets of difficulties ...: a growing separation from Britain ... and deeper integration with the other member states affecting taxation, economic governance, internal affairs and external security...."

Halligan set out what he called the "*FitzGerald Principles*" for Irish policy towards European integration, first and foremost:

"Accept that the European Union is essentially a Franco/German enterprise, that they set the direction, content and pace of the integration process, and operate accordingly."

Ireland should always seek to be "*politically central to the life of the Union by working closely with France and Germany*", and where a choice has to be made between relations

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## Good Friday Agreement

### Working Too Well!

The working out of the Good Friday Agreement is troubling some people. It is working too well.

One of these troubled people is Lord Bew of the Official IRA. He spoke on the subject to a Law Conference on the moon-scape of the Burren, Co. Clare. According to the *Irish Times* report (May 6), he said:

"As the deal was a 'top-down, elitist' project, driven by leaders on both sides rather than reflecting a 'thrust upward' from the streets, it was expected that sectarian conflict would not disappear."

And Judge Catherine McGuinness said there was far too little understanding of the "*semi-stifled bitterness*" that remained between the two communities in the North. She continued:

"There is, no doubt, polite middle-class interaction, but what is really said after those neat middle-class doors have closed behind people?... Peace? Perhaps. Reconciliation? Not much."

The Judge suggested that the nature of the 1998 Agreement was causing difficulties:

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## Deserters and *The Guardian*

In a *Guardian* piece on 7th May 2013, titled *Unionists welcome pardon for Irish who joined British army to fight Nazis*, Henry McDonald, the *Observer's* Belfast correspondent, says:

"Thousands were barred from civil service jobs and ostracised in the Irish Free State after the war because they had joined the British armed forces, some of them deserting the Irish army to sign up against the struggle to defeat Nazi Germany."

McDonald quite clearly is saying that all southern Irishmen who joined the British Army during WW11 were barred from civil service jobs and ostracised. What is one to make of this? Is it simply a case of lazy journalism; of conflating the issues of the penalties for Desertion with the generality of the experience of any southern Irishmen who joined the British Army at that time? Possibly so, except this is not the first article McDonald had published in the *Guardian* on the matter.

In a previous effort on 12th June 2012, McDonald had this to say:

"Four and a half thousand Irishmen who were branded deserters for joining Britain's struggle against Nazi Germany are to be pardoned, the Irish government announced on Tuesday.

"Irish justice minister Alan Shatter told the Irish parliament that the government apologises for the way they were treated by Ireland after the second world war. **The men deserted from the Irish defence forces at a time when the neutral Irish Free State was playing no direct part in**

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Registered Employment Agreements: An Important Victory

Philip O'Connor

with Britain and the "core", "then decide in favour of the Franco German alliance". It must also always support "moves towards enhancing the supra-nationality of the Union so as to enlarge rather than diminish national sovereignty" (Strategies for a Small State in a Large Union, IIEA Lecture, 9th May 2013)

### POLES AND CZECHS FOLLOW SUIT

Ireland is not alone in opting to side with German leadership of Europe. In the 1990s the countries of "New Europe" were brought into the West under Anglo-American hegemony. As part of this they aligned themselves overwhelmingly with Thatcher's Britain which was then at the high point of its campaign to end the "deepening" integration of the EU and to turn it instead into a pure-and-simple market along neo-liberal lines. A year ago, before the Euro was stabilised, it was gleefully and confidently predicted in the Anglo-American press that the "euro crisis" was repelling East European countries from the eurozone integration process. In fact, developments since then have taken an exactly opposite course.

Typical of the new generation of East

European leaders is Poland's current Foreign Minister, Radoslaw Sikorski, who, when a young man, was part of the *Solidarnosc* movement and after being exiled in 1981 moved to Britain where he studied at Oxford. He was prominent in the Oxford Union and joined the radical Tory "Canning Club", whose members included David Cameron and Boris Johnston. He became an investment advisor in Poland for Rupert Murdoch and married the anti-Communist historian and one-time Editor of *The Economist* Anne Applebaum.

But in late 2011 Sikorski engineered a remarkable re-direction of Polish policy away from its British orientation. Describing Germany as the "indispensable nation" of Europe, he said—in a speech in Berlin—that Poland feared German power much less than German inaction in the Euro crisis. This Polish plea more than anything else spurred Angela Merkel to take on the leadership role in Europe which Germany has exercised since. Within a month of Sikorski's declaration she had issued the Deauville Declaration with Sarkozy which was a statement of intent to break the deadlock in European integration and led

to the Fiscal Compact of December 2011. Because it was vetoed by Britain, the Compact set the eurozone on a course of integration outside the straightjacket of the EU Treaties. Sikorski ensured that Poland joined the Compact and has since steered the state on a course towards membership of the Euro. The whole trajectory of Polish development towards Germany has been watched with horror by Timothy Garton Ash who described a recent British-Polish Round Table:

"Do you want to be left alone ... I don't want to use the phrase ... at the mercy of Germany?" To which a Polish participant replied: 'If the UK leaves, it's not the German demons we're afraid of—it's the Southerners, the French demons ...' For Poland wants to be part of a strong, disciplined northern Europe. ... the Poles want to seize their chance to be in the hard core at last. And if that means being part of a German Europe, well, so be it...." (*Guardian*, 16 May 2013)

The only country to join Britain in opting out of the Fiscal Compact was the Czech Republic which had followed a fanatically pro-British line in Europe since the 1990s. But in elections last year, the party of the long-dominant Thatcherite eurosceptic President Fuchs was swept away by the pro-European Social Democrats led by the former Communist Milos Zeman. Recently Zeman flew the European flag from Prague Castle alongside the Czech flag, something unimaginable under Fuchs, has affiliated the Czech Republic to the Fiscal Compact, and announced his intention to "join the euro zone in five years" (*Prague Daily Monitor*, 22 April 2013).

### GERMAN LEADERSHIP CONCESSIONS

In the ferocious ideological onslaught on the euro (and particularly on Germany) that accompanied the global crisis, the success of consolidating the Euro as a rules-based fiat currency is never more than grudgingly acknowledged. The currency has more than survived and this survival is no longer seriously questioned, even by the *Financial Times*. The Euro has retained its role as the second reserve currency in the world, its value in relation to the Dollar and Sterling, and, most significantly, has seen four new countries join it since the start of the crisis and many others line up to complete accession.

Angela Merkel has spoken of the concessions Germany has made in weakening its own "social market" model in the interests of the bigger goal of European integration:

"... Europe was made up of different cultures and economies with different strengths. The key, she said, was for Europe to orient itself towards best practices. That meant Germany accepting a single market for services, a common labour market and more compatible social security systems, so that Europeans could move from one state to the other without worrying about their pensions. "We don't always need to give up national practices but we need to be compatible", Merkel said. "It is chaos right now"..." (*Reuters*, 22.04.2013).

But since having leadership forced on it with the watershed of the Fiscal Compact, Merkel has also spoken of the possible benefit for the rest of Europe of some of some features of Germany's Social Market economy (see 'Merkel and the export of industrial democracy', *Irish Political Review*, April 2013).

In similar vein she has told the G20 that the structural consolidation of the Euro currency would go hand in hand with protecting it from shocks from the global financial markets (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 14.06.2012).

As Germany gets more confident in its leadership role in Europe, we hope we can expect it to re-assert the qualities of its social market economy as the eurozone norm.

Philip O'Connor

## Working Too Well!

continued

"The carefully choreographed arrangements of the Stormont political structure ensure that every issue is considered in the framework of divided identity..."

There is no "divided identity" now, and there never was. That is, there is no schizophrenia. The Six Counties is one of the sanest places in the world. The 'Northern Ireland' political structure imposed on it ninety years ago by Westminster—imposed on two peoples who were at war with one another—ensured that "identity" remained clear and definite in each of them. Tricky questions asked for manipulative political purposes by the State might elicit tricky answers, but that did not cause people to forget who they were.

The two peoples were at war with each other when the Bill to set up Northern Ireland was introduced at Westminster in 1920. But they were at war with each other as components of the general Anglo-Irish War, that resulted from the refusal of the Westminster Parliament to heed the result of the 1918 Election in Ireland,

## Austeria

Paul Krugman wrote a very interesting piece called *How The Case For Austerity Has Crumbled* in the *New York Review Of Books*, in which he appears to deal with the austerity argument quite comprehensively. However, I'm left with a slight feeling of unease as, beyond his critique of Austerian economics, he fails to address the wider issue of the relationship between Government borrowing as a percentage of GDP and the growth of credit. He seems to brush up against it without looking at it in the face. For instance he admits that there was a housing bubble on both sides of the Atlantic and that in fact he saw it coming but he doesn't see any relationship between that housing bubble the proliferation of cheap credit and Government borrowing.

While I can't claim to have any deep knowledge on the subject, instinctively it seems to me that if you have Governments borrowing extensively this must have implications for the wider economy and in particular in the area of credit provision. Government borrowing must have an impact on the cost of credit at least in the modern world. In classic economic terms this would not be an issue as Governments were assumed to be able to influence credit provision through their control of money via currency circulation. But money now assumes a variety of forms, the most pernicious of which is the ability of private banks to generate it on an unprecedented scale via private loans, credit cards and mortgages.

In such circumstances, if Government borrowing has the effect of sustaining a certain level of domestic demand, that demand ultimately manifests itself in terms of individual income and spending. When banks then tap into that level of individual income, and then proceed to amplify it through offering multiples of it in terms of credit provision, the basis already exists for an inevitable bubble. A bubble in this sense can only be a property bubble because it is the one point where the pressure can build up across a wide enough area of social activity to impact on the wider economy. Later in his article he says:

"As many observers have noted, the turn away from fiscal and monetary stimulus can be interpreted, if you like, as giving creditors priority over workers. Inflation and low interest rates are bad for creditors even if they promote job creation; slashing government deficits in the face of mass unemployment may deepen a depression, but it increases the certainty of bondholders that they'll be repaid in full."

But, on the other hand it cannot be denied that in modern economies fiscal and monetary stimulus (or, if you like, Government borrowing) can also provide the stimulus for excessive credit provision—you can't have one without the other. It is his failure to deal with this that bothers me.

Eamon Dyas

which gave a strong mandate for the establishment of independent government in Ireland.

In 1921 Westminster Partitioned Ireland. It legislated to set up two devolved Governments under British sovereignty. It knew very well that the 26 Counties, which had set up its own independent Government in defiance of British military rule, would refuse to become the devolved Government of Southern Ireland and that only the Six County devolution would be functional.

The Ulster Unionist refusal to participate in any form of all-Ireland politics—under Westminster sovereignty or not—had been used as a debating point against Sinn Fein as against the Home Rule Party before it. But, when the 'Ulster' objection was removed by Partition, Britain still

refused to concede independence to the rest of the country.

Six months after Northern Ireland was set up, Westminster made a deal with a section of Sinn Fein (but not with the Dail), that is called a Treaty but wasn't, whereby a Dominion state was established in place of the Republic in the 26 Counties. The Treatyite section of Sinn Fein was persuaded to agree to that arrangement, and to make war on their colleagues who didn't, by an informal understanding with Whitehall that Northern Ireland would be eroded by a Boundary Commission to a point where it would cease to be viable. The Irish Government (foolishly) expected that the Commission would transfer Fermanagh, Tyrone and South Armagh to the South.

The Treatyite Provisional Government,

established on British authority, made war in Northern Ireland in 1922, to ward off the danger of it settling down. Whitehall was most understanding.

The Northern nationalist community was urged by the Treatyite Government in Dublin to have no truck with the new devolved Government in the North. Dublin undertook to fund its schools, and generally facilitate it in living autonomously beyond the Northern Ireland structures.

The war in the Six Counties was at its most intense during the first half of 1922. But Whitehall had arranged that it was no longer a segment of the general Anglo-Irish War, but was a little war on its own, at least in superficial appearance.

Then in July 1922 Whitehall ordered its Provisional Government in Dublin—whose *de facto* power came entirely from the 'Treaty'—to make war on the Anti-Treatyites, with the threat that if it did not do so promptly the British Army—which had not gone away—would become active again.

With 'Civil War' erupting in the South, the Treatyite War in the North collapsed. And the nationalist community was left at the mercy of the devolved authority, which was given a free hand by the sovereign power to deal with it.

That was how Westminster provided for "*good government*" in the Six Counties after Partition.

Ireland was divided. Part of it was retained within the British state—but it was excluded from the political life of the British state. Northern Ireland, excluded from the politics of the state, had no political life. The Unionists were required to return a clear majority at each election to ensure that they remained "*connected*" with the British state, and they had to police the nationalist third of the population, which had no access to the democratic opportunities of the politics of the state.

The nationalist community lived its own life to the greatest possible extent. What else was there for it to do?

Lacking internal possibilities of development, it is not surprising that the system led to war. War eventually led to a drastic alteration which established a relationship of substantive equality between the two communities, effectively negating the majority status of the majority. If the

Limbo-land of Northern Ireland must exist—and the power that established it insists that it must—its present form, which Judge McGuinness and Lord Bew find objectionable, is what makes it tolerable and viable for the time being.

The 1998 arrangement was, of course, elitist in purpose. The intention was to establish unrepresentative middle class groups in authority under it. But Lord Trimble, advised by Lord Bew, made a mess of his side of it, and undermined the chances of the SDLP in the process. And then there actually was an "*upward thrust*" from the streets, displacing the incompetent elitists to the marginal extremes, and enabling the new arrangement to work.

Let's forget about Lord Bew, who lives in some kind of Marxist-Leninist/Stickie/Jackson Society fantasy, and imagines that the war was about religion and that the peace is a result of the decline of religion—as he suggested at the Burren Conference. But surely Judge McGuinness should know better.

The "*semi-stifled bitterness*" is a phenomenon of the Unionist community and "*Constitutional nationalist*" elements in the nationalist community who can't bear the thought that it is the "*men of violence*" who have brought about something like a constitutional structure in the proper sense, and know how to work it.

The Unionists chose the system of community conflict when they might have insisted that the region be an integral part of the body politic of the state. They chose badly, and if they don't like the outcome they'll have to lump it.

If, at Partition, Westminster had simply kept the North within the political life of the state, it is very probable that confused "*identities*" would have evolved. British politics is very good at that sort of thing. But Westminster chose instead to establish a bizarre political structure which could only preserve the relationship of antagonism between communities on which it was imposed.

The Good Friday re-arrangement acknowledged that reality but equalised the relationship. It works because it provides a level playing field.

By what system of brainwashing does Judge McGuinness think "*identities*" can be altered against the grain of existing political arrangements?

## Deserters

continued

### *the battle against the Third Reich.*

"In August 1945, the government summarily dismissed soldiers who had absented themselves during the war and disqualified them for seven years from holding employment or office remunerated from the state's central fund.

"It is estimated that about 100 of them may still be alive..."

No conflation here—this earlier article clearly sets out that the penalties only applied to those who deserted the Irish Army.

So why the inaccuracy in the later article? One could be forgiven for speculating that there is a political agenda operating here, one which fits neatly with the historical revisionist agenda in the Republic, to paint De Valera and the Irish State as essentially pro fascist in orientation during WW1. Why might this be important? Of course it helps vindicates Unionism in its opposition to and contempt for the state established in Ireland in opposition to British Imperial power.

Joe Moylan

Letter published in *Irish Examiner*,  
11th May 2013

### **Irish neutrality was noble; not all our soldiers were**

Minister for Defence Alan Shatter said Irish war-time neutrality was a "*statement of moral bankruptcy*".

That is a precondition for the State to pardon deserters. Most countries in Europe in 1939-45 declared neutrality (as did the US) and only became involved in the conflict when they were attacked.

De Valera's achievement—supported by all parties, the trade unions and the majority of the population—was to maintain neutrality, despite invasion threats. This was noble. Minister Shatter said these men deserted "*to fight Hitler*". But many were sent to the fight the Japanese. Others were sent to the colony garrisons, including India, where Gandhi and independence leaders were jailed. Others deserted and never joined any army. Many 'served' with the British beyond 1945 and participated in their brutal operations in Greece, Burma, Kenya, Malaya, Palestine and elsewhere. Is the pardon condoning those imperial operations?

Philip O'Connor

## Get Adams!

'Get Adams', anybody!

And put those Northerners back where they belong, to stew in the mess they were placed in, between 1921 and 1925.

That is the only sense that can be made of what is going on with regard to the Sinn Fein Leader in Ireland for a while now.

Miriam O'Callaghan's interview with the Gerry Adams on RTE's *Primetime* was another episode in the general campaign to 'Get Adams'. In the course of the TV interrogation by O' Callaghan she challenged the Sinn Fein Leader with a series of unfounded allegations based on mere speculation and hearsay. These allegations can be described as unfounded because, despite them being continually asserted by the media, nobody has produced a shred of evidence to support them. Adams has never been arrested and charged with anything over the course of the War, and yet he was expected to prove his innocence with regard to them by O'Callaghan.

O'Callaghan refused to take the absence of convictions, or the non-existence of evidence, as being of any significance. It seems that something can be described as 'widely believed', simply because the media continually asserts it; whereupon, given *imprimatur* by, for example, the families of victims who have been fed information by the media in the first place, this is now enough to warrant a show-trial.

In the interview O'Callaghan raised the issue of the killings of Garda Sam Donegan in 1972 and Prison Officer Brian Stack in 1983. She put it to Adams that, because "he was a senior leader of the Republican movement" and "the IRA had killed them", he would know who was responsible. Here is a sample of her accusations:

"I'm saying to you, can you after all these years apologise? Because you're almost sitting there like you knew nothing about anything that happened within the republican family—and nobody really believes that."

Adams said: "I would like you to be fair. I know nothing about these killings", and made the point that he did not know everything that went on during the conflict. He did not know whether the IRA had killed them or not, saying that other Republican groupings like the INLA or Official IRA or Saor Eire, could possibly have been responsible, for instance.

But O'Callaghan was having none of it:

"Two Sinn Fein colleagues of yours, Martin Ferris and Dessie Ellis, were in Portlaoise when Brian Stack was there... and you're still colleagues and friends of theirs. And in his autobiography, Martin Ferris spoke about Brian Stack being a very vindictive individual. To the Stack family it looked like in some way he was trying to justify his murder. Like there's no way you couldn't have heard of Brian Stack's murder."

Adams then attempted to explain why the prison regime was indeed cruel, how prisoners were killed and seriously injured in the jails, and about the activities of the Heavy Gang—before he was cut off by O' Callaghan demanding to know what had happened to Stack. Adams complained:

"Well, if you let me finish my point, then you might know, but if you keep interrupting me, nobody will know. A mark of our interviews over a number of decades has been perpetual interruptions while I'm trying to elaborate on a point."

O'Callaghan persisted:

"But you were talking to me about the cruel regime in Portlaoise, which almost sounds—and I'm not saying you're saying this—which almost sounds like you'd be justifying the murder of Brian Stack."

It hardly matters that pointing out that there was a "cruel regime in Portlaoise" is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a justification for the killing of Brian Stack.

The Sinn Fein leader then made a pertinent point: why were current members of the Irish Government never asked about what they knew about the killings of Seamus Costello and Larry White (IRSP), since they had been leaders in the Official Republican movement at the time of the killings by the IRA of Gardiner Street (the Officials).

But at that point the interview moved abruptly onto the case of the 1991 death of Tom Oliver in the Cooley mountains. O' Callaghan suddenly asserted that it was "widely believed" that "you were on the court of appeal" that decided on the killing.

A rather astonished Adams replied to this very serious accusation: "What are your sources?" To which O'Callaghan had no answer because she, presumably, had none.

After being rebuffed by this reply, O'Callaghan said in exasperation: "Do you really not know?"

Adams made the point that there were many more deaths in the North than those which O'Callaghan was focussing on and responsibility for these deaths lay much wider: "Look at all the people in the North who were abandoned by the British and Irish governments..."

But O'Callaghan interrupted this valid argument with the hysterical assertion: "You were in the IRA!" And thus reset the course of the interview to the required agenda of 'Get Adams'.

Adams said that, if people were truly interested in what happened to all these people, they should support his call for an independent international body to investigate these "legacy issues". But, he pointed out, neither the Irish nor the British Government was showing any interest in this. They were opposing the means to establish them.

(It can only be assumed that this is because the Governments are more interested in leaving these questions open, so that they can be employed in the media campaign to 'Get Adams', rather than find out the truth about them.)

Eoghan Harris was, of course, thrilled by the attempted show-trial of Adams and wrote in his *Sunday Independent* column praising O'Callaghan:

"Most interviewers succumb to Adam-speak after a short struggle, like peasant villagers caught in the path of a mudslide. But not Miriam O'Callaghan. Last Monday, she gave a masterclass on how to stay alert, cut through Adamspeak, and insist on an answer—even if the answer was only in the body language of Adams" (5.5.13)

Not being an expert on "body language", I cannot comment on this. I am sure that the meaning of body language is very much dependent on the perspective of the observer. But I have never heard of it being cited as evidence or to prove a fact.

Harris is not alone. It is a certainty that the Southern media is out to 'Get Adams'. Its various branches are even beginning to embrace the 'cleaned up' and de-toxified Fianna Fail because Michael Martin constantly attacks Sinn Fein—and they believe that Fianna Fail is the only effective antidote to the spread of republicanism in the South. If Fianna Fail has a purpose now, making it worth a resurrection, it is to 'Stop Sinn Fein'.

'Get Adams' has become an obsession. One is tempted to say, 'national obsession' but that would be false because there is nothing 'national' about the Irish media. It is divided between a British-owned part and a wannabe-British part.

Even though the Southern Establishment have an inkling that they are playing with fire and fear the consequences of what they are doing in the North, they do not seem to be able to stop themselves. On 22nd April, the front page lead in *The Irish*

*Times* was: "Warning—Release of Tapes could jeopardise the Peace Process"—referring to remarks by Ed Moloney that I shall deal with later.

Presumably the fear in Dublin is that Sinn Fein is gaining traction in the South and this is the context for the new-found love of Fianna Fail from the media that slaughtered them a few years ago. One example of this is summed up in the headline: "Soldiers of Destiny emerge from shadow of annihilation and look to a brighter future" by Arthur Beesley (IT 26.4.13).

The latest Martin attack on Republicans was at Arbour Hill: "Martin claims SF and Provisional Movement sullied the name of Republicanism". This was the headline in *The Irish Times* above the following:

"Mr Martin asserted that if people wanted to know where the men and women of 1916 would have stood in later years, they would find out by looking at what they did: taking the route of constitutional republicanism" (22.4.13)

But surely that—"taking the route of constitutional republicanism"—is what Gerry is actually being damned for by Martin's partners in the 'Get Adams' coalition: Which only goes to show the multi-dimensional character of the campaign.

#### NEW LEADER?

Another aspect of this is the attempt to create the impression that Sinn Fein's political prospects are hindered in the South by their Northern Leader. Tom Kelly wrote as follows in the *Irish News* in an article headed 'Recent past impedes plan on shared future':

"The Castro-like reluctance of Gerry Adams to relinquish his crown is hampering Sinn Fein's political advancement, North and South. Adams wants to remain a puppeteer pulling the strings of his own ministers from Connolly house. If you live in Louth and voted for El Presidente Adams you would have a right to feel short-changed as he is more often in the media talking about the North than the Republic. But Mr Adams, who always seems like a man of much self regard but of little self-awareness, is the elephant in the Sinn Fein living room" (IN 5.5.13).

This is another element of the 'Get Adams' campaign. It involves trying to work up an antagonism towards the Sinn Fein Leader to get him replaced by somebody from the South, who is expected to be less substantial and less politically skilful. It is the weirdest thing. There is not the slightest suggestion that there is any part of the Republican movement or the Northern Catholic community generally that views Adams as a liability—

precisely the opposite is the case.

What is entirely a media construct is therefore imagined by the shapers of public opinion to be capable, if it is said often enough, by enough people in the media, of generating a 'widely-believed' notion that will constitute the accepted truth and then influence things—just like the 'widely-believed' allegations of 'war crimes' that are being levelled against Adams.

Miriam Lord, who writes waspish ironic pieces in the *Irish Times*, has also joined the campaign to 'Get Adams'. She is not usually worth reading, but one could not help being struck by her headline on 15th April, when she was covering the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis: "Another Birthday for Sinn Fein's most glorious leader and perpetual president". She did her best to portray Adams as some sort of totalitarian leader so loved by the 'lesser breeds' inhabiting the non-British world:

"He is a totemic figure within the party. The analysts and observers who pronounce that the Sinn Féin leader is a politician past his sell-by-date and out of touch with the modern ways of a voterschmoozing party might have had second thoughts had they witnessed the undiminished allure of Adams to the enthusiastic crowd in Castlebar... central to it all was Adams, the Perpetual Leader. Together with veterans Martin Mc Guinness and Gerry Kelly, he provided the steady gravitational force around which everything else revolved. They were just there, a compelling presence, proving the anchor for all the activity. Without them, one suspected, the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis would have been just as jaded as all the other conferences from all the other parties. Without them it would have been just another exercise in political marketing. With them, it's still about the Struggle."

In part Kelly's and Lord's contributions are recognition of the importance of Adams and the Sinn Fein leadership—which conducted an orderly retreat from the battlefield to maintain the struggle at the political level. But it is also part of a continuing attempt to shift Adams from the Presidency of Sinn Fein to render the movement manageable by the Establishment.

It was noticeable that in the O'Callaghan interview her very last assertion was: "You DO realise, don't you that for Sinn Fein to ever get into government in the Republic, YOU will have to cease being Leader!"

O'Callaghan gave no reason for this bolt out of the blue and she did not say who was insisting on this or why. Adams sensibly replied that this was a question for the democracy and not her or any other hanger-on of a future coalition.

#### BOSTON TAPES

The O'Callaghan interview is linked, of course, to the main assault on Adams which has centred on the Boston Tapes episode. Here is some wishful thinking from the *Belfast Telegraph* of 2nd May 2013 headlined, "Boston College tapes: IRA recordings on Jean McConville death 'may bring about Gerry Adams' downfall":

"The Irish government is understood to be concerned that the release of the tapes could destabilise the peace process in Northern Ireland and the power-sharing government.

"The pressure is mounting on Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams, after one of the interviewers at the centre of the Northern Ireland's Troubles project, predicted it could bring about the politician's downfall.

"A spokeswoman for the PSNI said: "We are making plans to take possession of the material and proceed with our inquiry."

"The discussions with republican and loyalist paramilitaries formed part of an oral history of the Troubles.

"Ex-IRA member Dolores Price, now dead, was one of the interviewees, and it is claimed she discussed the disappearance of Belfast mother-of-10 Jean McConville. Authorities investigating Ms McConville's disappearance had called for the US government to subpoena the documents, invoking a treaty between Britain and the USA. The Republic's department of foreign affairs and the Irish Embassy are monitoring the matter.

"But an Irish government source said the coalition government was worried about what way the tapes would be made public. "We'd have a concern about what might happen when they are released", a source said.

"Former IRA prisoner Anthony Mc Intyre and journalist Ed Moloney, who compiled the interviews, had appealed to halt the release of the interviews with the late Ms Price to the PSNI. But their appeal was rejected when the US Supreme Court declined to hear it. It is believed Ms Price, who died in January and had been a vocal critic of Sinn Fein for accepting the Good Friday Agreement, may have implicated Mr Adams in the McConville killing. Mr Adams has continuously denied membership of the IRA and any involvement in the mother's abduction and killing.

"The Sinn Fein president has insisted both former IRA member Brendan Hughes and the late Ms Price "were telling

The Dublin/Monaghan Bombings,

1974,

*a military analysis,*

by

**John Morgan, Lt. Col (Retd.).**

248pp. Index.

ISBN: 978-1-872078-17-4. Belfast  
Historical Society. 2013.

€20, £17.50, post-free in Europe

lies” when they claimed he was responsible for Mrs McConville's disappearance. In a heated interview with Miriam O'Callaghan on RTE's 'Prime Time', Mr Adams insisted they were both people who had gone on in their lives to become “opponents”, felt he had 'sold out' and allied themselves with “various so-called dissident groups”.

“Mr (Ed) Moloney said that the contents of some of the interviews could bring about the downfall of Mr Adams.

““With Gerry Adams will also fall the peace process”, he stated.”

The campaign to '*Get Adams*' is getting so dirty that it resulted in the originators of the quest quarrelling with some upstarts in it at the *Irish News*—rather in the way bounty hunters would fight over the man with the price on his head.

This curious incident happened after an *Irish News* journalist, Allison Morris, interviewed Dolours Price while she was undergoing psychiatric care at St Patrick's Hospital, Dublin. After objections to publication from the Price family, the management of *The Irish News* agreed to a 'restrained' version of the story appearing, without direct quotes from Ms Price. However, after a fuller account appeared in *The Sunday Life*, Moloney alleged that Morris had given her story to her former *Andersonstown News* colleague, Ciaran Barnes, who then published an unrestrained account based on the tapes that Ms Morris had made. After this a cartoon depicting Morris in a PSNI uniform appeared on Anthony McIntyre's blog, *The Pensive Quill*. The outcome was that *Irish News* lawyers put pressure on McIntyre to remove the cartoon. Then a 6-month National Union of Journalists suspension was served on him. (A partial *Irish News* account of this peculiar incident appeared on 28th March 2013: '*NUJ ban for Boston College researcher*').

Ciaran Barnes apparently claimed that he got his information, not from the Morris Tapes but from the Boston Tapes. Moloney then suggested that Barnes could not have listened to the Boston Tapes because as—

"I have attested in an affidavit... she never once mentioned the Jean McConville case nor her alleged part in that woman's disappearance in her interview with Anthony McIntyre." (From Ed Moloney's blog, *The Broken Elbow*, 28.3.13)

But Moloney's attempt to expose Barnes exposed something else of much greater significance that appeared in Moloney's Affidavit. Danny Morrison pointed this out on his blog (*Explain Ed*):

"Ed Moloney has some explaining to do. In his affidavit to a Belfast Court two weeks ago he stated categorically that Dolours Price in her interviews with

Anthony McIntyre for Boston College's 'Belfast Project' does “not once mention the name Jean McConville... nor that she received orders to disappear people from Gerry Adams or any other IRA figure.”

"It only took him two years and seven months to correct a perception that he and McIntyre by their silence had perpetuated and fostered, fuelling dozens of newspaper features and television and radio programmes. Not that his affidavit was intended to do Adams any favours. It was just one more desperate attempt to win over a court, in this case in Belfast, to help prevent the repatriation of the worst oral archive project in the history of the world.

"Moloney and McIntyre's incredulous defence before courts in the US and Belfast has several strands: their 'concern' for McIntyre's safety; their 'concern' for the peace process and for those republican architects of it whom their interviewees have incriminated; and their 'concern' for the damage done to oral history projects and academic research.

"On all counts they have no defence.

"McIntyre baits mainstream republicans almost daily in his statements and writings, indicating that he does not consider them a threat (which was why his court submission in Belfast read so tongue-in-cheek). McIntyre considers the Belfast Agreement a sell-out, and Moloney's 'Voices From The Grave', interpreted by most reviewers as a major attack on Adams, showed no concern for the effect his allegations against Adams would have on the peace process.

"With regard to the oral history project and the duty of care they had towards interviewees, Moloney and McIntyre were warned by Boston College that each interviewee of the project was to be given a contract guaranteeing confidentiality "to the extent that American law allows".

"Dolours Price's 2010 interview with the 'Irish News', followed a month later by Ed Moloney's publication of 'Voices From The Grave', followed by his television documentary based on the same book, each played a part in provoking the two subpoenas in the USA from British authorities seeking the tapes as potential evidence in prosecutions.

"Rather than accept that he has been hoist on his own petard he has gone to extraordinary lengths to blame the 'Irish News' and the 'Sunday Life' newspapers for publishing an interview with Dolours Price in 2010 in which she made allegations against Gerry Adams, the same allegations that Moloney published about Adams in his book. The fact is that Ed Moloney would have no concern for the peace process and would have had no hesitation in publishing Dolours Price's allegations or those of other interviewees in 'Voices From The Grave II, III & IV etc' had Dolours Price or other interviewees died.

"In fact, implicit in a letter from Boston College librarian Justine Sundaram to

me is that Moloney has exclusive rights to publication of the tapes. But how dare anyone else publish interviews with his pets while they are alive! Particularly, if their interviews cover the subjects contained in the Boston College archive!

"Here is how Ed Moloney recently depicted Dolours Price at the time she was interviewed in February 2010 by Allison Morris of the 'Irish News': “When Dolours Price's family heard that she had given an interview to Allison Morris they were alarmed. She had a history of psychiatric problems and substance abuse. She has been diagnosed with PTSD, had been hospitalized repeatedly and was taking strong psychotropic drugs. Indeed on the day she spoke to Morris she was on day leave from St Patrick's Psychiatric Hospital in Dublin. Her family believed that in her mental state, and because of her anger over Gerry Adams' disavowal of the IRA, she was capable of saying literally anything and getting herself into undeserved trouble.”

"Yet, two weeks after the Morris interview, Moloney flies in from New York and he himself interviews her! But why? What was he doing interviewing a person he considered to be a seriously ill woman? Surely, Anthony McIntyre's ten or eleven interviews with her were adequate and comprehensive? Had Moloney done follow-up interviews with others in the project or was she the only one? Again, if so, then why?

"When Dolours Price was interviewed in the Irish and US media... (Moloney indelicately described her as going “on the rampage”), she was adamant that what she was saying in these interviews she had said in interview for the Boston College Belfast Project, thus undermining Moloney and McIntyre's attempts to blame the 'Irish News' for the mess (instead of themselves for initiating the project) but also potentially calling into question Moloney's affidavit in which he stated that she did not make these allegations against Adams in her interviews with McIntyre.

"However, this can be squared. When Moloney read the 'Irish News' interview in 2010 did he discover that it had lurid details that were not in McIntyre's interview? Was that what motivated him to come and re-interview Dolours Price so that he would have Adams being damned again? And if that is the case then doesn't it once again expose the main motive of this project as being 'Get Adams'?

"I believe Moloney when he says in his affidavit that in her interview with McIntyre Price does "not once mention the name Jean McConville... nor that she received orders to disappear people from Gerry Adams or any other IRA figure."

"The big question for Moloney now is this: can he say about his interview with Dolours Price what he was prepared to say under oath about the Dolours Price interview that was carried out by



McIntyre: namely, that she does not mention Adams or Jean McConville?

"Or was Adams what it was all about from Day One?"

As regards the *Irish News* more recent participation in the 'Get Adams' campaign: the paper has been pursuing its own relentless 'Get Adams' agenda, presumably on behalf of *Fide et Patria* (in its present day manifestations of the Catholic Hierarchy and the SDLP. Sinn Fein has crossed the Bishops in its blocking of a Pro-Life amendment at Stormont).

Lately, *The Irish News* has been trying to position itself as 'the real opposition' in 'Northern Ireland', presumably because the SDLP has become politically impotent and the Northern Catholic Hierarchy has lost the clout of its crozier. It is annoyed that Sinn Fein has established a functional relationship with the DUP and works away at undermining this by publishing a welter of criticism of the First Minister/Deputy First Minister for not being able to do things they have no power to do and for doing other things that are very worthwhile, like journeying to the US to encourage investment in the province, but travelling business class and staying in good hotels!

There has also been a constant stream of various Prod-bashing stories in *The Irish News* which have little purpose except that of exciting passions. These seem to be aimed at re-igniting the flag dispute, which was effectively defused by the DUP and SF, presumably so that conflict can be engendered between the two parties, so that the two heads of the Executive can be depicted to be at loggerheads.

Such is the bitter Hibernian state of mind that clings on at the *Irish News* and that refuses to acknowledge how the Provos have transformed the general Catholic position in the North from that of self-pity to self-respect.

Another example of this was the reporting of the Liam Adams Trial. When Gerry Adams's brother was up in court on rape charges against his daughter, much of *The Irish News* interest was concentrated on the Sinn Fein Leader rather than the accused in the dock. Interest centred on trying to catch Gerry Adams out by airing the defence accusation that the Sinn Fein Leader had lied about his brother confessing his crime to him; or alternatively, if this was the case and Liam Adams had confessed, making the suggestion that Gerry Adams covered up knowledge of his brother's activities. Damned if you did, Gerry, damned if you didn't...

It seems that Gerry Adams had the distinction of being the first man to be more of a target than an alleged paedophile—and that is saying something when talking about the media!

The War is over but the British intention seems to be to resurrect particular incidents in it to undermine the Republican leadership which successfully brought about the successful transition from War to politics.

A wide range of forces seem to be involved in this including Whitehall itself, branches of the security services, the Unionist Party, the SDLP, *The Irish News*, the British media (from the *Daily Telegraph* to the *Guardian*), Fine Gael, Fianna Fail and Republican dissidents of various kinds—all sharing the intention of pinning something on Gerry Adams, Martin McGuinness etc. that would shred the functional arrangement arrived at between Sinn Fein and the DUP.

The Boston College Tapes, arranged by Professor Bew in conjunction with his PhD pupil, Anthony McIntyre, and Ed Moloney himself, have formed the centre-piece of the campaign.

This campaign, aimed at undermining the authority of the Sinn Fein Leader is, of course, part of the general attack on the 1998 Agreement that has been recently gaining momentum from various quarters.

The interviews Ed Moloney conducted with disgruntled republicans formed the basis of his book, *A Secret History Of The IRA*, published in 2007. The publication of this book was a major event in the attempt to fit-up Gerry Adams. A reading of the reviews of Moloney's book that Anthony McIntyre published on his website, *The Blanket*, in 2007 is enlightening about the origins of this developing political and media obsession.

In an editorial on the collection of reviews McIntyre assembled in praise of Moloney's efforts he stated:

"Allegations of previous involvement in war crime, no matter how distant in time, will cause serious concern for any politician with the slightest awareness of the pitfalls of public perception, especially when situated in an ever growing discourse of human rights."

The objective of the 'Get Adams' campaign, that has been taken up by a wide variety of political interests in Ireland, is pretty much summed up in that sentence, at its origin.

With regard to the reviews assembled by McIntyre, first up is Jim Cusack, security correspondent of the *Sunday Independent*, Sir Anthony O'Reilly's paper at

the time. Cusack's article is entitled: '*Exposing Adams' secrets to the light of day*'. It says:

"If we are to believe Gerry Adams, he has been a leading republican for 30 years but never a member of the IRA and has never had hand, act or part in any act of IRA terrorism... the main controversy over the book is its contention that Gerry Adams was the man in charge of the IRA in west Belfast when it kidnapped, murdered and secretly buried Jean McConville, and that he was also in charge of the IRA in Belfast on Bloody Friday.

"These are not really contentious issues in the North, where much of this is known or has been suspected for decades. The issues have only become contentious because Adams and his party have been engaged in a comprehensive campaign of historical revisionism, casting themselves as guilty only of a love of Ireland and a passionate pursuit of peace and justice..."

"Questions remain over Adams's role as commander of the west Belfast IRA in events such as Bloody Friday and the murder of Jean McConville. A Secret History of the IRA, unfortunately, does not offer conclusive proof on either issue. Bloody Friday was one of the most exceptionally vicious acts of terrorism perpetrated in a period when the IRA really surpassed itself for evil deeds. Before it came the Abercorn restaurant attack, in which an IRA bomb exploded among women shoppers, and a series of no-warning car bombs in Belfast and other towns. The intention was to subject an entire population to pure terror. Bloody Friday, when 20 bombs were detonated almost simultaneously in the city centre causing mayhem and terror on a huge scale, ranks alongside some of the vilest acts of 20th-century terrorism. Children, women and the elderly were the main victims in a day of truly awful horror."

The important factual sentence in Cusack's spray-job on Adams is: "*A Secret History of the IRA, unfortunately, does not offer conclusive proof on either issue*" (Bloody Friday and the murder of Jean McConville). But, despite this, Adams' name is associated by the Security Correspondents with a whole range of bloody incidents for which there no "*conclusive proof*", only hearsay.

Next up is Professor Henry Patterson, former Official Republican, adviser to Trimble, and Unionist academic. The article '*How Clever Was Adams?*', in which the answer is too clever by half, is republished from *Fortnight Magazine*, October, 2007:

"There are numerous references to the widespread suspicions in republican circles, particularly in Tyrone, that crucial operations were betrayed by one or more high-level informers. However, Moloney



provides no evidence to link the existence of such spies to Mr Adams and in the case of Loughgall admits that 'glaring mistakes' in the planning of the operation may well have alerted the security to forces. However he does emphasize the degree to which such botched or betrayed operations greatly assisted the progress of Adams' pursuit of his 'secret peace process' with the London and Dublin governments."

The important sentence in this review is: "*However, Moloney provides no evidence to link the existence of such spies to Mr Adams...*" But despite this a connection has to be made by Patterson to implicate the Republican Leader in shady dealings with the Brits: "*However he (Moloney) does emphasize the degree to which such botched or betrayed operations greatly assisted the progress of Adams' pursuit of his 'secret peace process' with the London and Dublin governments.*"

Finally, in McIntyre's selection of witnesses bearing testimony against Adams, is Professor, the Lord Bew. McIntyre describes his former mentor thus: "*Paul Bew is the Professor of Irish Politics at Queen's University, Belfast. This article first ran in the Daily Telegraph and is carried here with permission from the author*". The title is: '*At Last We Know the Human Cost of Gerry Adams*'.

No problem with republicans consorting with Unionist Lords and the Tory *Daily Telegraph* then if the objective is mutual—to '*Get Adams*'!

Here is the Professor's testimony against Adams:

"Today, Gerry Adams presents himself as a folksy, slightly pompous avuncular figure in Irish politics: a moralist who chides the politicians in Dublin for their embarrassingly corrupt ways... Mr Adams emerges from a new book, *A Secret History of the IRA* by Ed Moloney, smelling like a rotten cabbage. If the author of the book—an award-winning Irish journalist—is to be believed, Mr Adams knew about the killing of Jean McConville, the widowed mother of 10 children who was murdered by the IRA in 1972. Mr Adams has since said he thinks the allegation that he knew about or was involved in the murder is outrageous...

"There is a frightening element; it would appear, of bogus sincerity in Mr Adams's public persona. Mr Moloney presents a picture of Mr Adams, in his best concerned mode, attempting to placate President Clinton and the families of the disappeared in the 1990s, while retaining an insider's knowledge of what really happened.

"But even now, is there any hard proof against the Sinn Fein president? Mr Moloney relies heavily on a range of interviews with republican activists, many

of whom, it will be said, have an axe to grind against the leader who brilliantly manipulated them to the point where the IRA campaign ended without achieving its stated objective of British withdrawal from Ireland. All that could be said here with certainty is that Mr Moloney presents the evidence by means of relentless accumulation of precise detail that may convince many readers.

"Some of the naive liberals who got on the Adams bandwagon in recent years will be shocked... Ulster Unionists will be less shocked. They have never believed anything other than that Mr Adams is a bad man, and a bad man who compounds his badness by endless displays of slippery hypocrisy. David Trimble will, however, add that, while Mr Moloney's book proves that Mr Adams is a troublesome and dishonest adversary, there is little alternative to dealing with him as the leader of a formidable section of Northern nationalist opinion...

"Irish republicans, or rather those Irish republicans who sincerely believed in the project of the 'Republic', will be appalled. For such people, the moral price of this squalid war was only worth paying if the end result was the triumph of their particular political vision. Instead, they have witnessed a new ethnic bargain, one available in most essentials since the mid-1970s, which has revised Stormont, albeit along power-sharing and Irish dimension lines...

"Mr Moloney's real achievement is to remind us of the human cost of the 'Troubles' and the policy of human sacrifice pursued for so long by Mr Adams and his colleagues at surprisingly little risk to their own lives..."

The important factual sentence in this piece is: "*But even now, is there any hard proof against the Sinn Fein president? Mr Moloney relies heavily on a range of interviews with republican activists, many of whom, it will be said, have an axe to grind against the leader.*"

And yet Professor Bew, the respected academic, buries this fact beneath a pile of unsubstantiated accusations from political enemies with (decommissioned) axes to grind.

From all this we should surely conclude that Gerry Adams is an extraordinary man. He apparently almost single-handedly waged a 28 Year War on the British Empire, commanding IRA units across the land, disappearing people who stood in his way, sending forth his comrades to lay waste to Belfast and its civilians. And not being satisfied with his handiwork he single-mindedly decided to call a halt to his War, deceiving his old comrades and having some of them stiffed by the Brits, and all along engaging in secret, shady dealings with them.

And not content with having concluded his War he then decided to direct his forces southward, threatening the democracy and interfering where he isn't wanted, having the temerity to tell the Southerners how they should run their country.

One might add: *Who does he think he is?* Does he not understand he is a Northerner and Northern Catholics were not supposed to do such things? Does he not know his place and preferably stay there, out of the way, with his own?

The only sense I can make of what is going on with regard to the Sinn Fein Leader is a general attempt to bring down Adams, weaken Sinn Fein, disrupt the arrangement with the DUP so that the Northern Catholics would be put back where they belong, to stew in the mess they were put in, between 1921 and 1925.

There is also the fear that Sinn Fein is developing all-Ireland politics, where no other party is willing or able to do so.

Of course, that is not the subjective intention of everyone involved in the campaign but it is the only objective purpose and logical objective of it.

Writing for *The Irish News* Tom Kelly has presented a wider political context for the '*Get Adams*' campaign—which might just become a '*Get Adams and Robinson*' campaign—a case of killing two birds with one stone:

"The politicians have had 15 years controlling the levers as to how we handle the past and the future. They have failed and it is time for them to admit failure and allow others in society to come up with solutions by empowering and involving the responsibility of community relations and conflict resolution to outside of the body politic. The reality is that too many of those in power were part of the troubled past, too many of them were protagonist with many unanswered questions about their roles and too much of the past is too recent. Clearly having a past is more of an impediment to building a future that David Trimble first imagined." (IN 5.5.13)

Tom Kelly, chief spin doctor of manufacturing consent for the Agreement of 1998, seems to be dissatisfied with the way things have turned out. The point was to create a centre ground that would exclude Sinn Fein and the DUP. But the will of the people unfortunately intruded into the project and produced a result that, whilst being functional, is not to the liking of Dublin and London, and their various media hacks.

And so the functional DUP/SFG Government is being assailed by all and sundry for its 'failure' to achieve the impossible, i.e. to make a silk purse out of the 'Northern

Ireland' sow's ear.

The objective, therefore, seems to be to undermine the substance that has made the Agreement of 1998 functional and replace it with various non-entities that can be manipulated by the media and are more malleable to the interests of Dublin and London.

No sooner had a functional arrangement been achieved between the DUP and SF that various forces were attempting to unravel it. The only logical explanation for this was that the Agreement had not worked out in the way it had been intended to in establishing a malleable centre-ground detached from London and Dublin.

The obvious problem is Sinn Fein as an all-Ireland party. The organisational range of Sinn Fein poses a problem for both Dublin and London. The Dublin Establishment, right across the political spectrum, is concerned at the State ambitions of the blow-ins from the North. They represent something that Fianna Fail was in its past, a 'slightly constitutional' party, that is not entirely manageable by the State apparatus constructed over the generations. The historic policy of Dublin since Partition, despite all its Anti-Partitionist rhetoric, was to seal off the North as a thing dangerous to its national independence and sovereignty. Perversely, since the Southern State has begun to increasingly surrender its independence of mind—largely because of the successful way Britain has employed the Northern conflict against its conscience—this development has had to face a potential disruption to both its cosy set-up and its developing relationship with Britain.

Sinn Fein as an all-Ireland party is also problematic for Britain. The original purpose of 'Northern Ireland' was to exert leverage over the bulk of the island and it has performed this function spectacularly well, particularly in the last half-century. However, what would happen if the same party had power and influence on both sides of the Border and that party had proved itself able to deal with Britain by being largely impervious to British wiles? Where would the lever be then?

Sinn Fein's partner in government in the North, the DUP, is also a less malleable force than the Unionist Party. It is far more representative of the Protestant masses and has an independence of spirit that the Official Unionists never had. From O'Neill through to Molyneaux and Trimble the Unionist Party always did what Britain required of it when the chips were down. Even Faulkner, the best Unionist politician

## The 20th Century Was A Bloody Time For Ireland

I was struck by the above sentence (May 4) in Mal Rogers's account of his interview with the writer Julia O Faolain. My limited travels have taken me to France and to Italy, to Belgium and Germany, to Austria and to Spain. Also to Switzerland, the only country I've been to which appears to have seen less violence than Ireland.

The twentieth century dawned with Irishmen, volunteers, fighting in their thousands to impose British rule in South Africa, and in much lesser numbers to frustrate that Imperial land grab. Arising from the British victory came the founding of The Irish Guards Regiment which parades to "*Let Erin Remember*" on St. Patrick's Day. My father used quote the full first line of that song *Let Erin remember the days of old, "ere her Faithless Sons BETRAYED HER"* and noted how appropriate it was for the regiment.

The First World War saw far more Irishmen, volunteers, shed their blood in British uniform than was shed in Ireland by men, women and children of all origins and opinions from the massacre in Dublin's Bachelor's Walk in July 1914 until the present.

Even more Irishmen would have been killed in that Great War, had the British Parliament, implemented the Act already passed to enforce Conscription in Ireland. The 1916 Insurrection and the rise of Sinn Fein ensured that the first quarter of the 20th century was less bloody for Ireland than it would have been had the people acquiesced in British rule..

The further erosion of British rule ensured that most of Ireland was spared the horrors of the 1939-1945 war. The North of Ireland was also spared Conscription during that war, and during Britain's later troubles, emergencies and difficulties in Palestine and Egypt, Malaya, Kenya, Korea and Cyprus. Between the end of Ireland's Civil War in May 1923 and the ambush at Niemba in the Congo in November 1960 not a single soldier of the Irish Defence Forces was killed by hostile action. Republican fatalities and fatalities arising from republican action were not numerous during that time..

We Irish are often accused of narrow-mindedness, tunnel vision, and even parochial concerns, and the accusation might well be supported by the quotation above.

Winston Churchill considered the Black and Tan War mere bush-ranging. Compared with other wars he was involved in, from South Africa at the dawn and Korea at the middle of the 20th Century, Ireland's "*Troubles*" in the whole of that century were on a much much smaller scale.

**Donal Kennedy**

by a long way, was persuaded to drop his demand for political integration when Whitehall had a word in his ear. On the other hand, Paisley continuously frustrated British initiatives and Peter Robinson put the wind up those who implemented the Anglo-Irish Agreement through his actions in 1986, which deterred its full application.

And, of course, the DUP has embarked on a functional arrangement with Sinn Fein, against all the odds and expectations.

For the simple-minded in Dublin, Paisley and the DUP have never ceased to be the principle hate-figures of the 'Black Protestant North'. Paisley was a religious enthusiast when the South began to become confused about its Catholicism. So he was labelled a bigot in Dublin and the Southern media. But there is a strong strain of liberalism in Ulster Presbyterianism and Paisley is very representative of it. And, having lived in the Catholic

part of Paisley's constituency for most of my life, I have heard very few bad words said of its long-serving MP.

**Pat Walsh**

### WHEN GERRY MET MIRIAM

The marriage doesn't work but do they part for somehow they may need one another, though the wife is out to see him smothered, not to kill, but his intellect to outsmart. She tries to revise his view of the North, where his family lives relatively free. Though war was war she twists the facts with glee, ignores the fact his family's home was torched while forgetting her own family roots when an intruder would not leave when told then left with six properties as loot, threatening dire consequences terrible bold until Uncle Éamon put in the boot. Now he is gone will the freehold be sold.

**Wilson John Haire**

17th May, 2013

# Shorts

from  
*the Long Fellow*

## COLM MAC EOCHAIHD

In March Denis O'Brien and Paddy Mc Killen brought a case to the High Court seeking an injunction to prevent the *Sunday Times* publishing confidential views of officials in the IBRC concerning the commercial relationship of the two businessmen.

A Temporary Injunction was granted by the presiding Judge, Colm Mac Eochaidh, who could not resist making a comment that had nothing to do with the case. According to *The Irish Times*:

"...Mr Justice Mac Eochaidh criticised Mr O'Brien for making 'contemptible' comments about Mr Justice Michael Moriarty in the wake of the judge's tribunal report in 2011 and suggested Mr O'Brien, now seeking the protection of the court, was 'in a peculiar position'..."

The report does not say why Mac Eochaidh thought O'Brien's position was "*peculiar*". Certainly the businessman's application for an injunction was not frivolous since Mac Eochaidh went on to grant him a Permanent Injunction at the end of April. It appears that Mac Eochaidh believes that individuals who have criticised a judge in a non-judicial matter, such as the findings of a Tribunal, should not have the temerity to defend their rights in a court of law.

Mac Eochaidh was an unsuccessful Fine Gael candidate for the Dublin South East constituency in the 2002 General Election. In an interview with Damien Kiberd on Newstalk 106 (25.10.10) he expressed the following view:

"It's time for the de-Fianna Fáilisation of this country, the way they de-nazified Germany and de-baathified Iraq...the country has been run by what is effectively a criminal conspiracy for 13 years... supporting Fianna Fáil has crippled and beggared the country for a generation."

The Fine Gael-led Government nominated him for the position of High Court Judge on 5th June 2012.

## THE MAHON TRIBUNAL

In 1995 Colm Mac Eochaidh, along with the then Chairman of *an Taisce* and current Editor of *Village* magazine, is credited with taking steps which led to the setting up of the Mahon Tribunal. Mac Eochaidh and Smith offered a reward of 10,000 pounds to whistleblowers revealing

corruption in the planning process. This attracted the attention of James Gogarty who became a key witness in the initial stages of the Mahon Tribunal.

The most high profile 'defendant' in the Mahon Tribunal was Bertie Ahern. The Moriarty Tribunal, on the other hand, focussed on the awarding of a mobile phone licence by the Fine Gael Government. It could be said that the Mahon Tribunal has put Fianna Fáil on trial, whereas the proceedings of the Moriarty Tribunal have placed Fine Gael in the dock.

The two main political parties have used the respective Tribunals to throw mud at each other. But no political party is prepared to criticise the Tribunals themselves, in case it becomes associated with the alleged wrongdoing of individuals that have been denounced. As a result the Tribunals, each of which have cost hundreds of millions of Euros, have been exempt from political criticism.

The latest example of Tribunal malpractice was revealed in a case brought by Des Richardson, a Fianna Fáil fundraiser. The Mahon Tribunal in its original report said that Richardson had claimed not to have any knowledge of the origin of IR£39,000 which was in a bank account used to buy a Bank Draft paid to Bertie Ahern. Mahon went on to say that it was "*incredible*" that he was unable to account for the origins of the funds in the account.

There was one not insignificant problem with this finding. The Tribunal, with all the hundreds of millions of Euros at its disposal, didn't get around to *asking* Richardson about the origin of the IR£39,000! The Long Fellow finds it "*incredible*" that the Tribunal presumed to know what was in the mind of this witness without giving him the opportunity to give his own side of the story.

The Long Fellow thinks that the Tribunal was unjust, but from the taxpayer's point of view it is a pity that it was not consistent in its approach. Think of the enormous time and expense that would have been saved if Mahon had decided that he knew what evidence all witnesses (not just Richardson) would give before they gave it. Calling such witnesses to give evidence would then have been superfluous. A Report, which took more than a decade to complete, could have been done and dusted within a few weeks!

The High Court was not prepared to correct the Tribunal's findings, but accepted as a matter of fact that it was in error on this matter. So, although Richardson lost the case, he had established in a court of law that the Tribunal had made

a fool of itself. However, it was not until one month later that the Tribunal acknowledged its mistake. There was no apology, just the following:

"...all such reference to the said IR £39,000 in the Final Report, including any criticism of Mr Richardson for failing to identify the origin of this sum are withdrawn" (*The Irish Times*, 22.4.13).

This is by no means the first time that Mahon has been pulled up by the courts. Joseph Murphy Junior, among other appellants, had to go to the Supreme Court in order to avoid the Mahon Tribunal awarding costs against him. In the course of the case it emerged that the Tribunal had suppressed evidence that would have undermined the credibility of one of its star witnesses, James Gogarty. Justice Hardiman commented as follows:

"It is salutary to remember that the concealed materials would never have come to light in this case had the appellants not taken these proceedings. It is chilling to reflect that a poorer person, treated in the same fashion by the tribunal, could not have afforded to seek this vindication."

## ULSTER BANK

Ulster Bank, whose parent company RBS is 81% owned by the British State, reported first quarter losses of 195m euro. This was about half the loss it incurred for the same period last year. The reduction was largely due to the gradual unwinding of the losses on loans, which were given at the height of the boom.

However, there is another element to the story. The Long Fellow has not seen any comment on the following piece of information:

"Income at the bank fell by £6m (€7.1m), which was blamed on costs associated with trying to raise deposits and lower interest-earning loan volumes. However the bank has seen deposits increase, up 8% to £22.7 billion" (*RTE News*, 3.5.13).

Is that not remarkable! In the midst of a period of economic stagnancy Ulster Bank increased its deposits by 8% to a massive £22.7 billion. It should also be remembered that during that period Ulster Bank, or to be more precise the RBS group, had horrendous IT problems. Due to 'sequencing' Ulster Bank was last in the queue for the fixing of the problem.

And yet loans by Ulster Bank to the Irish economy have reduced. So, in effect, Ulster Bank has been hoovering up Irish savings as a means to repair its balance sheet. Since it is part of the British bank bailout scheme, rather than the Irish one,

there is no pressure on it to lend to Irish business. Indeed, since lending or credit cannot be created out of thin air—a bank needs funds such as deposits, before it can lend—Ulster Bank's aggressive pursuit of Irish deposits is undermining the ability of Irish banks to lend.

None of this is remarked upon by our Anglophile business journalists who ten years ago cheered on competition from the British banks in the Irish market, competition leading to the reckless property-based lending; the consequences of which we are all too familiar.

Treatyites signed, and said that they signed, because the British Prime Minister threatened that if they did not do so promptly, without consulting their Government, he would unleash a war of reconquest with all the force of the Empire, which would be fought by Boer War methods (Concentration Camps and closely linked chains of Blockhouses). I have read a lot about it since then, but that is still my understanding of it.

## Review Of A 'Review'

# The *Irish Bulletin* And The Academy

## PART TWO

Continuing the review of the review of the Aubane reprint of the first volume of the *Irish Bulletin* in *History Ireland*, a pop-history magazine sponsored by the academic Establishment and edited by a former revolutionary socialist: or rather a review of the short Introduction which I wrote to the 500 pages of the *Bulletin*.

Professor Foster dismissed the *Bulletin*, with a snide remark in his mass circulation *Modern Ireland*. *History Ireland*, being wise in its generation, prefers neither to support Foster's dismissal of the *Bulletin* nor to take issue with him.

Here is paragraph (c) of its criticism of my Introduction. It purports to describe my view, or rather Aubane's view, of things:

"Academic historians of Ireland are engaged in a neo-colonial conspiracy to delegitimise the War of Independence and the nationalist project as a whole, dating back to the outbreak of the Northern Ireland conflict of 1969-70. (In fact, criticisms of post-1916 republicanism, and the general academic bias against physical-force nationalism as a historical phenomenon, date back to post-1916 Redmondite polemics and pro-Treaty realisation during the Civil War that republican rhetoric used against Dublin Caste and parliamentarism could be deployed against the new state. Clifford downplays this because he sees de Valera's Fianna Fail as the sole legitimate heirs of the nationalist tradition and denies that Redmondism and pro-Treatyism were anything more than incoherent and opportunistic responses to British power.) It is even insinuated, as in other Aubane publications, that some Irish historians are conscious "operatives" of British intelligence. Clifford assumes that academic historians all work in tandem, so that when Leonard Piper (not an academic) includes an ignorant and inaccurate description of the *Irish Bulletin* in his biography of Childers, he is assumed to have known that all other historians would cover up for him."

I got myself to read through the *Introduction* to the *Bulletin*—I do not much care for reading what I have written—in search of where it was suggested that some historians are British Intelligence operatives. I couldn't find it. I wouldn't be surprised if it was found that some of them were, but I doubt they would have been

the ones who exerted the greatest influence.

What I have said repeatedly—but not, I think, in that Introduction—is that generations of Irish academic historians have been produced openly by Cambridge and Oxford. The pathways were established by two Professors who *were* British Intelligence operatives, T.D. Williams and Nicholas Mansergh, but I imagine that most of them who travelled them did so innocently—so to speak.

Dermot Ferriter has made the point that he is not an Oxbridge creation. But that only shows that not going to Oxbridge does not of itself make you a historian.

I did not know that Irish academia had never regarded the War of Independence as legitimate, and that revisionism was, therefore, not a new departure in that respect. (That *is* what is said here, isn't it?) So I stand corrected.

If that is a fact, and I "*downplayed*" it, the reason is not some concern about Fianna Fail, but total ignorance of academia.

The first time I looked at Irish academic magazines was about 1968 when I was trying to find out what Northern Ireland was. I found them worthless for that purpose. (It has since been officially admitted that they were not allowed to deal with 20th century Irish history.) So I cannot dispute the assertion that the academics who call themselves revisionists only said what academia had always said. But I wonder, then, what the fuss was about? Because there was a fuss.

As for the view attributed to me, that I see Dev's Fianna Fail "*as the sole legitimate heirs of the nationalist tradition and deny that Redmondism and pro-Treatyism were anything more than incoherent and opportunistic responses to British power*": The "*Treaty*" was certainly a response to British power. Before I ever read a word about it, my understanding was that the

I don't know where I'm supposed to have said that signing up for the Crown to ward off such a war was opportunist. Perhaps *History Ireland* will supply a reference. I can only say that it seems rather a harsh description of submission to such a threat.

And where did I describe that defence of the Treaty as incoherent? It seems very coherent indeed.

Unfortunately the Treatyites did not stick to it. I suppose it seemed rather unheroic. Anyhow, some of them added other reasons. And Collins seemed to deny that the signing had anything to do with the British threat of immediate and terrible war.

As to "*Redmondism*"—it depends what you mean by it. Some of the MPs, around 1900, said that if they could see their way to raising an Army, and wresting independence from Britain by war, that is what they would do. But, since they could see no possibility of that, they were organised to try to get what Britain might be willing to concede. That is certainly a concession to British power, but again I do not know that opportunism is quite the word to describe it.

Taking *Redmondism* to refer to the period when Redmond, without consulting the Party, committed it to support for Britain's War on Germany in early August 1914, and to his follow through on that, I do not see how it can be described as anything but demagogic Imperialist war-mongering. He was happy to support the Italian irredentists against both the Church and the Socialists in order to get Italy into the War. It was OK by him to offer the Greek Government a big piece of Turkey in the hope of getting it into the War. And, when the Greek Government refused the bait, he did not balk at invading, overthrowing the existing Government, and setting up one that would declare a war of conquest on Turkey.

As to my seeing Dev's Fianna Fail "*as the sole legitimate heirs of the nationalist tradition*"—I can't think where I might have said such a thing.

I was largely unaware of a substantial part of the "*nationalist tradition*" until I went to live in Belfast. During my first Summer there I was surprised to see the streets being covered with bunting in mid-August. Asking about it, I discovered Hibernian nationalism. I suppose I knew the word *Hibernian*. It figured in the name of a hotel in Mallow and a soccer team of Cork, and I must have come across it in the handful of Connolly's writings that were then in print, but as a social presence it was altogether unknown to me.

Working backwards I came to the rupture of the Home Rule movement connected with the 1903 Land Act and the blending of a Catholic secret society into the structure of the Nationalist Party. I read reports of the anti-Hibernian demonstrations held in 1910 in the townlands I was familiar with, and of how Redmondism was routed, and how Canon Sheehan, the Irish novelist I most liked reading, had written the Anti-Hibernian manifesto. A powerful recoil from the first touch of Hibernianism broke Redmondism in my corner of Cork in 1910 so thoroughly that it was forgotten about. I suppose it was because the Feast of the Assumption was somehow symbolic of what had been rejected that nothing much was made of it. It wasn't because of distaste for Mariolatry as such. The May Altars were lavish.

(The structural transformation of the Home Rule Party into a Catholic ascendancy Party under Redmond's leadership by the blending of the Ancient Order of Hibernians into it was central to the 1910 Election campaign against it, which led to its loss of all but one of the Cork seats to the All For Ireland League. That rupture is now being denied by Cork University to have been about any matter of consequence. John Borgonovo says it was just faction fighting on the excuse of a slight difference of opinion on social policy.)

I don't know where I denied the existence, or the "*legitimacy*", of Hibernian nationalism. I certainly did not see Dev as its "*sole legitimate heir*", or as its heir at all. He was very much of the other 'tradition'—Young Ireland/Republican. And if it was somebody else who kept Republicanism going in mainstream politics after the Treatyites had lost themselves in the course of winning the 'Civil War', I'd be interested to hear from *History Ireland* who it was.

I recall the celebrations in North-west Cork when Fine Gael snapped the last tenuous link with the Empire in 1948. The

thing itself hardly warranted the celebration. The thing that mattered was that the Treatyites had re-found themselves as Republicans. And Dev certainly had a lot to do with that.

Of course *History Ireland* might not have meant the meaning I have excavated from the morass of language. But I did my best. Perhaps I got too accustomed to precision in the use of words through reprinting Northerners like Steel Dickson, Porter, Sampson etc., but I don't think my difficulty with *History Ireland* language is just due to that.

The Piper reference was dealt with last month. Piper, not an Influence in academia, is used as a whipping-boy for Professor Foster, who is.

"Peter Hart is described as presenting the War of Independence as 'a serial murder campaign directed against Protestants' which 'verged on genocide'. This will be news to anyone who has read his books in full, as distinct from Aubane's favourite extracts".

What an interesting way of putting it!

It is not denied that Hart reduced the War of Independence to a murder campaign of Protestants. Nor have I denied that he wrote other things too. I thought his later book on Collins was one of the better books on the subject, and I tried to say so at a public meeting to launch it in Belfast, but wasn't let by the Chairman, Richard English.

English wanted to continue the sensationalism of the Cork book but Hart didn't respond to his urging. It seemed to me that Hart was a victim of his Professor at Trinity, David Fitzpatrick. He was instructed that the War was a Catholic sectarian rampage and was sent out to concoct a case supporting his instructions. He did so and was made a Doctor of Philosophy. And massive publicity was laid on which presented "*Aubane's favourite extracts*" as the essence of the book. Which they were. But it seemed that Hart, in the course of carrying out his instructions, gained a different view of the subject matter and became capable of writing history, as distinct from Trinity propaganda. But what was he to do about his first book, and the powerful system of academic authority which rewarded him for it? He was branded by the media hype of his first book—which, in fact, accurately expressed the gist of it. He did not repudiate the hype. He just tried to slide away quietly from it. But that wasn't possible in the actual world. He had burst on the scene as a vulgar sensationalist propagandist claiming he had proved that the War of Independence was (as the British

propaganda of the time claimed) a sordid sectarian murder campaign. He was met with screaming headlines of welcome in the daily papers, and with totalitarian acclaim by the History Department of Cork University. I was interested to see if he had any bit of the strength of character needed to free himself from all of that. But he went and died too soon, and so he remains branded with the lurid headlines by which he agreed to be launched as a public figure.

The only time I have seen Patrick Maume (the author of the *History Ireland* 'review') was at a launch of a book by Brian Murphy in Dublin. Brian showed in detail how Hart misrepresented a crucial document. Maume seemed to experience the demonstration as physical pain. In the Question period (which was not a mere pretence, as on revisionist occasions), he asked if Brian was saying that Hart was dishonest. Brian responded by going over the document again, describing what it said and how Hart had quoted one part of it which seemed to support his thesis but made no reference to an adjacent part of it which undermined his thesis. Maume did not dispute the facts presented dispassionately by Brian, but neither was he satisfied by the reply. It seemed that what he wanted was some kind of emotive statement about Hart—that there was some emotional need that factual argument did not meet, even when the matter under discussion was the content of documents.

Maume has a further complaint:

"Hart is ridiculed for suggesting that the rural IRA were made up of 'Wrenboys and Strawboys' whereas he argues that both reflected a wider rural youth culture; Antoinette Quinn's biography of Patrick Kavanagh resembles Hart in her account of the young poet's involvement with the IRA in defiance of his Redmondite father".

Here is what I wrote:

"Cork University's favourite revisionist, Peter Hart, treats the IRA as a complex of Wren Boys and Straw Boys pursuing vendettas. If I was a city slicker I might think there was something in that. I have noticed that the city tends to have strange notions of the country and of the ways of peasants. But I grew up in a peasant society, in a region where much of the War was fought, and where Wren Boys and Straw Boys were still doing their thing, and I found the notion of the War being fought by them too ridiculous to discuss."

It is, of course, probable that some people who joined the IRA after the 1918 Election had hunted the wren or taken part in a strawing, just as they had taken part in

other local activities. But that is very very different from the idea that these *ad hoc* groups combined to form the IRA and wage war as a faction fight.

Wren Boys dressed up in disguise on the day after Christmas and went around asking for many "to bury the wren". They were supposed to have a wren with them, but they rarely had. I forget the story of it all. The wren was supposed to be the king of the birds because of having hitched a lift on an eagle's back and then having taken off when the eagle could fly no higher.

Strawboys dressed themselves in straw suits with straw helmets and appeared at wedding receptions at the houses of newly-married couples, lending a bacchanalian atmosphere to the occasion, and sending the couple off to bed in an appropriate state of mind.

If young men who took part in strawings were more likely than others to join the IRA, doesn't that conflict with the idea that the IRA was extremely puritanical??

Antoinette Quinn "*resembles Hart*" to the extent that she says Kavanagh "*once joined a group of wren boys*", and that his parents discouraged him from engaging in Republican activities (he was 14 in 1918), and that ordinary criminal activity sometimes claimed to be political: "*Local shops were also raided and the Inniskeen police barracks was burned down in 1920*" (p36)—two activities of the same kind?

Kavanagh once "*came home with a new flashlamp, part of the booty from the evening's activism, his father thrashed him and sent him back to the village to return the stolen goods. James, as a tradesman, was on the side of law and order*" (p36).

The biography was published in 2001, some years after Hart's book—the one that counts as a public document—was authoritatively presented by journalists and academics as the true account of the "*so-called War of Independence*", setting the scene for all future writing on the period. Not to comply with its parameters was to brand oneself a small-minded, backward, bigoted crank. And who could bear to have that brand on them—other than us, who had been branded as Unionist stooges some time earlier by the same opinion-formers who flipped themselves over to become apostles of the new Good News revealed by Hart as the mouthpiece of Professor Fitzpatrick?

The Kavanagh biography does no more in this respect than tick the boxes of the revisionist scenario.

But the wren boys, as "*groups of young*

boys", hardly fits the bill. In Slieve Luacra there were occasional groups of young men, who gave a more elaborate performance than the boys but were no more menacing. And the wren boy chant in Monaghan varies slightly from the one I was familiar with.

And it seems that there were "*mummers*" in Monaghan: which is something I know nothing about:

"Even such apparently innocent entertainments as mumming took on sinister overtones during this period of guerilla manoeuvres. Patrick [Kavanagh] joined a gang of mummers, mostly young men who dressed up and performed a ritualised playlet in neighbours' houses. He found they were no longer welcome, since people feared being visited by roving troops of men, under whatever pretext. They were right. The habit of thieving and marauding had tainted the mummers and they sometimes resorted to blackmailing to extort money or stole food from their reluctant customers" (p36).

If mumming was a customary activity in the area, I imagine that it would have been used by Republicans as a cover for assembling under the eyes of the military government. Obviously it could also be used as a cover for ordinary criminal activity. And, Monaghan being a Planted County in which a section of the population had Unionist affinities, it might also have been used as a cover for another kind of activity. The biographer does not go into any of this. Why should she? She is only sketching in the background of Kavanagh's early teenage years. But since *History Ireland* considers it worth citing her remarks as evidence in support of Hart's Book, one had to see what was in it.

There are no Strawboys in it. Strawboys were very definitely bawdy young men. Even in Slieve Luacra it was beyond the capacity of young boys to enliven the proceedings with the spirit of the bachanaal.

**Brendan Clifford**

**Scripture Politics**, Selections From The Writings Of Rev. William Steel Dickson 160pp. AB, 1991. €12, £10

**Billy Bluff And The Squire** (*A Satire On Irish Aristocracy*) 88pp. AB, 1991. €10, £7.

**The Economics Of Partition**, by B. Clifford. 1992. €10, £8

**Memoirs Of William Sampson**, with A Brief Review Of Irish History (1807). Edited by Kenneth Robinson. 292pp. €24, £20

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**Report: Tom McGurk On This Year's 1916 Commemorations**

## "Who's Afraid Of 1916?"

"[On Wednesday 8th May, observers] ... would have seen an entire regimental colour party from the Defence Forces, followed by the Army band, marching into the Church of the Most Sacred Heart. Then, from the long line of motorbike outriders and limos parked outside, the President and the Taoiseach emerged.

What was going on, passers-by must have wondered, because while evidently there was some major State event happening, where were the crowds? Here was the full ceremonial party of the State, legislature, judiciary and Defence Forces all dressed-up and in their Sunday-best (on a Wednesday) and seemingly nobody had told anybody else about it? Bizarrely, it seemed that here was a State event with more dignitaries and soldiers of the State present than actual citizens of the State.

What was happening was, of course, the official commemoration at the graves of (some of) the executed 1916 leaders on the 97th anniversary of the Rising. One could hardly blame any observer for thinking that it was all being handled like some afterthought, a national event out of sight and out of mind.

Significantly, given the controversy it subsequently aroused, it is useful to remember that the event was hosted on behalf of the State by Justice, Equality and Defence Minister Alan Shatter.

However, the lack of public involvement was only the beginning of the many questions left hanging in the air.

Certainly, some citizens would have known about the occasion because this newspaper had, that very morning, reported that the Minister has allowed significant changes, involving the Army, to be made to the traditional format of the ceremony; an Army colour party would no longer be present inside the church at the Mass and ceremonially saluting at the Eucharist. Apparently there was even an attempt to remove the Army generals from the front row of the church but that was resisted.

So why was this ceremony being demilitarised, especially by the Minister in charge of the Army? It wouldn't be the first time this Minister has exhibited a poor knowledge of the history and traditions of the country.

Whatever Mr Shatter's intentions were in changing the format of the commemoration, the reason the Defence Forces were given such a significant role in the State's commemoration of 1916 has a significant historical background.

Essentially, the format of this ceremony—ongoing since 1924—was dictated by the post-Civil War crisis. Back then the new State was continually seeking a wider acceptance for the legitimacy and the role of the Defence Forces in those difficult years after the Civil War.

So, symbolically linking them to this particular ceremony dedicated to the 1916 leaders was part of that, while sending, at the same time, a message which illustrated the continuing paramilitary tradition.

There were many armies at one time, all calling themselves the army of Ireland. After all, this was what was called the 'Free Staters' army' and it had defeated the Republicans in the bloody conflict that followed the signing of the Treaty.

This week, the Minister also sought and got changes in the religious ceremony itself. Where once it was an all-Irish Requiem Mass, this time it was mostly in English and with a significant multi-faith ritual. Again the original type of service had historical roots: post-Civil War, the Irish language restoration project and the significant power of the Catholic Church were also



being thrown behind the new State.

Significantly too, the association of the executed leaders with Easter and their deeply Catholic deaths all invested the Catholic Church with a direct link to the Rebellion that few historians of the period can find. In fact, the Catholic hierarchy were historically opposed to the Republican tradition and especially to the notion of armed insurrection. But post-independence, the Church, just like the State, was keen to be on the right side of the executed 1916 leaders.

On Wednesday, the eulogy at the Catholic Mass was given by the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Michael Jackson. Mr Shatter seemed to have him on his toes too.

In his contribution, Dr Jackson warned that *'this generation of Irish people should be cautious of those who politically manipulate and exploit the legacy of 1916 and surrounding events'*. (Presumably, in the circumstances, he wasn't referring to Mr Shatter.) The Archbishop continued with perhaps a clue to what Mr Shatter and the Government are intending when he said: *'History develops a new function, that of releasing new energy in a tired and repetitive world, porous to exploitation by those who know that old fears and old symbols still sell and who still suppress those who can think otherwise and think for themselves.'* I think a reasonable translation of this gobbledegook is that the sooner we accept that the past in Ireland needs to be reinvented the better.

There were other symptoms too of the State's—and in particular this Government's—unease with the whole 1916 business.

The Presidential wreath was laid in memory not just of the executed leaders but for all those who died around the events of 1916. Presumably, that also includes the 116 British soldiers who died putting down the Rebellion.

...In an important new study, just published, entitled *Fatal Path*, about violence and democratic politics between Britain and Ireland from 1910 to 1922, Ronan Fanning, Professor Emeritus of Modern History at UCD, quotes eminent historian Bernard Lewis on revisionism:

'The purpose of changing the past is not to seek some abstract truth, but to achieve a new vision of the past better suited to the needs of the present and their aspiration for the future.'

'Their aim is to amend, to restate, to replace or even to recreate the past in a more satisfactory form.'

...Minister Shatter's changes to the traditional 1916 Commemoration occasion may owe something to the dead hand of political correctness, but there appears to be a larger agenda at work. Particularly with a younger generation in mind, a sort of bowdlerised historical hybrid is being created by the State. Given the extensive agenda of historical commemorations due from now until 2022 (the end of the Civil War), are we yet again witnessing another official version of State history being produced? ... Do they really think that some 80 years on as an independent State, it is still not safe for us to be left loose with our own history.

The contrast with the UK could not be more vivid. Take its November Remembrance Day. It unifies the entire nation and brings all political and religious shades to the same spot. It fortifies the British sense of nationhood and national homogeneity and creates a national moment of unity and continuity that enriches the nation... millions of British people at home and all across the world know exactly what they are remembering, who they are commemorating and (perhaps just as importantly) who they are as a people.

But, while in the UK history is an immovable force, here in Ireland the sands are always shifting...

*Daily Mail (Eire), Saturday, 11.5.13*

## When The US Endorsed The Use Of Chemical Weapons

At this time, when President Obama has declared the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime to be a US *"red line"*, with dire (though unspecified) consequences for the regime, it is appropriate to recall a time when the US endorsed the use of chemical weapons and took the lead in blocking Security Council condemnation of their use.

Here, we are not talking about a few instances of use in small amounts (which the US and others allege has already happened in Syria) but systematic use as an integral part of military operations carried out over several years against both military and civilian targets.

We are, of course, talking about Iraq's use of chemical weapons in its aggression against Iran from 1980-88 and US support for Iraq in that aggression in order to prevent an Iranian victory.

To remind readers of the extent of this support, I reproduce in the Annex below an extract from Richard Clarke's book *Against All Enemies*. He worked in the US State Department at the time and played a part in drawing up US options *"to prevent an Iraqi defeat"* (and later worked in President Clinton's White House as his anti-terrorism chief).

### SUPREME LEADER FORBAD USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Iraq's use of chemical weapons against Iran in the 1980s is worth recalling for another reason as well—for the fact that Iran didn't retaliate in kind, even though it had the capacity to and the Iranian military leadership wanted to do so. It didn't hit back in kind because the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, forbade the use of chemical weapons as a violation of Islamic law.

As Flynt Leverett explained recently:

"In its war with Iraq—when the United States, among others, was supporting Saddam Husayn in an eight-year war of aggression against the new Islamic Republic—Ayatollah Khomeini's own military leaders came to him and said, 'We inherited the ability to produce chemical weapons agent from the Shah. We need to do that and weaponize it so that we can respond in kind. We have tens of thousands of our people, soldiers and civilians, who are being killed in Iraqi chemical weapons attacks. We need to be able to respond in kind.' And Imam Khomeini said, 'No, because this would violate Islamic morality, because it is haram—it is forbidden by God—to do this, and the Islamic Republic of Iran will not do this.'" [1]

So, not only did Ayatollah Khomeini declare that the use of weapons of mass destruction was in violation of Islamic law, he insisted that the Islamic Republic acted upon that principle and eschewed the use of chemical weapons, even though it was engaged in a life or death struggle with Iraq, which had the support of the US and most of the Arab world.

### NUCLEAR WEAPONS A "GRAVE SIN", SAYS SUPREME LEADER

Today, Iran's leaders, including President Ahmadinejad, have repeatedly denied that they have any ambitions to develop nuclear weapons. Ayatollah Khomeini's successor as Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, has followed him in declaring that the acquisition or use of nuclear weapons would also violate Islamic law, describing the possession of such weapons to be a *"grave sin"*.

For example, in a speech to nuclear scientists on 22nd February 2012, he said:

"The Iranian nation has never pursued and will never pursue nuclear weapons. There is no doubt that the decision makers in the countries opposing us know well that Iran is not after nuclear weapons because the Islamic Republic, logically, religiously and theoretically, considers the possession of nuclear weapons a grave sin and believes the proliferation of such weapons is senseless, destructive and dangerous." [2]

There was nothing new in this statement from him. In 2005, he issued a *fatwa*—a religious edict—saying that *"the production, stockpiling, and use of nuclear weapons are forbidden under Islam and that the Islamic Republic of Iran shall never acquire these weapons"* (see Iran's Statement at IAEA Emergency Meeting, 10 August 2005 [3], p121). And he has repeated this message many times since then (see, for example, Juan Cole, 'Khamenei Takes Control, Forbids Nuclear Bomb', 4 March 2012 [4]).

These repeated pronouncements by Khamenei should be taken as a serious indicator of Iranian policy on this matter, not least because similar pronouncements by his predecessor resulted in the Islamic Republic shunning the use of chemical weapons to repel Iraqi aggression.

Also, Khamenei is the person who would take any decision that Iran develop nuclear weapons. If he intends to do so in the near future, it is surely unwise of him to declare repeatedly that these weapons



are un-Islamic—yet he continues to do so.

Of course, it is not impossible for Khamenei or a future Supreme Leader to reverse this stance. However, as Flynt and Hillary Mann Leverett point out in their book *Going To Tehran: Why the US must come to terms with the Islamic Republic of Iran*, this "would mean having to explain—to Iranians and to the entire Shi'a world—how Iran's strategic circumstances have changed to such an extent that manufacturing nuclear arms was now both necessary and legitimate" (p87). They continue:

"That, of course, is not an absolute constraint on Iranian weaponisation. But it would require, at a minimum, a widely perceived and substantial deterioration in the Islamic Republic's strategic environment—most plausibly effected by an Israeli and/or US attack on Iran. It is far from certain that Tehran would opt for weapons acquisition then. But those urging military action to block the Islamic Republic's nuclear advancement advocate a course that would raise the risk of Iranian weaponisation, not reduce it."

In other words, Israeli or US military action against Iran, ostensibly to prevent Iran developing nuclear weapons, would be likely to have the opposite effect, leading the Iranian leadership to conclude that the possession of such weapons was the only means of deterring future attacks.

#### WITHDRAW FROM NPT IN 1979

A final point: if the Islamic Republic had intended to develop nuclear weapons, it should surely have withdrawn from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) after the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and become free, like Israel, from international obligations not to develop nuclear weapons. Then, it reviewed all the international agreements and treaties concluded under the Shah, including the NPT, but it decided to maintain its membership of the NPT and adhere to its existing nuclear safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

Because of Israel's growing nuclear arsenal, withdrawal from the NPT in 1979, or any time since, would have been within Iran's rights under the NPT, Article X of which says:

"Each Party shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country. It shall give notice of such withdrawal to all other Parties to the Treaty and to the United Nations Security Council three months in advance. Such notice shall include a statement of the extraordinary events it regards as having jeopardized its supreme interests." [5]

By any objective standard, Iran and other neighbours of Israel have good grounds for withdrawal, because of the build up over the past 40 years of an Israeli nuclear arsenal directed at them. There could hardly be a better example of "extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty", which "have jeopardized [their] supreme interests".

It might not have been wise for Iran to withdraw from the NPT at any time in the past 40 years, since it would risk terrible havoc from the US and/or Israel. But, there is no doubt that such an action would be fully justified under the provisions of the NPT.

David Morrison

May 2013

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## Annex: US options for preventing Iraqi defeat

### Extract from *Against All Enemies* by Richard Clarke (p41-2)

"Shortly after it began, the Iran-Iraq war became a stalemate, with very high casualties on both sides. Our little politico-military team at State was asked to draft options to prevent an Iranian victory or, as we entitled one paper, 'Options for preventing Iraqi defeat'. At time passed and the war continued, many of those options were employed. Although not an ally of Iraq, the Reagan administration had decided that Saddam Hussein should not be allowed to be defeated by a radical Islamist, anti-American regime in Tehran.

"In 1982, the Reagan administration removed Iraq from the list of nations that sponsored terrorism. Iraq was thus able to apply for certain US government-backed export promotion loans. Then in 1983 a presidential envoy was sent to Baghdad as a sign of support for Saddam Hussein. A man who had been the Defense Secretary seven years earlier in a previous Republican administration was sent carrying a Presidential letter. The man was Donald Rumsfeld. He went to Baghdad not to overthrow Saddam Hussein, but to save him from probable defeat by the Iranian onslaught. Shortly after, I saw American intelligence data flow to Baghdad. When Iran was preparing an offensive in a sector, the Iraqis would know what US satellites saw and Saddam would counter with beefed up defenses.

"In 1984, the United States resumed full diplomatic relations with Iraq. Although the US never sold arms to Iraq,

the Saudis and Egyptians did, including US arms. Some of the bombs that Saudis had bought as part of overstocking now went to Saddam, in violation of US law. I doubt that the Saudis ever asked Washington's permission, but I also doubt that anyone in the Reagan administration wanted to be asked.

"After the intelligence flow to Saddam was opened up, our State Department team was then asked to implement the next option in the plan to prevent Iraqi military defeat, identifying the foreign sources of Iranian military supplies and pressuring countries to halt the flow. We dubbed the diplomatic-intelligence effort Operation Staunch. I spent long days tracing arms shipment to Iran and firing off instructions to American embassies around the world to threaten governments with sanctions if they did not crack down on the gray market arms shipments to Tehran. The effort was surprisingly successful, raising the price and reducing the supply of what arms Iran could get."

Let there be any doubt that the US was aware of Iraq's use of chemical weapons, here's what Flynt and Hillary Mann Leverett write about the matter in their book *Going to Tehran* (p50)

"... for four years, the United States took the lead in blocking any meaningful action by the Security Council to stop Iraq's use of chemical against Iranian military and civilian targets. Washington was fully aware of what Iraq was doing: during one of Rumsfeld's visits to Baghdad, Saddam's foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, gave the American visitor video tapes showing tens of thousands of Iranian soldiers killed by Iraqi chemical weapons, to underscore what 'civilized Iraqis have to do in order to stop the barbarian Iranians'. But, former secretary of state George Schultz subsequently (and rather cold-bloodedly) explained, 'It was a very hard balance. They're using chemical weapons. So you want them to stop using chemical weapons. At the same time, you don't want Iran to win the war.'"

David Morrison

David Morrison is the author with Peter Osborne of

*A Dangerous Delusion: Why The West Is Wrong About Nuclear Iran*, available from Amazon or your local bookshop

## Annette O'Riordan RIP

The death has occurred of Annette (Macdonald, née Hennessy), following her 60th birthday, after a courageous three-year fight for life.

*"Ab shin a bhfuil de shíorraíocht ann,  
Go maireann smut dár mblas,*

*Trí bhaineannú is fireannú,*

*Ón máthair go dtí an mac?"*

"But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you"

It is hoped to carry an obituary in a future issue. Ed

## George Gilmore And The Republican Congress In Perspective

Following the resignation of Peadar O'Donnell, George Gilmore and Frank Ryan from the IRA in 1934, a left-wing Irish Republican Congress was established with Gilmore and Ryan as Joint Secretaries. The Protestant Republican George Gilmore (1898-1985) is the name most closely associated with the narrative of that short-lived Congress venture. His first pamphlet *The Irish Republican Congress* was a contemporary, agitational one, published in 1935 by the Republican Left Irish diaspora in the USA, the Connolly Union Printery of New York, and it certainly does make for stirring reading. Gilmore's second pamphlet on the theme, *The 1934 Republican Congress*, was published in Dublin in 1969 by the Dóchas Co-op Society. That second narrative was a retrospective assessment and has received several republications. A 2011 edition has been published in Kilkenny by the George Brown Memorial Committee, with an Introduction by its chairperson Pádraig Murphy, an IRA leader during the 1950s Border Campaign, and subsequently a Workers' Party stalwart.

Gilmore's secularist Republican values certainly shine through, but too often his narrative has been seized upon for quite unrealistic leftist make-belief about the "might have beens" of Irish history. It was one thing for Gilmore's 1935 agitational pamphlet to seek to advance the cause of the Republican Congress by fulminating against Fianna Fáil's supposed failure to be Republican enough. It was quite a different matter for his 1969 retrospective to learn little from history as to de Valera's triumph in securing Republican sovereignty for the 26 County state on the eve of the Second World War, and to blame either the Labour Party or Congress's own "Workers' Republic" faction for the rapid disappearance of the Republican Congress as a force with relevance to Irish politics. In his retrospective assessment, Gilmore maintained:

"Document No. 2 had never been widely understood, and now, by the people, it was forgotten. It was not forgotten by the creators of the new (Fianna Fáil) party. That document, put forward by President de Valera in 1921 as an alternative to the 'Treaty' settlement, was an attempt to find a formula that would, by removing symbols of subjection, reconcile the national sentiment of the Irish people to a form of association with the British Empire that might, it was hoped, be acceptable to the British

Government as sufficiently safeguarding the imperial interests in peace and in war. It held no threat to capitalist interests in Ireland or to the imperial interests with which they were interwoven. When it failed to get acceptance in 1921 Document No. 2 was discreetly swept under the carpet. Now it emerged again. While the retention by the government of the land annuities hitherto handed to Britain was the chief economic slogan of the 1932 General Election, the removal of the oath of allegiance to the Crown and of the Governor-Generalship were the specific constitutional changes calculated to appeal most directly to the national sentiment expressed in the popular slogan, 'On to the Republic!' ... In 1934, when the Republican Congress came into being, the Fianna Fáil government was attempting to suppress both the militant Blueshirt movement and the spontaneous militant republican reaction to it, and was trying to come to terms with the British Empire in a settlement along the lines of Document No. 2. It could truly claim that it was the party leading the national struggle, but that struggle had, under its leadership, ceased to be a struggle for the independence of the Republic of Ireland" (2011 edition, pp 7-8).

But that was a completely nonsensical conclusion. By 1938 de Valera had secured Republican independence for the 26 Counties and proved it to be so in World War Two. Churchill knew that to be the case and ranted and raved accordingly. More important, Nationalist Ireland also knew it to be the case, and regarded Gilmore's quibbling to be beside the point. One cannot get a realistic picture of the Republican Congress failure by reading George Gilmore's analysis, unless, in the process, it is to recognise the failure in Gilmore himself. It is only in private correspondence, such as in the first publication of the letter that follows, that Gilmore acknowledged a real dynamic behind de Valera's success.

It is difficult not to conclude that George Gilmore was a political failure in terms of offering any programmatic solutions to the problems of either North or South, although one must recognise an uncompromising integrity throughout. Yet he also remained a formidable polemicist, with gems of sharp observation often mixed in with political *non sequiturs*. In 1950-51 the then Editor of *The Bell*, Gilmore's life-long comrade Peadar O'Donnell, opened up its pages to a debate under the heading of "*The Fears of Ulster*

*Protestants*". Ulster Loyalism was represented in the debate by the Reverend Frederick S. Leahy of the National Union of Protestants. In the April 1951 issue George Gilmore replied as follows to some of Leahy's earlier arguments:

"Mr Leahy's insistence that partition is to be regarded as a religious and not a national issue is carried to its logical conclusion in his statement that if the King of England should turn Papist the Protestant North would no longer stand for partition... The mentality that approaches a 1951 question from a 1641 viewpoint is not grown up, and when Mr Leahy emphasises the liveness of the 1641 tradition in North-East Ulster he seems to me to be very authentic. Having old associations with Portadown I know how alive it is at a certain level and how convenient at another level. Without that experience I think I would find it difficult to believe that people can still, after the passage of three hundred years, be haunted by fears based upon the experiences of pioneer settlers in a hostile country. Is it any wonder that in 1641 the planters, newly come to Ulster, should have been dealt with angrily and terribly in the rush of that rising of the evicted people against the grabbers? But what of the experience of the Protestant minority in the Nationalist areas of Ulster when they were suddenly left to the mercy of the IRA in 1920-22? They were no longer planters then, but Irishmen, and however withdrawn from the national struggle they were, or even hostile to it, they were not thought of as foreigners and they were not massacred nor driven from their farms. The establishment of a Tory bridgehead statelet is another matter. After all the Protestant George Washington did not permit the Protestant Tories who opposed him to collect into a self-governing state in New York. He deported them and confiscated their property, and many of them found a refuge in the Toryism of the Roman Catholic French Canadians".

A decade later, George Gilmore was engaged in another controversy that has resonances in current responses to wartime Army Deserters issue. In the *Irish Times* on 26th August 1960 Donal O'Donovan wrote of a visit to Dachau Concentration Camp:

"I went there (Dachau) with the mixed feelings of one who comes from a country which was neutral during the 1939-45 war. Ireland was officially neutral while 9,000,000 died in the concentration camps of Europe; but Irishmen as individuals were far from neutral. They followed, broadly speaking, the pattern of their upbringing. Those of the Ascendancy or 'Castle Catholic' families hoped—and, indeed, worked—for the speedy ending by the Allies of the Nazi evil. Those who had an extreme Republican background still believed that 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity.' To them, the

obscenities and horrors of Belsen and Buchenwald, Ravensbrück and Auschwitz never happened."

It is difficult to know whether this piece should be viewed as a guilt-ridden son's expiation of the perceived sins of his father, or be more cynically viewed as a drunken embrace of the Ascendancy designed to secure more rapid promotion, with accompanying salary increases, in that same *Irish Times*. For O'Donovan undoubtedly had his price. When O'Donovan died at the age of 80, his obituary in the *Irish Times* on January 17, 2009—entitled "*Journalist, PR executive and freelance spy for East Germany*"—proceeded to note:

"He was not the only member of his family to be involved in espionage. His father, Jim O'Donovan, IRA director of chemicals during the War of Independence and the principal architect of the bombing campaign in Britain during the Second World War, was the IRA's link-man with the Abwehr and sheltered the Nazi spy Hermann Goertz. He was interned in the Curragh for two years. O'Donovan's mother, Mary, was a sister of Kevin Barry, who was executed by the British in 1920... After some casual work in the *Irish Times*, he was in 1954 offered a permanent job. Three years later he was appointed as a leader writer and, from 1961 to 1970, he was an assistant editor..."

The *Irish Times* column "*An Irishman's Diary*" reported on 28th April 1998:

"Deeply interested in politics, he has been director of elections for Fianna Fáil in Co Wicklow... Now 70 years of age... none of us could have suspected in our wildest dreams that he was a spy for the German Democratic Republic's Stasi secret service during the cold war... He now reveals all in his autobiography *Little Old Man Cut Short*... He is a self-confessed alcoholic and throughout the book he blames booze for some of his less successful enterprises. He was approached by two Stasi members in 1961 while on a journalistic assignment in Berlin. The two, posing as journalists, wanted him to act as their eyes and ears in Ireland, to go to meetings abroad and to report their findings to them. What made him join up? *'I was flattered, intrigued and curious about the prospect of entering the world of John le Carré. And I was most of the time fairly drunk. They would pay my expenses and a fee commensurate with the value of my reports.'* He describes his report to his masters as *'short and harmless'*. He took a few diplomats to lunch in Dublin to obtain their views of issues of the day in Europe... Looking back on his experience, which he now regards as one of the low episodes of his life, he writes ruefully: *'Since I drank alcoholically for 30 years, I could not say that my essay into espionage was more drunken than any other part of my life. I*

*can only imagine that I would have not accepted the invitation if I had been sober.'* ..."

I myself met O'Donovan only the once, and found whatever conversation was forthcoming from him to be little more than cynical. This was in 2003, at a double book launch, of *Irish Secrets—German Espionage In Wartime Ireland 1939-1945* by Mark M. Hull, and *MI5 And Ireland 1939-1945—The Official History*, edited and introduced by Eunan O'Halpin, O'Donovan's own cousin. O'Halpin's book carried a Foreword provided by the Cambridge MI5 academic Christopher Andrew, and as both speakers and publisher sang the praises of British-Irish Intelligence cooperation, O'Donovan's face wore an expression of wry bemusement that seemed to denote *déjà vu*.

Whatever had led to O'Donovan's fulminations against Irish wartime neutrality and republicanism, George Gilmore responded to him in the *Irish Times* on 29th August 1960:

"The picture that emerges from Donal O'Donovan's article on Dachau (August 26th) of the Irish republican tradition as a breeder of pro-Nazi, or even tolerant-of-Nazi, sentiment and of the 'Ascendancy' and the 'Castle Catholics' as defenders of democracy is a fantastically false one. If Mr. O'Donovan himself does not remember those years of the rise and development of Fascism in Europe, he need only look through the files in the National Library to see that Irish republicans were campaigning against Fascism and Nazism and exposing the horrors of concentration camps year after year, while the conservative elements that he mentions were drawing inspiration from the Nazi camp and encouraging the development of similar shirty political techniques here. I am not sure that I know what an 'extreme republican is', but I do know that when the Spanish people were being massacred by Italian Fascist armies and German Nazi bombing squadrons, and when that desperate defence of democracy had its repercussions in the Dublin streets, neither the 'Ascendancy' people nor the 'Castle Catholics' were noticeably active striving to rescue people's minds from the horrible doctrines that produced Dachau. They left that to the Republicans."

The letter that follows was forwarded to me two years ago, in June 2011, by Gail Malmgreen, who had come across it in the archives of the Transport Workers' Union of America held in New York University. And, indeed, it had been left to its diaspora membership in the USA for the Irish Republican Congress to provide its only lasting legacy of substance, the construction of the Transport Workers' Union of

America, basing it on the Trade Union principles of James Connolly.

#### FIRST PUBLICATION OF A 1936 GEORGE GILMORE LETTER

Clonard Cottage  
Ballawley  
Dundrum  
Co. Dublin

November 30, 1936

Mr. John F. O'Donnell  
c/o "Irish Echo"  
152 East 121st Street  
New York City  
USA

Dear John,

I am going to reply, at long last, to your very welcome letter dated over a month ago.

I have been away on my travels again most of the time since I got it. Indeed I think I went away the very day I received it so far as I remember. However the urgent matter mentioned in it was dealt with just before I left.

I sent a letter to Mrs. A. Kelly, written in Bilbao, containing some matter that I thought you might like to use for the "Echo".

I do not know whether the poison campaign around the Spanish war has been as virulent in America as it has here. If it has, some such statement of facts in the Basque Country would be useful as an antidote.

I am sending you some news cuttings which will give you some idea of recent events here.

The "Christian" Front movement is going very strong and is even causing De Valera's Government anxiety as it is really an attempt to reorganise the Cosgravite forces on a definite Fascist basis, using the "save Christianity" slogan.

It is really very serious for, although, so far, it has been almost entirely composed of the Blueshirt Anti-Republican elements (with a sprinkling of Fianna Fail & I.R.A. Party people) still it has succeeded in silencing all other groups. The "Irish Press" will not print anything that would serve as Anti-Fascist Propaganda. Neither will any other paper in Ireland. The Labour Party has a new weekly paper just issued, but the first number did not contain any mention of either the Fascist drive in Ireland or in Spain or anywhere else. A few of the North of Ireland Socialist Party & Labour Party people and ourselves are the only ones who have done anything whatever to stem the rush.

I got some very good authentic information in Bilbao that would help to prove (not that there have been no Republican or Left wing excesses in Spain—unfortunately there have been plenty) but that there has also been so much slaughtering of priests & monks by Franco's forces as well, that it is absurd to call it war for religion on either side.

That is the line of Propaganda here. Franco is held up as a defender of Christianity (nearly all his generals are quite openly Freemasons, and in Spain Freemasonry is definitely anti-Christian) but no paper in Ireland will publish anything like that. I got a statement from a Basque Priest who was at our Republican reception in the Mansion

House in 1932 in which he gave me all sorts of facts that would surprise our innocent "Christian" Front supporters. I supplied his statement to the papers but not one would publish a word of it. {The name of this Basque priest was Father Ramon Laborda who would visit Ireland again from January to March 1937, addressing public meetings in support of the Spanish Republic in both the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, and the Ulster Hall, Belfast, but who was refused permission to speak in Queen's University Belfast—MOR. }

The one good point in it is that O'Duffy jumped into the defence of Franco's brand of Christianity first. That means there are different factions competing for the honour of that Crusade. If Cosgrave's people had got in first it would have been even more serious.

The political situation at present is that De V. is in the saddle more firmly than he has ever been. The only other movement that moves at all is the Christian Front which is being hammered more definitely into the shape of an opposition to De V.

I enclose a cutting of the Ard Fheis of the I.R.A. party {Cumann Poblachta na h-Éireann—MOR}. You will see on the executive the names of all the I.R.A. leaders with the single exception of Sean Russell.

Sean's position is a bit peculiar: Speaking in a general sense it would be true to say that his dollar drive in U.S.A. was for the New Party. But still he is, and always was, personally against the idea of the formation of the Party. He quarrelled with all the other members of the A.C. {IRA Army Council—MOR} on that issue when they were starting it, but not enough to cease to work with them.

It is true that the Party H.Q. was in his house during the recent elections, but then it is also his brother's house and his sister's house. Sean's reason for being against the Party is even more backward than the other peoples' support for it. Sean says he has no politics. He really has the weirdest ideas about political matters & his "no politics" stand has played into the hands of the Fianna Fail people just as much as McBride's Fianna Failism has.

The reason I say that his collection of dollars was really for the Party is that when several organisations that are nominally separate—such as I.R.A., Cumann na mBan, I.R.P.D.F. {Irish Republican Prisoners' Dependants' Fund—MOR} & New Party—have the main force of their activities aimed in one direction, it is in that direction that the main portion of their funds will go too. And now the main activity is certainly aimed at the coming general election.

The press cutting of the New Party Ard Fheis does not mention what was, to my mind, the most important resolution that was before it. The Drogheda branch had a resolution proposing that members of the Party should not be allowed to be also members of any Fascist organisations such as the "Christian" Front. It was especially aimed at Dr. Brennan, a member of their first executive, who took a leading part in organising the "Christian" Front.

The H.Q. people opposed the resolution

& it was not allowed to be put to the vote.

I note your statement that Sean Russell confessed that he had believed that De Valera might "make good". It is quite a confession, because those people used to be fond of saying that we were nearer to Fianna Fail than they were. I am glad he said that. Of course it is perfectly true. The section that won out in the I.R.A. Executive was the one that fought for the slogan "Don't embarrass Fianna Fail" at the three Conventions held after Fianna Fail got into power, as opposed to our effort to make an immediate move to lead past Fianna Fail.

I think that your idea of remaining in the Clann {the Fenian Brotherhood organisation in the USA, Clan na Gael—MOR} & working to use it as a lever to force a United Republican Front is perfectly correct.

At present the Clann is only a support for the New Party which is an influence, not for unity, but against it. But that is because the old tired three-fourths Fianna Fail influence at the head of the Clann has won a pull, just as it has in the I.R.A.

So long as that influence is in the ascendant there will be no Republican movement in Ireland worth speaking of. But I quite agree with you that it is inside the Clann you can best work for the triumph of better ideas. The Congress formation simply ceases to have any meaning or value once it becomes a little organisation all out on its own. Its only meaning is to be a centre for rallying all the really Republican groups for a common effort.

I think you realise as well as I do that, whether that rallying comes today or next year, it will have to come before there is a serious Republican movement. At present, it would be an exaggeration to say that there is any Republican movement. There are many little Republican organisations. The only movements are Fianna Fail and the "Christian" Front. If Dev has an election soon he will be returned stronger than ever.

One very significant thing in that respect has been the dropping from the New Constitution of any change in the Free State relations with the British Empire. We expected that Dev would play his "external association" card at the next election. He now feels so safe that he is saving that Trump card for another time. The new constitution only regulates our internal affairs. So he still has his Trump card for the future.

A rather interesting thing at the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis was that several Clubs had resolutions proposing that the new Constitution should make it possible for Northern M.P.s to take their seats in an all-Ireland Parliament. Of course Dev would not hear of such a thing. But he had kept them stringing along after him on that issue for the past 12 months nearly.

We proposed to the Northern M.P.s a long time ago that they should hold public meetings in Dublin demanding that, & stir up an agitation that would get the support of a lot of Fianna Fail supporters. But instead of that they just kept coming up to see Dev privately about it, and he kept putting them

off with vague half promises.

Of course he could not accede to their request without smashing the "Treaty" to flitters, but there could have been a great agitation for it if they had held meetings in Dublin instead of trusting to the back stairs.

They have a new organisation in the North now that was really organised as a support for Fianna Fail but was certainly buoyed up with the expectation that the new Free State Constitution would do something for them. The two abstentionist M.P.s for Tyrone-Fermanagh are in it. So is Donnelly M.P. for Armagh. The National League (Devlinite) is hostile to it and it has roped in a lot of the present day I.R.A. in the North. (The North is the only place where the I.R.A. has much membership now, and that is because there need be no differentiation there between I.R.A. & Fianna Fail).

They may begin to kick up their heels a bit now that Dev has disappointed them with his Constitution.

This has been a terribly hurried letter. I am rushing to catch a mail boat. There would be no other for 4 days.

You asked after my health. Indeed, I am sorry to say that I am becoming a bit of a crock. I suppose it is old I am getting, but certainly I do not seem to be able to stand any little hardships the way I used to be able.

I crashed in an airplane in the Basque Country & hurt my leg a bit & then from that or from something else I got sort of knocked up & have not recovered very well yet. Indeed I was lucky, though, because the airplane was smashed to flitters and I was the only one who got out through the door. They others were flung out through the broken up sides of it & some were severely injured. It was quite exciting too because we had had got lost and had made a forced landing and I did not know for half an hour whether we were in the enemy's territory or not—and they have a short way with prisoners.

I had to play very cautiously & pretend I could not understand a word until I found out. I can tell you I was glad to see the Basque flag sewed on the volunteers' jackets when they came along. It is like this:

{Gilmore here reproduced a drawing of the Basque flag—similar to a Union Jack, but with a white cross superimposed on a green x, set in turn on a red background—MOR. }

Red white green  
 \ I /

Now I must rush to catch the mail with this letter.

Would you write again and tell us how things are shaping. I do not know exactly how much control you have in the "Echo" but I am sure you can do a good deal with it and really, although we just failed to get our Republican Front last time, I shouldn't wonder if the urge for it should come from America again next time.

Wishing you the best of luck,  
Yours sincerely,  
**George Gilmore**

**Manus O'Riordan**

## Ó Riada's Receipt?

Apart from the recording (by the RTÉ Concert Orchestra—presumably named in emulation of the BBC's similarly versatile band) of the *Mise Éire* sound-track, all the material on this CD was specially-recorded by the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Robert Houlihan, (*Mise Éire* is conducted by Proinsias Ó Duinn.) Let's proceed through the recording; Track 1 is the Overture Olynthaic, written when he was in his mid-twenties in 1955 and first performed in 1956. It is very vigorous and well worth a listen. Though what a young composer was doing in the mid-1950s composing an Overture, lord knows.

It may have to do with Ó Riada's distinctly tongue in cheek attitude to the patrimony (cough!) of 'Western Classical Music'. In the 1960s Ó Riada gave a series of lectures on Radio Éireann claiming that Irish 'traditional' music was itself a 'classical' music (in the manner of Chinese, Indian and Iranian and other traditions). Presumably he meant what he said—but the 'Euro-centric', as he would have described it, music on this disc demonstrates his detachment.

It must be emphasised it does not demonstrate sloppiness or lack of craft.

After the Olynthaic (title unexplained) piece we get *The Banks Of Sulán* (apparently there isn't a river, or even stream called Sulán), it exhibits Ó Riada's ambiguous attitude to his musical material. (It also exhibits the oddities of programme-writers. The booklet issued with this CD claims it is "pastoral in mood". It is true to say that we start in—almost—Vaughan William-like 'cow pat' territory. But most of the 9.05 minutes are quite sinister, it feels like a cityscape, and not a smug suburban one either.

Then there is *Nomos No. 1* (he chose 'Nomos' as a catch all name for his larger works. It has been described as issue-avoiding, but he was on a Stravinskyian journey through 'Euro-centric music. 'Ireland' has a quite strong tradition of engagement with that tradition—but then, so did Russia, Stravinsky's birthplace.) *Nomos No. 1* is subtitled *Hercules Dux Ferrarie*, but has no 'programme' (a story-like narrative). It was composed in the mid-fifties (1957 to be precise), and is a bit of 'twelve-tonery', using procedures pioneered by Arnold Schoenberg in Vienna in the 1910s (when he wasn't in uniform fighting for Hapsburg Austria). Its eight short movements have titles like *Canon*, *Passacaglia*, and *Fuga*—a Lenten engagement you might think. There is also *Tempo di valse*. This is one of Ó Riada's

Letter submitted to *Irish Examiner* (3 May), but not published

## Food Supplies And The 'Famine'

Disinformation is spread by Allen Crosbie's letter (*Examiner*, 22Apr2013) regarding the 1845-50 'famine'. He provides 'proof' that oats was cattle feed; that "preparation of oats for human consumption took four to five hours". He adds; "...it is doubtful whether the average Irish farmer would have had either the knowledge or the means of rendering them palatable."

Mr. Crosbie is belied by the ubiquitousness of grain-kilns and -mills shown on Ordnance Survey maps completed prior to that 'famine'. While oats is livestock feed; oatmeal never was. In the late 1940s in Co. Galway my cousins ate oaten "stir-about" every breakfast, and brought oaten bread with them to school. The oats was of their own production and was dried and milled in adjacent Templetogether townland at Egan's kiln and mill (also on that map).

But Mr. Crosbie covers-up genocide. He never mentions the direct cause of Ireland's starvation; the at-gunpoint removal of its abundant grains, barreled meats, livestock, poultry- and dairy-products, etc. Resistance against that genocide was so great that its execution required a larger British force (69 regiments of its then-empire army of 137) than was used to conquer the Indian subcontinent.

Lord Clarendon wrote at the time: "But for the onerous duty of escorting provisions, the army in Ireland would have little to do."

Chris Fogarty

most popular works and it is easy to see (or should that be 'hear'?) why. It is very vigorous, enjoyable, music. He maintains all the niceties (but this is outgoing stuff), while using all the resources of the string orchestra (according to the BBC virtually a 'British' monopoly). The movements marked *Lento e rubato*, *Lento sostenuto* and simply *Lento* are important parts of the structure, which is almost Brahmsian in that it is restrained in terms of volume—there are no very loud or very soft passages.

*Seoladh na nGamhan* (The Herding of the Calves) is a straightforward piece of 'cow-pat' 'Irishry'. The 'cow pat' phrase was Elizabeth Lutyens': it was part of her counter-attack on enforced 'Englishry', during much of her career from the 1930s to '70s. She used Schoenberg's 'twelve tone' procedures, though being a woman hardly helped her career. *Seoladh na nGamhan* is a solidly professional item, most listeners would not object if it was used to fill the time in a radio schedule. Whether most would relish it as a concert hall piece is questionable. 'Irishry' was pushed by fans of RVW's music and his book / manifesto *National Music*.

Cathal Breslin is the piano soloist in *Nomos No. 4* (*Andante* and *Allegro*) it is Ó Riada's gesture to a piano concerto. Up to a point—the piano writing is not brilliant, which must make bringing the thing off a problem—and the thing might not have been conceived as such (concerto-like—certainly not as a Romantic 'duel' between the piano and the orchestra. Though the early-'Classical' *Sinfonia Concertante* might have

been at the back of Ó Riada's mind). The *Andante* is something of a 'night piece', though not as sinister as *The Banks of Sulán*. The *Allegro* has a whiff of Bartók and of Gershwin—in the use of drums and timpani—a bit of Poulenc-like jolliness would not have come amiss.

After all this comes *Mise Éire* (Orchestral Suite)—meaning a concert hall / recordable piece made out of his music for the film. It (*Mise Éire*) was a compilation of newsreel and privately-made footage, and stills, about the lead up to the 1916 Easter Rising—it was a Gael-Linn product and was felt to be a turning point in Irish film history. Ó Riada's music must have added to such an effect. Irish melodies had been orchestrated before, of course, usually in polite Victorian eunuchoid form. But here they were (in Hollywood manner of full giant RRRomantic orchestral form) *Róisín Dubh*, *Sliabh na mBan*, and others. The effect on audiences trained-up by the Great and the Good to sneer at such 'bog music' must have been near incredible. Whether it is 'good music' or not hardly comes into the question—as it happens it is a professional job, backed up by genuine and legitimate patriotic passion.

The 'Bonus Track' is Seán Ó Sé singing *Mná na hÉireann* (Women of Ireland), the music composed by Ó Riada in 'Euro-centric' strophic form (of the sort used by Schubert, Gershwin,—and Vaughan-Williams. Ó Sé sings it well, with a full heart—it is interesting to speculate what its fortunes might be even in 2013 if it were released as a 'single'.

Seán McGouran

Does  
It  
Up

Stack  
?

#### ENDA KENNY'S CONSTITUTION.

It is an old saying that "*the devil can quote Sacred Scripture for his own purposes*", or words to that effect. In Taoiseach Enda Kenny's case, he says the Constitution of Ireland is his "*Book*". And on 2nd May 2013 he was quoted in the national print media telling his Fine Gael and Labour TDs that "*the Law is not being changed*". He was referring to "*The Protection of Life During Pregnancy Bill 2013*". If the law is not being changed, then what is all the expensive fuss about? And what is a Bill if not an enactment of legislative change? In the 6 o'clock and 9 o'clock RTE News on 1st May 2013, the Taoiseach Enda Kenny was shown making the same untrue statement to the Irish people. Of course the law will be changed if the Bill becomes law! We know that Enda Kenny *lied* but in the usual moral lassitude of the Irish people—we watched him do it and said to ourselves: "well he has to do that to get it passed—doesn't he?" Instead we should be outraged at the Taoiseach's blatant lie. And if we were a truly democratic people we would believe in a democratic vote of our representatives without their having to be whipped into line. Not into the Fine Gael Party line—mind you but into the Labour Party line and into Enda Kenny's line. The Fine Gael supporters are solidly against abortion other than for medical reasons if the mother's life is in danger. But then Enda Kenny was not elected leader of Fine Gael for his moral and ethical rectitude but because his Parliamentary party thought he had the ability to win elections. And like Bertie Ahern in Fianna Fail he has done that. Will he repeat it three more times like Bertie did for Fianna Fail? I think that is extremely doubtful if not impossible. Bertie avoided the X Case fall-out. He enacted the decision and left it like that.

The Supreme Court in the X Case had interpreted the law and the Constitution and nothing further needed to be done and so Bertie Ahern had not done anything. Everyone knew what the law is and everyone accepted it but the liberals who were waiting for their chance down the line. Liberals like Ivana Bacik for example and others in minority groupings—if not outright fringe groupings, if truth be told—and then there was the Labour Party Mark

11 under the rule of the old Worker's Party who wanted a push towards abortion on demand but softly bit by bit until it became a reality. This became quite clear in the leaked tapes revealed by the *Sunday Independent* on 28th April 2013 when Labour TDs Ann Ferris and Aodhán O Riordáin made their positions and that of their leader Eamon Gilmore clear in favour of abortion on demand with no time restrictions.

After Taoiseach Enda Kenny lied about the law, the TV, radio and print media began to spew out one lie after another. Much was made of the Supreme Court direction to the Dáil to change the law. It did no such thing and it has not the power to do so. Then again the media stated the Supreme Court decision in the X Case became part of our common law. It did **not**. It interpreted what the Constitution says—incorrectly as it has turned out, because the Court was persuaded that "*suicide ideation*" was a risk to a pregnant woman's life and this medical situation has now been found to be false. Pregnant women do not feel suicidal because of being pregnant as a matter of medical fact. And that a pregnant woman's mental health is not improved by abortion is also medical fact accepted by psychiatrists worldwide.

The most unfortunate death of Savita Halappanavar became the subject of quite outrageous and unjustified attempts in *The Irish Times* and indeed elsewhere to manipulate public opinion and to manufacture consent to abortion-on-demand. The Irish media fed on it for months until it was gorged with lies and half-truths up until the time of the inquest, which showed—and the jury and coroner concluded—that Savita died due to medical misadventure and her death was not because she did not get an abortion on demand. She died because she did not get the correct treatment at the right time—due partly to a delay in laboratory tests results. Sworn evidence was given and accepted that a pregnant woman who has a very serious infection such as Savita had, is made worse by an induced abortion because induced abortion opens up more tissues to the infection in the mother.

Despite the Coroner's verdict that abortion law had nothing to do with Savita's death—the media, and in particular *The Irish Times*, continues to flog the case form day to day in an attempt to frighten people into abortion-on-demand.

In Ireland the medical practice has always been and still is that the mother's life is the primary consideration in any medical treatment. This is spelled out in

the Rules of Practice for Obstetricians. What the Supreme Court recommended was that these Rules should be enshrined in statute law for the sake of legal clarity. That is what the Taoiseach should have done. Instead of doing that he has allowed the "*suicide ideation*" concept to be put in the Bill without any medical support for doing so. We all know that the Labour Party are pushing for abortion-on-demand to satisfy a clamorous minority in the party.

One woman TD from the West of Ireland did refer in the Dáil to "*fornication*", but apart from that there had been a great reticence to connect the intentional killing of babies with the sexual intercourse which is a necessary precursor to having a baby. Perhaps it is appropriate that a party entitled the Labour Party should be attempting to facilitate recreational sex. Because that is precisely what it is doing. None of us were aborted and we all, each of us, prefer to be alive rather than killed. No circumstances ever justifies intentionally killing another human being. The vast resources expended on abortion would be far better spent on helping unfortunate women who have a surprise pregnancy to bear the child and then either rear the child within the family or put the child up for adoption. It can be done and it is done and should be done more often when necessary.

There are those sad economists who say that the world will become overpopulated. John S. Mill proved it to his own satisfaction but it has not happened yet and does not look likely to happen. The people starving to death in the world today are demonstrably in those countries whose mineral wealth is being stolen by more developed countries. More food is being wasted in the more developed countries than would be needed to stave off famine in Third World countries. We enjoy our beef dinners but we know that the food supporting the vast herds of large animals would, if fed directly to people instead of to the animals, support up to ten times more people than are existing on meat and dairy products today. We also know that a starving person would rather be fed than dead. Population growth is not a valid reason for abortion.

Enormous resources have been moved into influencing public opinion on abortion. The abortion industry is itself enormous. For example London is probably the "*abortion capital*" of Europe. Abortion is one of the big UK invisible exports and one abortion clinic in London is reported to do two hundred abortions a week. That is ten thousand babies killed



every year in just one clinic. The cost is said to be £1,000 each which means this clinic alone takes in £10,000,000 each year. And that is just one of many clinics in London. Think of how much the whole UK economy is earning from abortions.

The Irish public and the TDs and Senators are being subjected to great pressure in the media and by an army of lobbyists to change public opinion in favour of abortion. Millions of euros are being spent by the lobbyists to promulgate lies and half-truths. Reference was made above to the X Case. This case has been mentioned in the media in recent months every day. Some days it is trotted out several times, as if it was relevant to the present discussion on abortion. The public are led to believe that the Supreme Court in that case was in favour of abortion even though it was not. The public are led to believe that the X Case decided that abortion-on-demand should be legislated for, though it did not. What the Supreme Court decided (on incorrect information as it now transpires) was the right of X to travel abroad to the UK for an abortion because, if she did not do so, she was in danger of suicide.

In its *obiter dicta* the Court asked for clarity in the laws. Asking for clarity has no legal effect on anyone or on anything and it was not incumbent on any Government to do anything about it and so nothing was done about it for the next twenty years. In the thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution passed on 23rd December 1992, the Constitution was changed to give effect to the actual decision of the Supreme Court and Article 40.3.3 as a result now states the right to life of the unborn would not limit freedom to travel between Ireland and another state. And so the decision in the X Case is since 1992 part of the law of Ireland. The X Case decision is therefore not relevant at all to the Bill presently before the Dáil.

The Supreme Court did not decide that suicide ideation is a reason for abortion. It decided that a person, any person, has a right to travel. The Constitution of Ireland does not say suicide is a reason for abortion. So why does the Taoiseach Enda Kenny say "*the Constitution is my Book*"? It obviously is not his book if he is going to pass a law giving someone with "*suicide ideation*" an abortion.

The whole discussion at present is emotionally driven and does not stand up logically.

Other than intentional abortion to save the life of the mother, I have never seen nor heard cogent logical arguments in favour of intentional abortion-on-demand.

Oh yes, we hear about special situations like rape or incest but since when has society descended to killing the child for the outrage committed by the father? Since when is it all right for a murder victim's

family to kill the murderer's child? Since when is it OK to kill someone who gets in the way of your career?

Meditate carefully on it.

Michael Stack ©

#### TRADE UNION NOTES

## Registered Employment Agreements: *an important victory!*

The Labour Party has rendered a significant service to organised labour in the current crisis. In 2010 some fast food companies challenged the constitutionality of agreements reached by Joint Labour Committees which, once registered, have automatic legal application throughout most (though not exclusively) low paid sectors covering up to 200,000 workers. The Fianna Fáil Government at the time, responding to intensive lobbying by SIPTU and other Unions, declared its intention to legislate to remove the constitutional threat to the system but fell from power before doing so. Following renewed Union lobbying, the new Government introduced legislation in September 2011 to meet the challenge to the system, abandoning Fine Gael Minister Richard Bruton's plans to "*reform*" the system through its abolition. Bruton believed he was running with the neo-liberal fashions of the time, and was convinced the Troika would applaud his initiative. But SIPTU secured confirmation from the Troika that this was far from the case (See, 'Saving the Social Republic—Legislation to underpin the Labour Court system', *Labour Comment/IPR*, September 2011).

The result was an extensive review (the Walsh/Duffy Report) and the introduction of the Industrial Relations Act (Amendment) 2012, resolving the basis of the alleged unconstitutionality of REOs (Registered Employment Orders). A further case by employers, on which the High Court ruled on 9th May 2013, concerned an REA governing the electrical trades. It ruled this "*unconstitutional*" on the basis of provisions of the 1946 Industrial Relations Act. But, despite much media commentary to the effect that the entire system is now redundant, apparently this will not be effective in destroying the system of registered agreements, as the basis in that Act for the ruling had itself been superseded and resolved by Labour's 2012 Amendment Act. According to SIPTU General President, Jack O'Connor:

"The Industrial Relations Act (Amendment) 2012, which the Labour Party in Government succeeded in getting passed by the Oireachtas, does appear to address the issues that have been highlighted in today's judgement... Only last year the Oireachtas legislated to preserve the infrastructure of the REAs and what is clear is that this Supreme Court judgement does not strike down the 2012 Act. It also appears from the wording of the judgement that the Supreme Court is allowing, without scrutinising the issues because they were not before them, that the 2012 Act is constitutionally compliant" (*Liberty*, May 2013).

The system of Joint Labour Committees, Employment Regulation Orders and Registered Employment Agreements was inherited from the old British Trades Board Act but, while this has since withered on the vine in Britain, in Ireland it was greatly expanded through the operation of the Industrial Relations Act of 1946 which established the entire Labour Court system. Under this, Employer and Trade Union bodies for particular trades or sectors agree minimum wages and terms and conditions, which, when registered with the Labour Court, have legal application throughout the sectors involved.

The Industrial Relations Act 1946 pre-dates the era of extensive constitutional "*interpretation*" by the Courts. Its "*design flaws*", in constitutional terms, concerned firstly the sole power of the elected authority (the Dáil)—rather than the Labour Court—to force citizens to comply with regulations and secondly the imposition of Agreements on bodies (e.g. employers not members of employer organisations) who were Industrial Relations Act 1946.

The destruction of the JLC/REA system would have brought an open-ended "*race to the bottom*" of wages and conditions in many sectors that today are characterised by extensive casualisation (e.g. catering, contract cleaning, construction etc.). Along with the protections for contract workers, achieved notably by SIPTU under the Partnership system, these Agreements constitute a civilised culture of labour protection and a benchmark for reasonable terms of employment throughout Irish industry.

Philip O'Connor



## GUILDS continued

III (1312-1377) alliances and 'covins' between masons and carpenters were forbidden. As late as 1517 the daubers and masons of Coventry were denied the right to combine... A combine which limited its membership to joiners and carvers doubtless served better to protect a monopoly in the developing than one open to groups interested in other handicrafts" (p.57).

"It is doubtful whether tanners or other communities were, at this time organised in separate guilds. At any rate there is no record that establishes the fact. Before 1416, the year in which the York tanners set up their own guild, they had belonged to an association which included the glovers and parchment makers" (p.61).

### WEAVERS

In the Fifteenth Century—

"necessity rather than choice seems to have driven various handicrafts in different parts of the country into joining gild forces. In 1439, Oxford weavers were on their last legs and were forced to invite the fullers to join their weavers' gild. These Oxford weavers, whose predecessors had been among the first of the English crafts influential enough to secure a gild, must have been in sore straits to renounce it at this date. In their case, amalgamation seems clearly proof of the decay of local gild power and prestige.

"When men realised that their own guilds had lost ground they joined forces with some other group with whose interests their were sufficiently close to enable them together to make the most of the authority they could still exert. After all, sharing gild privileges with one's fellows was better than have no share at all in any gild" (p.69).

"Moreover, the prevalence of Fifteenth-century combinations comprising closely related craftsmen, tends to prove that no matter what may have been the cause of their creation, municipalities of the epoch had given up the attempt wholly to keep them apart" (p.69).

"In making this, as it were, a condition of their amalgamating, the crafts immediately concerned appear to be registering a protest against a movement {amalgamation} that was, in reality, contrary to the principles that had led the English handicrafts to withdraw from the gild merchant and erect guilds of their own, in order that they might manage their own affairs unhampered by outsiders" (p.71).

### TRADING CAPITAL v. INDUSTRIAL CAPITAL

"The Gloucester metalmen likewise sought confirmation of their union in 1607, following the gift to the city authorities of a charter authorising them to reduce into some company all the mysteries which before had not been under any uniform order or organisation... Where

fore the town council willingly conceded that the twenty-one metalmen who appeared before them and such others as should afterwards serve a proper apprenticeship with any one of these charter members should 'be taken and reputed' to be Gloucester's only company of metalmen" (p.77).

"Professor Unwin regards this company as an expression, as he terms it, of 'the ascendancy of trading capital over industrial capital', although he qualifies the statement because the company included in its membership the wire-drawers and the pinmakers. Their inclusion, he says, was probably due to the opposite influence (presumably the ascendancy of industrial capital over trading capital) since within a few years of the date of the amalgamation, Gloucester had become an important seat of the pin manufacture" (*Industrial Organisation*, London, 1902, p.38).

"The fact that Professor Unwin needs to qualify his explanation necessarily detracts from its worth as a reason for the association of these various group of handicrafts" (p.77).

### THE HAMMERMEN OF LUDLOW

"Despite the difficulty inherent in any attempt to harmonise the different factions in these large federation, in 1715, the hammermen of Ludlow still worked to increase the membership of their society. In fact the company is said to have owed its large membership to the pertinacity with which its officials prosecuted hammermen who refused to join the ranks. To all appearances, men who wished to work at the metal crafts in the borough of Ludlow were practically forced to join the organisation" (p.79).

### CONCLUSION

What was the significance of the movement in the evolution of the Guild system which gave rise and fostered the development of amalgamation among the trades and handicrafts?

"Immediately after the break-up of the gild merchant various groups of merchant seem to have drawn together into one organisation. In 1370, the Bristol merchants, mercers, draper and other dealers together formed a common gild for the purpose of regulating their own and the city's commercial affairs" (p.97).

"These joint associations seem to have secured for themselves as a body the mercantile privileges which they had all enjoyed in the days when the old gild merchant held sway." (p.97).

By the middle of the Sixteenth Century, if not indeed much earlier, amalgamated trading Guilds were the rule in the English commercial communities, and they continued to be an active force.

"We can readily comprehend how amalgamated companies, which sought to confine their membership to men engaged only in mercantile pursuits, had

many advantages which would recommend themselves more and more to the medieval traders, the mercers, grocers, apothecaries, haberdashers, and the rest, as the struggle to maintain separate guilds became increasingly severe" (p.97).

"By encouraging rival handicrafts to merge their gild interests, the authorities prevailed upon them to fulfill their civic obligations and play their part in the community's economic life" (p.98)

"The fact that so many crafts in the more important towns never amalgamated, but guarded their gild independence to the last, leads to the inference that among the handicrafts at least, *the movement toward amalgamation was in reality proof of the decline of early craft ideals*. The handicrafts which were unable alone to protect and develop their individual interests joined some group with relations sufficiently close to make a joint union feasible" (p.99).

In those communities the problem of excluding aliens was so absorbing as to overshadow all others. Indeed, the influx of strangers probably acted as a spur to link together handicrafts which might otherwise have continued indefinitely to compete with one another.

"From the late Sixteenth century onward, evidence prevails of the willingness of rival craftsmen to combine in order to debar from the towns strangers who made or endeavoured to dispose of their wares. By that time the danger that threatened local trade and industry from the invasion of foreigners became more and more formidable in the small towns until even the merchants were forced to raise the barriers maintained for centuries between them and the handicrafts, and to join with the latter in forming common societies. Accordingly there arose the large bodies embracing different trades and handicrafts until in the great Seventeenth-century aggregations which were established in Faversham and Wallingford the whole process of gild grouping reached its culminating point. The plan of association could scarcely have been carried further" (p.99). *The English Craft Guilds, Studies in their Progress and Decline*, Stella Kramer, Columbia University Press, 1927).

(To be continued)

\* George Unwin (1870-1925) held the chair of Economic History at the University of Manchester—then the only one of its kind in the British Empire—from 1910 until his death in 1925.

Unwin was a pacifist and greatly influenced by Sidney and Beatrice Webb. He wrote a number of works on British economic, social and business history, including *Industrial Organization In The Sixteenth And Seventeenth Centuries* (1904), and *The Guilds And Companies Of London* (1908).

Pat Maloney

## GUILDS continued

given charge of that city's commercial affairs, which seem to have been concerned largely with the sale of iron, salt, coal and wine. Besides these four commodities, all manner of merchandise that came into the city, 'as well merceri as groceri and halberdashe', hides and leather, seem to have been handled by this company which was incorporated by Queen Elizabeth in 1557, and empowered to buy and sell all kinds of merchandise 'in grosso siue retallia...' (*Corporation Records*, City of Dublin, Egerton MS, 1765).

### MERCHANT V. CRAFT

An uneasy relationship existed between the general mercantile fraternity and the craftsmen in mediaeval towns. Until particular groups of craftsmen could gather together enough men to form a Guild on their own account, they may have joined the society of mercers because they had to belong to some organisation if they wished legitimately to carry on their calling within an urban community.

The mercantile fraternity could levy tribute on outside handicraftsmen and other coming into town, so this was an added incentive for handicraftsmen to remain members of these other organisations. It is noteworthy too, that certain merchant companies, which up to the Sixteenth Century had opened their membership to handicraftsmen, began to make their admission increasingly difficult and in some instances even impossible. Of course, it was to the interest of merchant companies which wished to identify themselves with 'grete aventour' to repudiate their connection with local handicraftsmen.

"It is a matter of record that in most of the larger boroughs as in the smaller, the ordinary traders drew together into single associations not only for the purpose of making the distinction between them and local craftsmen, but of maintaining it until the end of gild domination. Professor Unwin endeavours to show that the antagonism of interests which developed between the English trades and handicrafts was due to a conflict between commercial and industrial capital, a theme which he discusses at some length." (p.39)

"The distinction which Mr. Unwin draws between the companies of merchants and those of drapers is that the leading motive of the merchant companies was to exclude the craftsmen, while the drapers' organisation aimed rather at controlling them. There is little evidence, however, which permits us to infer that the companies differed in any such respect" (p.39).

### DISTRIBUTION V MANUFACTURE

"As merchant traders the haberdashers' chief interest lay in forwarding the distributing branch of the hat business, while the working feltmakers naturally looked after the manufacturing part of it. The

relations between the two groups grew more and more strained, inasmuch as the haberdashers, in spite of the feltmakers' protests, persisted in asserting their rights. The feltmakers at last made formal application to the Crown for a charter which should confer upon them alone full authority to regulate their own craft" (p.46).

"This antagonism is well illustrated by what occurred when, as a compromise, the haberdashers and feltmakers were given joint authority to search all foreign wools. The feltmakers soon complained that the haberdashers "have not used" the search "because the chiefest and most part of the merchants that bringeth in and the ingrossers of the said wools are haberdashers"..." (p.45)

### DRAPERS AND TAILORS

"The associations entered into by the drapers and tailors form a second group which may be considered in connection with the merchant companies. So close was the relation which these two trades bore to each other that civic officials were often much exercised to keep them distinct. Thus at one time the mayor of London went the length of disenfranchising a citizen 'for using drapery him being a tailor'. But it was practically impossible to separate the two trades. Both the drapers and the tailors had been accustomed to sell cloth by retail, and to judge from Acts of parliament they continued to do so through succeeding centuries. It was especially fitting that the drapers and tailors should yield to the general impulse towards amalgamation, and so secure for themselves the advantages attaching to the system. Even though the two trades in London did not unite their guilds, they demonstrated the closeness of their business interests by working together to further them on more than one occasion.

If the companies of the city thus acknowledged their interdependence, it is not surprising that the provincial guilds went a step further and made their unions permanent" (p.47-48).

In the industrial world there were any number of kindred handicrafts which trenched so closely upon one another's sphere that it became practically impossible for the most zealous advocate of a division of labour to keep them separate.

### BOWS AND ARROWS

Throughout the latter part of the fourteenth century the London authorities attempted to confine different crafts to their own work. For instance, in 1371, they bound the "*reputable men of the trade of bowyers*" and "*of the trade of fletchers*" to see that "*for the profit and advantage of all the commonalty... no man of the one trade shall meddle with the other trade in any part*". We do not know how long these mediaeval bow and arrow-makers succeeded in isolating their respective callings. But the existence of a Sixteenth Century record of an amalgamated Guild comprising both bowyers and

fletchers proves that, by that time, they had found it expedient to join Guild forces.

### BREWERS AND BAKERS

Two vital industries of that age, the Brewers and Bakers, had a right 'barney': "*The time came when brewers could not be deterred from baking even though they had never been apprenticed to that calling...*". Consequently the brewers were encouraged to join forces with the bakers for the common good. The bakers and brewers of Boston were licensed in 1569 "*to be a commonaltie of themselves for their maintenance and good order*", which may be testimony to the fact that neither object had been attained when each group was arrayed against the other. Nor that amalgamation necessarily kept local bakers and brewers on friendly terms.

Some boroughs went so far as to make the baking of white bread and of black bread two distinct crafts. In 1393, Canterbury required the bakers of white bread to swear under pain of a severe penalty to bake no black bread and the bakers of black bread to bake no white. The bakers of brown bread didn't hang around either. In the days of the Tudors {1485-1603}, the City of London prohibited bakers of white bread and of brown from uniting their corporate forces. By ancient orders of the city, "*bakers of both varieties of bread had been two distinct occupations*".

Nearly two hundred years later, 1581, the London authorities insisted that the bakers of white bread and of brown be kept apart so as to prevent the inconveniences which would arise if the 'white bakers' were permitted to bake brown bread and vice versa.

### CARPENTERS AND JOINERS

The carpenters and joiners of many communities found it to their interest to amalgamate. Thus, in 1579, by-laws, which constituted the two groups in Newcastle-upon-Tyne a "*body corporate of themselves*", specified the work which the joiners alone should undertake as well as, those which the two crafts might use in common.

By 1692 the Carpenters' and Joiners' Guild of Worcester contrived to secure for its members upon equally advantageous terms, the timber which they required for their business. A monopoly on the purchase of timber.

"The joiners and carvers offered the city of Chester a certain sum for this privilege and in addition promised to supply timber to citizens more cheaply thereafter.

"Amalgamation seems not to have played a great role among the victualling crafts until the very end of that which they needed 'for their own occupying'..." (p.56).

### THE STATE AND AMALGAMATIONS

"The state at an early date declared itself opposed to the amalgamation of builders. During the reign of King Edward

continued on page 23

## GUILDS continued

company of mercers and ordinary merchants, more or less comprehensive in character, became a practically universal institution in the English boroughs" (p.5).

### LEATHER TRADE

"The industrial crafts soon followed the example set them by the merchants and consolidated their forces. While the state soon repealed as much of the Act of 1363 as had forbidden the merchants to trade in more than one line of goods, it left intact the clause which confined the handicrafts to their chosen craft; and before long it brought into play in a specific industry the same principle of isolating the crafts. For the year 1390 witnessed the passage of another Act which declared that 'for as much as diverse shoemakers and cordwainers use to tan their leather and sell the same falsely tanned, also make shoes and boots of such leather not well tanned and sell them as dear as they will to be great deceit of the poor commons', no shoemaker or cordwainer should thereafter use the 'craft of tanning no tanner the craft of shoemaking'. The state was thoroughly in earnest, apparently, in its desire to protect the English people from poorly made footwear" (p.8).

"It appears, then, that among the crafts concerned with leather industries, there were practically four different sorts of amalgamations, those of tanners or curriers and cordwainers; of skinners and glovers; of leathersellers which included makers of different leather goods; and the large companies, established in the smaller communities by gathering together all the leather crafts." (p.10).

And there was no love lost amongst them!

"The State expected, doubtless, to secure a better product by holding men responsible for one part of a process. It was, however, not easy for men to mend their ways all at once even at the stern command of the State. This the State well understood, since it continued to insist that such of its subjects as were employed in curing leather should not use two or more branches of the business" (p.62)

### METAL CRAFTS

"The Fifteenth century saw the men interested in the metal crafts move towards amalgamation. By the middle of the Sixteenth century the movement appears well grounded among the metal workers practically everywhere. London at that time was maintaining an amalgamation of blacksmiths and spurriers while later still the authorities encouraged local braziers and armourers to form a company" (p.10).

"In the early Fifteenth century the craftsmen in the building crafts, had at least in some places, consolidated their corporate interests. In fact, York seems to have sanctioned two combinations, one of local tilers and plasterers and another of

painters, stainers and gold-beaters... The reign of King Charles II { 1660-1685 } found Dublin supporting such a combination, while the plasterers of Bristol had affiliated with the local tilers" (p.12-13).

"Yet it is recorded that as early as 1356 London helped the city masons to organise a union. At that date the mayor summoned all the good folks of the trade to appear before him in order that he might 'have from them good and due information how their trade might be best ordered and ruled profitably to the common people'. The mayor had been led to take this step because 'divers dissensions and disputes have been moved in the said city between the masons who are hewers on the one hand and the light masons and setters on the other, because their trade has not been regulated in due manner by the government of folks in their trade in such form as other trades are" (Riley, *Memorials*, London, 1868).

### TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Records which establish an early date for the amalgamation of the different crafts concerned in the making of cloth are few and far between. In 1444, the records of Ipswich prove that the clothworkers, drapers, dyers and shearmen together formed one of the twelve groups which in that year took part in the Corpus Christi procession, but they yield not specific information concerning the economic relations of the different members in the group.

### BAKERS AND BREWERS

"Amalgamation seems not to have played a great role among the victualling crafts until the very end of Tudor time { 1485-1603 }. Even then, their unions were limited to two or three of the several branches of the art. Youghal, Co. Cork thought it 'fit that there shall be a yeeld { gild } of Innkeepers and Victuallers to the number of within this town at the election' of the 'Maior'. But the great majority of cities and corporate towns preferred, seemingly, to confine local bakers, brewers and dealers in food-stuffs generally to their own gild" (p.16).

### MERCANTILE CRAFTS

"The amalgamated gilds established by the mercantile crafts fall, for the most part, into three main divisions, according as these crafts associated themselves under the patronage of the mercers and merchants, the haberdashers or the drapers.

"While the amalgamations entered into by the industrial crafts fall, in the main, into five different gild groups which represent the leather, metal, building, cloth-working and the victualling industries, respectively, there were additional associations maintained in common by crafts like the bowyers and fletchers and the barber-surgeons, which have been considered by themselves. It seems true that the trend toward consolidation took hold first among the mercantile groups, but it soon commended itself to the handicrafts; the victuallers alone, so far as we can

judge, were debarred from an early exercise of the privilege of association" (p.19.)

### AMALGAMATION HISTORY

The move towards amalgamation was started in 1345 when three groups of London merchants united to form the grocers' company and by their union contrived to work so much mischief to the public at large in eighteen years, by engrossing all manner of merchandise and by enhancing the price of their wares, as to call forth a parliamentary measure restricting the merchants as a class in their commercial operations. We have, however, to look afield to discover why the State found it expedient to bind the handicrafts to their chosen craft. But we need not go outside London to perceive that the authorities were obliged to do something to allay the general discontent which had arisen because craftsmen were everywhere disregarding their neighbours' peculiar rights.

The London handicrafts were seething with discontent. As we shall see, time and again the town council tried to keep the peace among the disaffected craftsmen by defining in Guild ordinance the duties peculiar to each craft. This condition of affairs sufficiently explains why Parliament in the Act of 1363 included provision which aimed at checking the aggression of the crafts on one another's special field. Yet while State and municipality alike insisted that townsmen should keep within their separate spheres of industry, consolidated companies were springing up both among trades and handicrafts.

"The important point, however, is that the attention of the state was at this time directed against the monopolizing practices of an amalgamated gild of merchants and that the act of 1363 was deliberately aimed against them" (p.21).

At this time the Guild appears as a developed corporation and its members were undoubtedly guilty of practising the abuses characteristic of Guildsmen of the period. One of the abuses of the time was that of charging apprentices excessive fines for entry into the Guild.

### TOWN V. COUNTRY

"Naturally the traders of the considerable boroughs and large towns were more numerous and had ampler opportunities to prosper commercially than those who dwelt in the small boroughs. The city merchants could therefore often either maintain single gilds, or gilds which were limited to but two, or possibly three, different groups of closely connected trades, when the country merchants found it difficult to support a single organisation for all. Then, too, the merchant companies often lost a section of their members who withdrew when they wanted to set up a gild of their own" (p.28).

"Again, at Dublin in 1438, when 'Henri the fyfte' was king, a merchant gild was

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# Guild Amalgamations

"The Amalgamation of the English Trades and Handicrafts", the first study in the present volume, discusses a movement that followed closely upon the rise of individual guilds. This was one, seemingly, in such contradiction to the spirit of the age which called for the separation of guild interests, as to warrant a detailed inquiry into the causes of their amalgamation. Why the crafts were allowed to unite when the sentiment of the times favoured their separation seemed a mystery worthy to be unravelled" (*The English Craft Guilds, Studies in their Progress and Decline*, Stella Kramer, Columbia University Press, 1927).

The High Middle Ages (11th, 12th and 13th centuries) was the period when the Merchant Guilds were at their most powerful, the high point of mediaeval civilization—prior to the rise of the Craft Guilds in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Towards the end of the 13th century, however, clearer class divisions begin to appear. The number of journeymen increased, and many of them remained wage earners all their lives.

### 1345: THE BEGINNING OF GUILD AMALGAMATIONS.

In 1347, the Black Death struck England. Wages went up : for labour had suddenly grown scarce. Following the Peasant Revolts, the 15th century was probably the period of greatest prosperity for the labouring population of rural England.

The Protestant Reformation occurred in the 16th century. The Craft Guilds were the dominating feature of English industrial life between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries; "by the time of Elizabeth I they change in character and become something essentially different from the old craft guilds of medieval England. They have become associations of capitalists acting under the orders of the central Government" (Lilian Knowles, 1905).

"Conceded by King John in 1200 to the citizens of York, by 1272, the gild merchant was evidently not functioning even as the agency for registering the names of the freemen who were then being admitted into the civic fold... apparently as early at least as 1272, the Gild Merchant of York was yielding its place and powers in the community to the civic authority and to the rising craft and merchant guilds, seems to have been virtually completed ..." (Ibid, Stella Kramer, p.iv)

In 1363, during the reign of Edward III, a law was passed, "...that artificers, handicraft people, hold them every one too one mystery which he shall choose betwixt this and the said feast of Candlemas, and two of every craft shall be chosen to survey that none use other craft than the same which he hath chosen."

### INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATION

"To students of gild history this parliamentary measure is extremely significant, first of all, because it shows the immense strides taken by industrial organisation since the days of the gild merchant's regime. That once favoured association was evidently superseded in its own sphere of activity by the craft guilds which had risen into ascendancy.

The act has an additional significance for our subject, because it clearly shows that a distinct merchant class had differentiated itself from the handicraft, and as we gather one of its number, the grocers, had already come into collision with the trading rules of the time" (ibid., p.1-2).

"It is of special importance, therefore, to notice at this point that simultaneously with the emergence of a distinct class of English merchants, a most significant fact in English social history, we find that they had initiated a new movement in industrial association. This we know as the amalgamation of the English crafts" (p.2).

"Merchants, however, were still to remain a class apart from handicraftsmen, and those who had not already done so hastened to secure a royal charter protecting them in their special monopoly. In this was the London fishmongers, vintners and drapers took their place side by side with the grocers, mercers [dealers in textile fabrics] and the rest of the great metropolitan trading companies previously founded; and the majority of the twelve great livery companies were now firmly established." (p.3).

Miss Alice Law in an article on "*The English Nouveaux-Riches in the Fourteenth Century*" claims of the union of the Pepper and Spice merchants that "...the object of their incorporation was doubtless to qualify as a large banking establishment. It may indeed be that by taking the place of the Italian bankers these London merchants secured royal support in their ambitious mercantile projects."

"In certain of the small towns, towards the latter part of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth century, all the crafts were being drawn into definite gild groups, the number of which was determined by the authorities..." (p.5).

"We are on the whole justified, therefore, in assuming that by the middle of the sixteenth, or the beginning of the seventeenth century, an amalgamated

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