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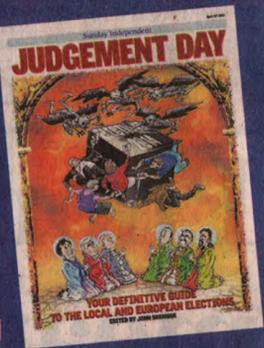
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## IMELDA MAY PRINCE PHILIP WAS CHECKING OUT MY ASS

LIFE MAGAZINE



## THE JOHN DRENNAN GUIDE TO LOCAL AND EUROPEAN ELECTIONS FREE INSIDE



### ALL IS CHANGING, CHANGING UTTERLY...

# Poll: FG gets it in the neck; SF rampant; new party call

## Hayes faces defeat in Dublin; Nessa to top poll; SF set to take seat in each constituency

DANIEL MCCONNELL and JOHN DRENNAN

FINE Gael Junior Minister Brian Hayes is facing a humiliating defeat in next month's European elections as Sinn Fein and Independents look set to capitalise on a wave of anti-government sentiment.

A new *Sunday Independent*/Millward Brown poll of the make-or-break Dublin constituency – the first comprehensive poll of its kind in this election – reveals that a decisive backlash against both Fine Gael and Labour is crystallising, with less than five weeks to polling day.

The poll also shows a majority – 54 per cent – in favour of a new political party, while over three out of every

four voters, 77 per cent, are in favour of increasing the powers of the Dail's Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

On the evidence of today's poll, Sinn Fein is emerging as the new kingpin of Irish politics. Independent candidates are also polling strongly, with Nessa Childers set to take the first seat in Dublin.

For the first time in a Millward Brown poll, the electorate is turning against Fine Gael as well as Labour. The party is trailing behind Independents and Fianna Fail in

former minister Eamon Ryan (11 per cent). Our poll also asked for people's second preference in terms of candidate. Of even greater concern for Mr Hayes is the fact that he is not as transfer-friendly as Ms Costello, Mr Ryan or even Ms Fitzpatrick.

On this basis, Mr Hayes is facing an uphill battle to take one of the three Dublin seats. Any failure by Fine Gael to win a seat in Dublin would have serious ramifications for Mr Kenny within a party that is furious about the mishandling of the Shatter crisis.

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**MillwardBrown**  
FULL POLL DETAILS AND ANALYSIS:  
PAGES 4, 22, 23, 24, 25 & 34

# McGuinness to Martin: I want your job, I wanna be the leader

JOHN DRENNAN and RONALD QUINLAN

THE chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, John McGuinness, has served notice to current Fianna Fail leader Micheal Martin of his ambition to succeed him as leader of the party.

Mr McGuinness dropped the bombshell to Mr Martin during a meeting after the Fianna Fail leader asked him if he would be interested in running as a candidate in the European elections, the *Sunday Independent* has learnt.

But Mr McGuinness turned down the invitation, telling Mr Martin his real interest was "in the FF leadership".

The FF leader made the suggestion after internal polls "showed McGuinness streaking away with it were he to run in the Euros".

However, Mr McGuinness instead told Mr Martin he was

not going because "if I am in Europe I can't contest the leadership".

A senior party source told the *Sunday Independent*: "Micheal nearly fell off his chair at the response, he wasn't expecting that, a paler shade of white might best describe it."

Mr Martin has come under fire recently from former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern and former minister Mary Hanafin over the party's "brutal" performance in Dublin, though the opposition leader has publicly insisted his leadership is "safe".

However, senior figures within the party tell a different story. One noted: "Micheal is accumulating enemies. There are issues with the old guard, there is unfinished business with Eamon O Cuiv, the finance spokesman Michael McGrath is not his friend."

In a chilly analysis, one

party frontbencher said: "It all hangs on the Dublin election; it would become very difficult if Fianna Fail came in behind Eamon Ryan or Nessa Childers."

Another senior figure said: "In the council elections the threshold of safety for Micheal is around 28 per cent and three MEPs, anything else would lead to a long, hot summer."

Today's *Sunday Independent*/Millward Brown poll findings – which show FF's Mary Fitzpatrick struggling in a four-way battle royale to claim the final European seat in Dublin – will heap further pressure on Mr Martin.

Mr McGuinness could not be contacted for comment last night. But sources close to the high-profile PAC chairman said: "Previously John had a reputation for being somewhat aloof, but he has certainly been putting himself

about much more with the party membership."

Another Fianna Fail TD added: "John is making no secret of his interest, nobody is bad-mouthing Micheal but he is fatally attached to the past; the feeling is that so long as he is there we cannot move on to greener fields."

Intriguingly, Mr McGuinness has chaired numerous FF selection conventions for the new Euro and local election candidates. "He's been getting a rapturous response, standing ovations, people are tired of Micheal's milk-and-water Fianna Fail sounding like Fine Gael," a source said.

One McGuinness supporter said: "Eamon O Cuiv could be the stalking horse that will force the issue. The younger breed will vote for McGuinness on the basis that, like Albert Reynolds back then, he is not going to be around for a long time."

### GRAINNE'S JOY



LOVE IS IN THE AIR: TV presenter Grainne Seoige and former rugby coach turned businessman Leon Jordaan celebrating their engagement yesterday. Grainne's dress is from Havana in Donnybrook, Dublin 4. Photo: Gerry Mooney. Full Story, Page 5 & Living, Page 2

### WHAT THE POLL SAYS:



■ **Voters want a new political party**  
MICHAEL McDOWELL, Page 24



■ **Public demands more powers for PAC**  
SHANE ROSS, Page 24



■ **Ireland wants Universal Health Insurance - but doesn't believe the Government can deliver**  
BRENDAN O'CONNOR, Page 25



■ **We are deeply suspicious of the charity sector**  
MAEVE SHEEHAN, Page 25



■ **Royal family are welcome to 1916 celebrations**  
EILISH O'HANLON, Page 25



■ **Nessa Childers is Queen of the capital**  
EOGHAN HARRIS, Page 19

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LIMERICK LADIES: Dolores O'Riordan with her mother Eileen by the Morning Star River in Bruff, Co Limerick. Photo: Kyran O'Brien

# 'You get to the point where you want to die just to get peace'

Dolores O'Riordan has put the dark days of the pressure endured in her early career behind her, she tells **Barry Egan**



**Y**ESTERDAY afternoon, if you'd been in Bruff, Co Limerick, you'd have been treated to a scene straight out of *Mary Poppins*.

Dolores O'Riordan walked along the banks of the Morning Star River with her mother Eileen. The 42-year-old was followed by a flock of fairly lively ducks — who didn't so much waddle as dance along beside the rock star from The Cranberries.

Years ago it was personal demons, restless in their malevolence, that followed Dolores inside her head wherever she went. She felt helpless and wanted to be dead.

Thankfully that dark pain for Dolores has long since passed, but the memory, like her most famous song, lingers. The multi-millionaire singer and now mentor on RTE's *The Voice of Ireland* seems like she's about to cry.

Sitting on a bench by the river next to her famous daughter, Eileen recalls a troubling incident, many years ago now: a prominent music business executive came to the O'Riordan family home — just up the road from where we're talking now — to see Dolores "who was very sick", Eileen says, meaning anorexia.

"He told Dolores that she would lose everything and that she couldn't break her contract. She came home to me and she was in the little

box room. He was telling her you just have to do this tour.

"So I got so angry and I said: 'I have fed her all my life and I can feed her now! She has her own little room. That's all she wants!'

"I got really mad. I was going to hit him. I said to him, 'If anything happens to her, I will kill you.' I looked in his eyes. And I meant every word of it."

"They just saw me as a commodity, as a cash cow," Dolores says now. "I was very, very lonely."

Eileen adds: "I remember my own mother — who was 92 when she died in 1997 — saying to Dolores one morning: 'You'd have been better off if you'd kept your little job in Cassidy's in Limerick.'"

"I worked there part-time when I was in fifth and sixth year," Dolores recalls with a laugh.

Eileen also remembers Dolores' fast unravelling sanity when she visited her in Dingle in 1993. "Dolores came to the door. She was in tears. She said, 'Will you help me, mammy?'"

"I said, 'What's wrong with you?' She said nothing, then said: 'Nobody can help me now.' I didn't know what she meant and I was very worried about her. She was unable to tell me or explain or communicate very well. It was a long drive home and I thought about it all the way home. That was a turning point for Dolores."

"You told me that you felt so pressured with the

music business that you didn't want to work any more," Eileen continues. "You just wanted to hide in a corner."

"You get to the point where you want to die," Dolores says, "because you think that you'll get peace when you're dead and you can't get any worse than you are."

"We built a house in Dingle that we never lived [in]. It was around the time of the third Cranberries' album *To The Faithful Departed*. All the songs were depressing and I was very depressed and I was extremely anorexic on that record and as it came out I got progressively worse."

## 'It wasn't that I didn't get on with Jamelia, we get on grand... but I'm a feminist and she's not'

"Looking back now I never thought that I'd be here with two boys and two girls — a beautiful 22-year-old, a beautiful 16-year-old, a beautiful 13-year-old, and a beautiful nine-year-old," Dolores says, referring to her children Mollie, Dakota, Taylor and Donnie.

"I realise now that life isn't about money, fame. Actually, all that crap. It's simply love that's important," she says.

Mammy and daughter O'Riordan take me across the road to The Bake House Bistro for a delish bite of lunch. Lorrying into her prawn and salmon salad with a healthy abandon,

Dolores says she is looking forward to the grand final of *The Voice of Ireland* tonight on RTE One at 6.30 and hopes that her act Kellie Lewis wins.

Dolores says she got on best with "the boys" on the show, meaning other mentors Kian Egan and Bressie. The implication being that she perhaps mightn't have got on with her fellow mentor on the show, Jamelia.

"It wasn't that I didn't get on with Jamelia," she says. "We get on grand, like, diplomatically but there is no chemistry between us at all. There is no spark between us. We are completely polar opposites."

"I'm a feminist and she's not," Dolores claims. "Someone who uses their sexuality to be heard or to be seen or to get attention — I don't think you need to do that."

"I think women should be equal," she says referring to misogynistic elements in the pop industry internationally as well as sexual inequality in Ireland.

"I think that is an area where Ireland needs to get with the programme, to have more equality sexually. I think Ireland is behind North America definitely — and that is one of the reasons I bring up my girls over there, I think it is more equally sexually for girls. In fact, I don't think — I know it."

In terms of her own act, Dolores says that "Kellie is a kind of a suffragette kind of a woman. She is a feminist. She doesn't have her boobs hanging out. I love her for that. She has self-esteem and respect. That is good for women."

Asked whether she feels that Jamelia, as has been alleged, has given Kellie

Lewis low scores on the show for reasons other than artistic, Dolores says: "I think Jamelia was grading her low because Kellie is very pretty and she knew she was good. She was intimidated by her beauty. So she was giving her bad grades to try and influence the public."

All will be decided tonight, of course. Dolores says she will be surprised if her suffragette Kellie doesn't win. Eileen says that while Dolores is watching Kellie sing on *The Voice* tonight she'll be singing in the choir in Ballybricken Church for 7pm mass.

When Dolores goes out to her car with Eileen, a group of local young girls rush up to the star on the main street in Bruff and ask her for photographs and to get her photograph taken with them. She hugs them. This time tomorrow Dolores will be on a flight home to her own kids in Canada.

# PAC chief could meet Flannery privately

McGuinness open to sit-down but a public appearance still required

RONALD QUINLAN  
Special Correspondent

THE chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), John McGuinness, last night said he was willing to meet with former Rehab CEO Frank Flannery privately to discuss concerns he has about giving evidence to the committee.

With just four days to go before the members of the PAC apply to the Dail's Committee on Procedure and Privileges (CPP) to compel Mr Flannery and his successor as Rehab CEO, Angela Kerins, to appear before them as witnesses, Mr McGuinness has insisted he remains open to discussions.

The PAC chairman was responding to suggestions from informed sources that Mr Flannery is willing to meet with him or any member of the PAC privately to assist them in as much as it is possible for him to do so, with their inquiries into Rehab.

"As chairman of the PAC, and I can also say this for the clerk of the PAC, we've always made ourselves available to people who would be potential witnesses, to explain the rules of the game and the rules of the exchange in the hearings, so that they're prepared. That's done with witnesses when they request information or guidelines on a hearing," Mr McGuinness told the *Sunday Independent*.

The PAC chairman made it clear, however, that were such a private meeting to take place, it wouldn't remove the requirement for Mr Flannery to appear before the committee in a subsequent public hearing.

## ANALYSIS PAGE 25

He added: "We will hear a witness in any way that we can so that when they come before the committee they're prepared for everything that might be asked of them. Whether we meet with Frank Flannery privately or not, it will not take away from the fact that the public hearing is necessary because that's how we do our business. So it's not that one meeting substitutes for another. We won't do that. There's never an 'either or', we conduct all our business in public, and we will conduct our business with him in public. There's no exception to that."

Mr McGuinness said that the PAC would meet this coming Thursday to finalise its application to the CPP to compel Mr Flannery and Ms Kerins to appear before them.

"We meet next Thursday to go for compellability. We've already made the decision that if we don't hear from either one of them [Frank Flannery and Angela Kerins], that we will submit an application to

the CPP (Committee on Procedure and Privileges) for compellability. The aim of compellability was that the CPP would have protocols in place arising from the 2013 legislation. They're in place now and they've been legally tested. That piece of work is almost completed, so they'll be ready to make a decision once they receive our application," he said.

While Ms Kerins appeared before the PAC last February, she was unable to attend at the committee three weeks ago due to ill health.

Mr Flannery, for his part, explained his reluctance to appear at a public hearing of the PAC in an interview with the *Sunday Independent* two weeks ago, saying that as a private citizen with no control over the spending of public money, he had a right to know what the committee's agenda was before he agreed to cooperate with it.

Responding to the criticisms levelled against him by certain members of the PAC over his refusal to appear before them, he added: "We can not and should not be blackguarded, bullied or demeaned."

"I am not being unreasonable or recalcitrant. I am not trying to bully anybody. I am just trying to stand up for my decision as a citizen of the Irish Republic and my rights under our Constitution."

# Great-grandson traces history of Great War brothers-in-arms

ANNA COOGAN

THE remarkable story of eight Sligo brothers who fought in the First World War has finally been recorded for posterity by one of the soldiers' great-grandsons.

Brian Scanlon, a caretaker at Sligo Cemetery, grew up hearing the stories of how his great-grandfather Michael Conlon, along with his seven brothers, had followed the urging of the Catholic Church to take up arms on behalf of "Catholic Belgium which had been invaded by Protestant Germany".

"I grew up with my grandfather Jack as my dad was away working in the Merchant Navy and my mum worked as an orderly in St John's Hospital, and all the time he would be telling me stories about what had happened to the Conlon brothers," Brian said.

Yet with no official record of his family's contribution to the war, Brian decided to do some research into the sacrifices made by the soldiers.

"My great-grandfather Michael Conlon was one of the two brothers who made it, and he went on to have 13



LEGACY: Brian Scanlon at the graves of Michael Conlon and Michael's grandson Bill Hudson. Photo: James Connolly

children and 97 grandchildren — one of whom was my mother," Brian said. "I was 10 and my grandfather Jack was in his 60s when he would tell me all these stories, but after he died I heard nothing more about the brothers. They were never spoken about again."

"I used to wonder if it was because, as a result of the trauma of the war, one of the brothers ended up in Sligo mental hospital, and it was thought better not to mention the war at all."

Brian became determined to reclaim his relatives, and has spent the past 20 years

researching his family's story.

He's particularly pleased about the part he has played in the decision to add the names of the 546 Sligo men who died in the First World War to a wall in Sligo Cathedral, which will be unveiled in August.

"It has taken 100 years for the Catholic Church to commemorate the men, though it urged them to go to war," Brian said.

Thomas Conlon, 27, was the first to die on May 13, 1915 at Ypres in Belgium. He had fought in Gallipoli twice. Next to die was Patrick, 34, killed in action on August 29, 1915.

It was at this time that Brian's great-grandfather Michael was traced to the battlefield and returned home to his family — in keeping with military custom of the time, not unlike the story told by Steven Spielberg in the film *Saving Private Ryan*.

Yet the reprieve given to Michael, the eldest in his family, didn't put a halt to the losses. James, 30, died of battle wounds on April 15, 1916, near Basra in Iraq. Alex, 31, died in action in Baghdad on October 28, 1917, and was buried in the military cemetery there. John Conlon arrived home after the war and died of trench fever in 1922 aged 32. Andrew, never recovered from the torment of the trenches and died in Sligo mental hospital in 1941. The eighth brother, Joseph, returned and fought in the War of Independence and joined the Free State side during the Civil War.

Michael Conlon went on to become a Labour Party mayor of Sligo. He was the chair of Sligo Rovers and in 1939 signed the legendary Dixie Dean to help in their bid for the FAI Cup that year.

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