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The facts behind the Presidential Election



Emily O'Reilly, our Political Correspondent, has written the first book on last year's Presidential election. Today, in the first of two exclusive extracts, she reveals the story behind Eoghan Harris's part in Mary Robinson's success.

- PAGES 10,11.

Court told of fabrication and perjury



A SIGN OF HOPE... Three of the Birmingham Six, from left, Johnnie Walker, Billy Power and Gerry Hunter wave to newsmen as they leave the Old Bailey yesterday

A GLIMPSE OF FREEDOM

From Aidan Hennigan, Annette Gartland and Vivienne Clarke in London

THE BIRMINGHAM SIX got their first glimpse of freedom yesterday at the start of a hearing which will end their 17-year prison ordeal.

Now the men are counting the days until they walk free, their innocence officially established by Britain's Court of Appeal. They will spend their remaining time in Wormwood Scrubs prison, where conditions are said to be among the worst in Britain.

The appeal could last up to two weeks, according to legal sources. All six men listened intently in the court yesterday

as defence counsel Mike Mansfield outlined a shocking story of police fabrication and perjury, which led to their original conviction for the Birmingham pub bombings of 1974.

They heard Mr Mansfield declare that evidence of explosive traces, said to have been found on the hands of two of them, was "thoroughly unreliable and erroneous."

Dramatically, he revealed that the positive tests by forensic scientist, Dr Frank Skuse, could have resulted from the soap he used to wash his hands before carrying out the tests.

And new tests on evidence on the men's alleged confessions had shown, he said, that "without mincing words", the police officers in the case had committed perjury.

Mr Mansfield said there had been "a grave and abiding" miscarriage of justice, brought about by the "emotional

turmoil" in the aftermath of the pub bombings.

The appeal hearing had opened on a dramatic note, with Mr Mansfield announcing that one of the scientists due to give evidence on behalf of the men had suffered a heart attack, while another was unable to be present yesterday because his wife was in hospital undergoing an operation.

But despite such setbacks, the expectation of the men, as well as of their families and the campaigners who crowded the courtroom at the Old Bailey, was that the final stage of their marathon ordeal had been reached. Mrs Eileen Callaghan, wife of Hugh Callaghan, one of the Six, spoke for them all when she said: "We're just waiting for the moment when they walk out the front door of the court as free men."
(See pages 4 and 5)

DECLAN KIBERD on the loss to the country of its

social and political lifeblood.

An entire generation goes missing

IF YOU travel through the smaller towns of western Ireland these days, you notice one thing: the dearth of younger adults in the 18-35 age group. One village in north Kerry has nobody left in that category. The football team, on those rare occasions when it takes the field, is a strange blend of the adolescent and the menopausal... with players being dubbed accordingly either "shapers" or "hackers".

The same trend can be seen, in somewhat less stark terms, in many national institutions. Take universities. Ever since the debt crisis and cutbacks in the 1980s, there has been virtually no hiring of junior staff. The youngest lecturers in many departments are now in their forties. A whole generation has gone missing.

This has baneful effects. In all societies, there is a healthy clash between youth and age, as the former tries to bring the latter around to its way of thinking. In balanced societies, a "middle generation" offers itself to mediate these conflicts: those in the prime of life help to explain the young and old to one another. This is vital to progress, if the innovation of youth is to be usefully blended with the wisdom of age.

Where such a middle generation does not exist in sufficient numbers, their moderating influence is lost. The old become stubborn and unyielding in their insistence on received values; while the despondent young, despairing of society, retreat increasingly into a private fantasy world of their own.

It could be argued that this is what happened to Ireland in the 1980s, as an extraordinary liberalisation in the behaviour of our young was incongruously accompanied by an even more striking reversion to fundamentalist Catholic values at the official level.

If the tens of thousands who emigrated annually through the 80s had stayed, the results of both the divorce and abortion referenda might have been different indeed. Not only might most of those who stayed have voted for the liberal side; but they would also have argued

their case in kitchens and sitting-rooms across the land. In their absence, many elderly fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, never faced a conversational challenge from those with another point of view.

Emigration may be the safety valve that keeps Ireland solvent, but it also keeps it mediocre. The loss of so many young minds leads to a suspicion of innovation. Over the past decade, promotion in the public service has once again tended to depend on years of service rather than on merit. Many bright people have left

Similarly, when a brief time of affluence in the late 1960s and early 1970s encouraged young people to stay put, great advances were made in putting issues like unemployment, housing and women's rights on the national agenda.

The problem of contemporary emigration is that it now threatens to become a self-sustaining tradition. Some of my students who do get decent jobs here report a numbing sense of loneliness at the loss of so many friends to London, Paris or New York. Soon, they too are on the planes flying out.

The heartbroken rituals of the old "American Wake" have given way to upbeat farewells spoken in the designer bars of Dublin 4

The answer to all this is not some surtax on the departing graduates or on the overseas firms who gain these instant experts at no training cost. It is, rather, to lure back gifted graduates (whose skills can often generate more jobs) by a number of measures — by reducing penal taxes on enterprise and work in this country; by liberalising our laws on divorce and personal morality; and, most of all, by identifying ourselves as a state with a definite philosophy over and above crisis-management accountability. Clearly, a new generation of leaders is required to implement such a programme.



RTE, the universities, the civil service, for richer pickings in the private sector, offer overseas. We are all worse off without them.

Historians agree that the periods in history when emigration halted have been the periods of social revolution. The 1870s recession in the US led the young who had to stay in Ireland to force a major change in the system of landholding. And just two years after international travel was curtailed by World War One, we had the rebellion of Easter 1916.

show everyone loves to hate. "Blind Date".

BARRY McILHENEY: From humble beginnings as a contributor to "Hot Press", McIlhenny put in stints at Melody Maker and Smash Hits before going on to edit British film magazine "Empire".

TOM FITZGERALD: After cutting his teeth at the right-on listings magazine "City Limits", Youghal-born Fitzgerald last year began publishing his own entertainment guide, "The Good Times", London's hippest freesheet.

BUSINESS

GERALDINE CROZIER: Originally from Tralee, Geraldine gained experience in banking both in Dublin and London before setting up a company in partnership with two others in 1989. GOAL (Global Operators and Administration Ltd.) provides

power professionals for projects in the financial sector. After a successful first year the company is now looking towards Europe and, in particular, Eastern Europe.

ANNE JONES: A dynamo in investment banking, Anne moved from Dublin where she was with the Investment Bank of Ireland to London in 1989 to help set up the subsidiary company in Britain, where she is Business Development Manager.

SUSAN HACKETT: Macroom-bred and Sassoon trained, Susan now snips the locks of a select clientele at her own hairdressing salon in Primrose Hill.

KAREN WARD/PHILIP DARLING: Together with partner James Laffin in 1989 they formed Dante, a thriving graphic design company handling business for, among others, RTE and Bord Failte in London. In an ironic

twist, Dante has recently expanded back across the Irish Sea, opening a second branch in Dublin.

KIERAN FINNERTY: In March '89 Finnerty, disillusioned with life on the dole in Dublin, moved to London. He swiftly got a job with Beardmore, a venerable company — in the West End since 1860 — which manufactures and sells high-quality door furniture. Originally taken on as a lowly purchase ledger clerk, now, at 28, Finnerty is Managing Director of the firm. He too is considering expanding the business to Dublin.

CLIODHINA O'TUAMA: Now with the prestigious firm Linklater and Payne, as head of the Irish Solicitors in London Bar. Association she has been a tireless and successful campaigner for the recognition of Irish legal qualifications in Britain.

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

ACCESS ALL AREAS

THE ROCK COLUMN WITH DERMOTT HAYES



The Pale, for fans of the new and wild.

More Casbah than Ceili

FOR THOSE who believe the Irish music scene is full of guitar-thrashing, raggle taggle neo-hippies, look no further than The Pale. With an irreverent mixture of Tom Waits-style vocals and an instrumental sound that hails more from the Casbah than the ceili, The Pale are the most exciting young band in Dublin right now.

Indeed, though their adventurous instrumental experiments — they play live with a drum machine, mandolin, guitar and bass — may indicate the influence of producer and mentor and former Ton Ton Macoute leader, Colum Farrelly, The Pale are very much in control of their own destiny so far.

It will please this quartet of dog-barking, shaven-headed madmen — Mathew, Rocky, Shane and Sean — to read that this was written without their press release which I promptly lost after I saw they left my rave notice of October last out of their press pack.

This should make up for that. Fans of the new and wild are heartily recommended to take themselves along to their Saturday afternoon sessions in Wicklow Street's International Bar, Saturday night residency in The Grattan on Capel Street or next week in The Purty Loft in Dun Laoghaire.

Another Band to look out for and from far beyond The Pale... they are 'The Cranberry Saw Us' from Limerick, whose three songs on their debut cassette/demo, 'Nothing Left At All', show signs of the melancholy promise of the likes of last year's favourites, The Sundays.

By contrast I find little to attract me in the slickly packaged demo from Drimnagh pop/rock band, 'The Colour Brigade', recorded recently in Windmill Lane. The singer is excellent, though, recalling everyone from Leslie Dowdall to Steve Nicks and Cher.

HAPPENINGS

■ 'Bringing It All Back Home' Hummingbird Productions adventurous five part BBC/RTE series on the Celtic roots of rock and folk makes its small screen debut on April 2 on RTE 1 at 9.30 p.m.

■ The Frames launch their debut single, 'The Dancer' tomorrow in The Baggot.

■ The Prayer Boat launched their debut album on the BMG label, 'Oceanic Feeling' last night in The Dockers.

■ Check out Mute Records' excellent compilation set, 'International' featuring the likes of Inspirational Carpets, Depeche Mode and Nick Cave among others

■ The Bible crawling King's X will play support to AC/DC when they hit Dublin on April 26.

■ Look out for John Wesley Harding (his real name) whose follow-up to last year's acclaimed

'Here Comes the Groom' has just been released, it's called 'The Name Above the Title'.

■ Saturday nights in Mother Redcaps features some excellent traditional musician soloists and combinations... don't miss Tommy and Siobhan Peoples on Saturday night.

■ Back to roots rock and roll from The Backroom Boys in Charlies Bar on Saturday.

■ Although soon to lose the white-trousered, silken voiced cyclist, Frank Lane, The Fleadh Cowboys intend to continue riding the range until things get too hot for them... at a hoedown near you this week.

■ Hidden Faces and Push the Pearl feature in Live at Three on Saturday in Mass St.

■ The Trust Company begin a series of free shows in Whelan's on Tuesday nights from next Tuesday.