

comann

A LINK BETWEEN THE CELTIC NATIONS

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ALBA: AN COMANN CEILTEACH
BREIZH: AR KEVRE KELTIEK
CYMRU: YR UNDEB CELTAIDD
ÉIRE: AN CONRADH CEILTEACH
KERNOW: AN KESUNYANS KELTEK
MANNIN: YN COMMEEYS CELTIAGH

CELTIC LEAGUE 

Alba

Naire mor na h-Alba: 1707-2007

De tha an naire as motha air an duthaich seo an diugh? Uill, tha taghadh farsaing ann - eucoir, cogadh ann an Iorac is Afghanistan, brùidealachd (den gach seorsa), 'sectarianism', truailleadh, cealgaireachd poileatagach... neo eadhon an telebhisean againne?

Nam bheachdsa, tha naire mor aig na h-Albannaich, ged nach eil iad uile ga mhothachadh. Sin an "Aonadh", eadar Alba agus Sasainn (san fhirinn, chan e dìreach na h-Albannaich agus Sasannaich, ach na Cuimrich, cuid de na h-Eireannaich, agus Cornaich cuideach).

Ann an Alba, tha muinntir bochd, neo-fhallain gun foghlam math againne, agus tha cuid a' creidsinn gur e rud math a tha ann. Is docha, tha eagal orra air atharrachadh sam bith, agus is urrainn dhuinn uile a thuigsinn. Ach, tha atharrachadh a' tachairt gach latha - gach mionaid - air an saoghal seo. Deich bliadhna air ais - cha robh blogaichean sam bith, mar eiseimpleir, agus cha robh telebhisean digiteach againne, neo Parlamaid na h-Alba. Atharraichidh Alba co-dhiu. Ach a bheil na h-Albannaich a' dol a taghadh atharrachadh bochd Breatannach, neo

atharrachadh math a bhios aig Alba neo-eiseimealach?

Chan e aisling gorach a tha ann, neo seorsa 'utopia'. Gun teagamh, bidh triplaidean gu leor againne, an deidh neo-eiseimleachd na h-Alba. Feumaidh sinn a' coimhead air duthchannan eile, seachad am BBC Breatannach, neo na paipearan Breatannach sna bailtean mora na h-Alba. Tha Lochlainn sa suidheachadh fada, fada nas fhearr na suidheachadh againne. Tha na Lochlannaich beart, foghlamaichte agus dochasach. Chan eil iad bochd, agus aineolach ma tha moran daoine ann an Alba an diugh. Agus, ann an Eirinn, chi sinn fein-earbsa sa phoblachd a tha a dhith air Alba fhein.

Tha na duthchannan beaga seo nas fhearr, agus nas beartaiche as deidh neo-eiseimleachd againne bhon Ruis, a' Ghearmailt agus Breatann. Carson nach eil sinn cho glic?

Summary: *What is Scotland's greatest shame? Perhaps 300 years of a "Union" which inhibited its progress and tarnished its international reputation.*

Gaelic television channel by end of year

Scotland is to have a digital Gaelic television channel by the end of the year following the agreement of a funding package. The channel will initially broadcast 1.5 hours of new television each day which will be supplemented with repeats and archive material. Amongst the new programming will be a television news service, something which Gaelic currently lacks.

To date, Gaelic programmes have been relatively few in number and have been scattered across different channels with many being shown in late-night slots. The new channel will enable an increase in programming and allow the showing of Gaelic television at more appropriate times.

While this news has been welcomed, however, serious concerns are being expressed by many Gaelic speakers, as to the availability of the new station.

When the station begins operation later this year, it will only be available on digital satellite and digital cable. Activists warn that unless the service is also available on digital

terrestrial television (Freeview), a large number of Gaelic speakers will be unable to view the new channel.

The Gaelic Media Service have stated that their aim is for the Gaelic television station to become available on digital terrestrial television when the analogue television transmissions are switched off and more capacity becomes available for digital terrestrial television. This will not happen until 2010/11 in most of Scotland, assuming that a deal can be reached for Gaelic television to be carried via digital terrestrial TV.

National Plan for Gaelic Launched

The first ever National Plan for Gaelic was published by the statutory Gaelic language agency Bòrd na Gàidhlig in March. The plan which has come about as a result of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 proposes strategic



measures to normalise Gaelic and to promote its development.

The National Plan for Gaelic provides government, local authorities, public bodies and the private and voluntary sectors with a 5 year road-map to take the language forward. The plan concentrates on promoting and developing the language to encourage people to learn and use it, in addition to ways of enhancing its status.

Following a consultation process on a draft plan last year, significant changes have been incorporated into the final plan. Many respondents criticised the draft plan for having too few targets, for being too vague and for being written in a style which was difficult to understand. Adult learners groups were also concerned that too little priority was given to this sector.

The final version of the plan contains clearer aims, more detailed targets, more emphasis on adult learners and is written in a more reader-friendly way. The plan also places more weight on research and on the importance of raising the profile of Gaelic nationally than did the consultation draft.

The plan can be accessed at: www.bord-na-gaidhlig.org.uk

Gaelic Education Figures

Recently released statistics from Strathclyde University show a mixture of stagnation and reversal for both Gaelic medium (GME) and Gaelic learner education (GLE). The national number of Gaelic medium primary pupils in the 2006/7 session at 2,092 was only up 24 on the previous year. All three local authorities in the Highlands showed either a reduction or stalling in the numbers of pupils in Gaelic medium primary education. Numbers in Gaelic medium secondary provision showed a significant decrease on the previous year with fewer schools offering Gaelic medium provision. In the Gaelic learners' (GLE) sector, the number of pupils studying Gaelic as a subject for learners at secondary school and exam entrances were also down for 2006/07. Bòrd na Gàidhlig have indicated in their National Plan for Gaelic that they aim to tackle this situation and increase numbers in both GME and GLE at all levels.

Màrtainn MacLeòid

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SNP WINS SCOTTISH ELECTIONS

The SNP has won the first general election in its history in dramatic fashion, condemning Labour to defeat in Scotland for the first time in 50 years and changing the face of British politics for ever. The SNP emerged as the largest party in the Scottish Parliament at the end of two chaotic and tense days of voting, counting and confusion.

The SNP won 47 of the 129 seats at Holyrood, with Labour one behind on 46. The Conservatives were third, with 17 MSPs, while the Liberal Democrats took 16 seats. The Greens were down to two MSPs, with Margo MacDonald, an independent, re-elected on the Lothians list. Mr Salmond was cheered by a triumphant crowd at the Hub in Edinburgh when he made his victory speech.

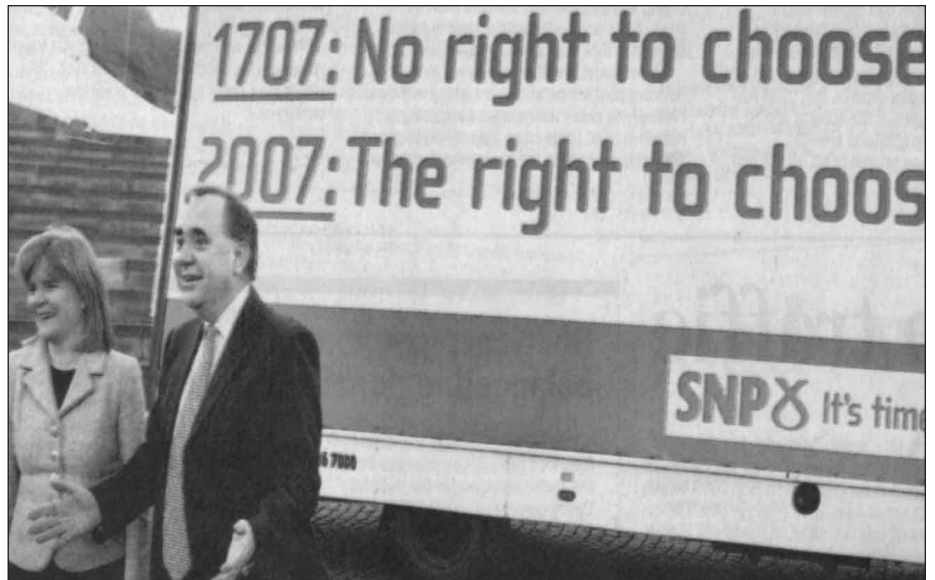
The Liberal Democrats turned down the prospect of a coalition with the Scottish National Party to form the next government of Scotland - despite moving from third to fourth place. Scottish Lib Dem leader Nicol Stephen said the fundamental stumbling block was the Nationalists' demand for a referendum on independence. Earlier, the Lib Dems ruled out a coalition deal with Labour.

Only three MSPs were elected from outwith the four main parties. Two Greens were returned - Robin Harper in Edinburgh and Patrick Harvie in Glasgow - along with the independent Ms MacDonald. The Scottish Socialist Party was wiped out after eight years in parliament and the Solidarity leader, Tommy Sheridan, lost his seat after being in Holyrood for the same period. Mr Sheridan suggested that the severe problems over the 140,000 invalid ballot papers across the country had denied him a place in the parliament.

As the inquest started into the fiasco, it emerged that thousands of voters had misunderstood the ballot papers and filled them in the wrong way. This was the first time that voters had been presented with three different electoral systems on two different ballot papers and many failed to cope with the instructions.

There were also problems with the electronic counting machines that were being used for the first time. Some of the results were very close, with the number of invalid ballot papers larger than the victory margin in a sixth of seats. The machines were provided by a company called DRS, one of whose directors is none other than former Welsh Labour leader Neil Kinnock.

A furious Mr Salmond said the first thing he would do if he became First Minister would be to commission a full, independent,



Alex Salmond and deputy leader Nicola Sturgeon unveil an SNP poster on the 300th anniversary of the Act of Union.

judicial inquiry into the problems to make sure they never happened again.

The shape of Scotland's town halls also changed dramatically over the course of the election. Labour lost what was left of its grip on Scotland's councils and now controls only two of the country's 32 local authorities.

With the SNP victory in Scotland, and superb results for both Plaid and Mebyon Kernow, not to mention the UVF ceasefire, things are looking up for the Celtic Countries just now. Perhaps our main stumbling block maybe one Monsieur Sarkozy.

Ray Bell

The British Union

The people of Scotland will not find out the truth about the British Union from the two biased documentaries produced by the BBC. Both presented by unionists, both present their own 'spin' on the events.

Everyone and their dog knows what the British union really was anyway, a shotgun marriage of convenience which suited England because it (theoretically) closed the door to a possible Scottish based invasion and it suited the 'Noble' families of Scotland who (I) regained the money they lost on the Darien expedition and (II) ended English economic sanctions which would have lost them their lands in England and also opened the way to make money in the newly emerging English (soon to be renamed British) Empire.

Just in case the Scots rejected English plans a large army was based on the border and since Cromwell's New Model Army (he ruled Scotland directly while in power) there was no hope of Scottish victory in a direct confrontation.

The peoples views were very different from their ignoble 'leaders' - they saw this for what it was the end to the glorious days of Scottish independence and effectively the virtual end of Scotland as a distinct entity.

Post union the English renamed Scotland as North Britain on official documents

(England remained England of course) leading Robert Burns to write some years later:

"Alas, I have often said to myself what are the boasted advantages which my country reaps from a certain Union that counterbalance the annihilation of her Independence, and even her name!"

So could union have been avoided? The people of Scotland hoped so with over seventy petitions containing 20,000 names calling for the nobles to respect the will of the people and remember the Declaration of Arbroath.

Unfortunately the truth is probably not, a huge part of the sovereignty of Scotland had been given away one hundred years before with the Union of Crowns in 1603. James VI had no interest in his native land whatsoever and like every other traveller to London Government since preferred to sit in London and soak up the gravy train than come home to his country.

James VI was a traitor. We know this from his own words, he said Scotland would: "with time become but as Cumberland and Northumberland, and those other remote and Northern Shires... they as other Northerne Countreys will be seldom seen and saluted by their King, and that as it were but in a posting or hunting journey"

This is the man who would later divide and rule Northern Ireland by sending in loyalist Scots settlers to rule it on behalf of England. The monarchs after him were no better.

James VII was removed because he didn't suit English plans and every one since has considered his bread well buttered by England and completely ignored Scotland accordingly.

Our current monarch followed this tradition with her choice of Elizabeth II of England rather than Elizabeth I of The United Kingdom.

The reformation didn't help matters either putting a wedge between Scotland and our Catholic allies in Europe. Some writers believe John Knox was specifically sent into Scotland by Elizabeth I to divide and rule us and this success is why she is so venerated today by Britain. Certainly, the Catholic Church was a lot more patriotic about Scotland and risked ex-communication as a nation to back their King and Country during the long wars of independence. The Church of Scotland had the power to foment rebellion against union but as long as their rights to maintain their religious freedoms were maintained they were simply not interested.

So effectively in reality we have been controlled by England for 400 years rather than 300. Darien proved this as King William of Orange backed England's imperial interests over Scotland's. The Scots were well sick of him and their desire to get rid of the Union of Crowns and restore full sovereignty to Scotland eventually led to them being finagled out of their parliament.

There were huge riots in all Scotland's major cities against the union so we definitely know that the ordinary people didn't want it.

Of course this historical stuff is all very interesting but what relevance does it have today? Well today Scotland has a devolved parliament but it remains powerless because sovereignty is still at Westminster. In this 300th year anniversary of the forced union we have a golden opportunity to make our voice heard very loudly on the international stage. We can have our own seat at the United Nations, we can have our own Scottish Olympic Team and we can put Scotland right back on the international map.

Today, we the people have the power and we are not reliant on easily bribed nobles to represent us. To do so however we must ignore 300 years of blatant British propaganda and say "we are as good as every other country and we deserve the same right to rule our own affairs".

Current polls show a clear majority in Scotland for independence.

If you want it, vote for it this year.

Joe Middleton

<http://politicalnewsfromscotland.blogspot.com/>
<http://scottishindependence.com/>

Andrew Lumsden R.I.P.

At the beginning of February 2007 Andrew Lumsden died suddenly. Andrew was a passionate advocate of the Scottish independence cause and was our SNP candidate in Midlothian in 1992. He was about 35 at the time and hit Midlothian like the political equivalent of a tornado. An economics lecturer from Galashiels he had an instinctive grasp of the local politics in Midlothian and he could speak to the people in an honest and forthright manner.

Andrew helped local miners in their successful bid to re-open Monktonhall colliery he took their campaign to the European (he was always a very strong advocate of the benefits of independent EU membership) and Westminster Parliaments and while their campaign was led by the miners themselves Andrew made a massive political push on their behalf and he joined the consortium when the pit was re-opened.

Along with Jim Sillars and Alex Neil he



Andrew and Sheila Lumsden

Andrew was a massive and lasting inspiration to me and all the other SNP activists in Midlothian. He was a very fine speaker and a staunch socialist. He was one of the first people who really inspired me in politics and he had the fight and heart to take on Labour in their heartland.

Andrew believed he could win in Midlothian and he convinced his young team of activists that we could win as well. Even though the SNP didn't win the election we saw a massive increase in our vote (from around 4,000 to over 10,000 votes) and the series of public meetings that he spoke at and organised were very influential in later local government successes in the area.

The Free by '93 campaign was a watershed one for the SNP, it was extremely hard fought and Andrew was our candidate for a full three years before the election during which he tirelessly worked to build up the party in the area.

spoke at Miners clubs right across Midlothian and he gave the Labour party a real fright. He exposed the closure of Greenhall high school and we made school closures a central part of our local election campaign just after the general election in 1992.

Andrew was by far the best SNP candidate we ever had in Midlothian and we have never seen his like again. He was a massive inspiration to everyone who met him and his socialist values combined with his strong political nous had a lasting impact on us all.

Andrew and Alex Neil wrote an influential joint paper 'Poverty Amidst Plenty' about the economics of independence that can be read here:

<http://www.scottishpolitics.org/scotching/poverty.html>

The funeral was held on Wednesday, 14th Feb at Cloyster Chapel, Warriston Crematorium at 2.30pm. His wife Sheila can be contacted at:

shiela@lumsden.biz



**Independent Scots read the
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Breizh



Merc'hed e parlamant Bro Gembre

E fin ar viz genver ez eus bet ur c'hollig aozet e Brest gant ar CRBC hag ar Skol-Veur diwar benn "Skeudenoù Bro Gembre". E touez un toullad klaskerien ha kelenerien e oa añv eus ar parelezh e parlamant vro Gembre gant Veronique Molinari, eus Skol-Veur Grenoble. Setu amañ ar pezh a zo bet kontet deomp:

E-kreizh ar bloavezhioù '90 Bro Gembre e oa welet e-giz ur vro bihan tout. Ne oa nemet añv eus ar rugby hag al lazhoù-kanañ a oa lakaet da heul. Plas ebet evit ar merc'hed e-barzh ar gevredigezh nag war an dachenn bolitikel, dreist-holl. E votadegoù 1994, ne oa nemet 10% merc'hed dilennet e Bro Gembre. E votadegoù 2003 e oa merc'hed 50% eus ar gannaded. Da lavaret eo ul lamm bras hag ur skouer evit ar bed ha bezh. Met daoust hag eñ Bro Gembre zo ur gwir skouer evit ar vroioù all er kumuniezh Europaat pe un dra dreist-ordinal?

An Devolution: ur gwir digreizhenañ-21bn.

Tony Blair zo deuet da vezañ lañ ministr a drugarez d'an devolution, er bloavezh 1997. Da heul an devolution e oa ar youl da lakaat ar merc'hed hag ar minorelzhioù e-barzh ar jeu. Setu perag Parlamant Bro Gembre o deus degemeret ur gresk bras (40%) er votadegoù 1999. Evit hini 2006 ar sifroù oa muioc'h eget hanter kant dre gant. Evit komprenn ar perag eo dav mennegiñ traoù disheñvel. Er penn kentañ tout ne oa ket eus ar Parlamant-se araok. Ouzhpenn-se, gwirioù ar Parlamant n'int ket ken kreñv eget hini Londrez. Memestra kalz kreñvoc'h eget hini Breizh (< €1bn). Dreist holl, budget Bro Gembre a zo uheloc'h eget € 21bn. Mod all, ar mouezhiadur oa ur meskaj mat etre unan muiañ-niver hag ar kenfeurel. Padal ouzhpenn ar youl politikel kaset war ar raok gant ar Sokialisted-Nevez e oa an nerzh hag ar startijenn lakaat e-barzh ar stourm-se gant ar feministed. Ganto eo bet astennet al lezenn evit lakaat e pleustr positive action. Un doare nevez da vont war zu ar "positive discrimination" savet gant J. F. Kennedy er bloavezhioù tri-ugent. Ar Parlamant nevez a zo bet savet a vez implijet en un doare kalz modernoc'h eget hini Londrez. Setu perag an darempredoù zo bet gwelloc'h, efedusoc'h ha jentilloc'h etre an holl strolladoù politikel.

Votadegoù (1999) diwezhañ ar c'hantved

Ar maout a zo aet gant merc'hed peogwir ez eus bet ur stourm a feson e diavezh ar

strolladoù politikel, dre vraz. Memestra dav eo mennegiñ n'eo ket bet graet kalz strivoù gant ar konservatourien. Ar brasañ stourm zo bet kaset da benn gant ar feministed. En o zouez Jane Hutt, renerez Chwarae Teg, troet war al labour en embregerezhioù, ha Val Feld eus ar gevredigezh Equal. Deuet int a benn da astennañ, e 1994, al lezenn evit ar Vonreizh añvet "Democracy Declaration". Parlamant Bro Gembre, a daolo evezh, eus ar penn kentañ, e vefe kempouezet an dilennidi e-kenver niver ar merc'hed, paotred ha strolladoù minorelezh. Ar pal a oa lakaat anezho da gemer perzh eus ar gwellañ posubl, en aferioù ar parlamant. Ar feministed eus ar gevredigezh "Women Say Yes" d'an Devolution (1997) o deus graet ur sapre labour evit kas an traoù war ar raok. Ar memez bloavezh (1997) ar Sokialisted-Nevez o doa voted ul levr gwenn: "a voice for Wales". E-barzh e oa skrivet: soñj a



reomp e vefe un dra vat ha yac'h evit an demokratelezh, ma vefe muioc'h a merc'hed o kemer perzh er votadegoù. Araok votiñ an destenn-se ez eus bet kalz añv eus ar kotoaiou. Ar pal a oa da vont an tu all eus eun drederenn (33%) evit ma vefe ul levezon war al lezennoù. Ar gudenn vrasañ zo deuet eus ar strolladoù lec'hel. Er pastellioù-vro-se (constituencies) an izili oa tec'het da zibab ar re a oa araok war ar reñk, evit Londrez. Dreist-holl, an divizoù oa graet war an "dillid". Setu perag e oa dav cheñch penn da wazh evit mont war ar raok. Ar Sokialisted-Nevez ha Plaid Cymru o deus klasket mont war zu ar "Positive Discrimination". Padal al Lib.-Dem. hag ar Konservatourien n'ho doa ket graet kalz strivoù. Memestra ar gevredigezh a zo aet war ar raok. Ar Sokialisted-Nevez o deus dilennet 15 merc'h diwar 28 (= 53%); Plaid Cymru 6 merc'h diwar 17 (= 35%); Lib.-Dem. 3 merc'h diwar 6 (= 50%), hag ar Konservatourien netra diwar 9 ezel. Benn ar fin 24 merc'h a zo bet dilennet diwar 60. Da lavaret eo 40% en holl.

Ur gwir souezadenn bras da welet Bro Gembre en eil plas er Bed a Bezh goude Bro Sweden (43%).

Votadegoù (2003) kentañ an XXIved c'hantved

Etre votadegoù diwezhañ ar c'hantved (1999) hag ar re gentañ (2003), al lezenn zo aet war ar raok gant ar "Sex Discrimination Act (2002)". Araok mont war zu ar votadegoù dav eo gouzout ez eus div listennad. An hini añvet "rannvroel" hag hini añvet "Pastellioù-vro". Setu perag ar voterezh-se a zo ur meskaj. Evit votadegoù 2003 ar Sokialisted-Nevez o deus cheñchet strategiezh. Echu gant ar sistem gevellañ (1plac'h hag 1 paotr da heul), evit ar pastellioù-vro. Dav e oa dezho taol kont eus ar c'hannaded a oa bet dilennet ar gwec'h gentañ. Diviset o deus lakaat muioc'h merc'hed eget an taol diwezhañ, ha dreist-holl kinnig merc'hed er pastellioù-vro e pelec'h e vefe tu dezhi gounid. Benn ar fin 22 plac'h zo bet kinniget ha 18 paotr gant ar Sokialisted-Nevez. Plaid Cymru o deus diviset lakaat 15 plac'h ha 15 paotr war al listenn añvet "rannvroel". Evit an eil rummad, añvet pastellioù-vro n'eus bet nemet 6 plac'h evit 35 paotr. Al Lib.-Dem. o deus kinniget 6 plac'h ha 15 paotr war al listenn "rannvroel" hag 13plac'h ha 27 paotr war al listenn "pastellioù-vro". Evit echuiñ ar Konservatourien o deus "kuzet" 8 plac'h e-kreizh 72 paotr war al listenn "rannvroel". Disoc'hoù ar lañ votadegoù eus ar XXIved kantved oa gortozet gant difiziañs. Setu perag gant 30 plac'h dilennet diwar 60 kannad (50%), an disoc'hoù a zo bet dreist-ordinal. Dre-se Bro Gembre zo deuet da vezañ ar vro gentañ er bed ha bezh evit ar padelezh, zoken. Ar Sokialisted-Nevez o deus graet kalz gant 19 kannadez diwar 30 plac'h. Da lavaret eo tost eus an div drederenn gant 63%. Plaid Cymru gant 6 kannadez hag al Lib.-Dem. gant teir o deus graet 20% ha 10% eus ar mec'hed dilennet. Evit echuiñ ar Konservatourien, gant 2 kannadez o deus graet tro dro 7%. Benn ar fin an disoc'hoù dreist-ordinal zo bet tizhet a drugarez d'ar merc'hed a oa bet dilennet an taol ar raok hag diwar ar gresk el listennoù "rannvroel". Memestra dav eo lavar n'eo ket bet aes da lakaat merc'hed e-plas ar paotred. Tabutoù a zo bet war an dachennoù lec'hel. Dreist-holl, dav eo trugarekaat Tony Blair e Londrez evit mont war zu an demokratelezh. Dav eo ivez trugarekaat Rhodri Morgan o deus savet, er bloavezh 2000, ur governamant gant muioc'h merc'hed eget paotred. E oa ar gwec'h gentañ da welet ur plac'h e penn minitrezh an arc'hant bras, Edwina Hart he añv.

Disoc'h ar stourm ar raok votadegoù-2007:

Ar galloudoù graet da Vro Gembre dre an devolution ne oa ken kreñv eget ar pezh zo bet aotreet da Vro Skoz. Padal ar stourm kaset da benn gant ar merc'hed o deus graet ur skouer evit ar bed ar bezh. Dre-se Bro

Gembre zo anavezet kalz gwelloc'h el live etre-vroadel, eget ar raok. Evit ar bruderezhe-se dav eo trugarekaat ar strolladoù politikel a oa prest da vont war hent ar "positive discrimination". Evit mont pelloc'h er votadegoù a viz Mae-2007 e vo dav kenderc'hel gant ur sistem voterezh kenfeurel hag ur youl kreñv a-berzh ar strolladoù politikel eus a bep tu, bounted gant ar feministed a bep sort. Setu forzh penaos "chañs vat" d'an demokratelezh e Bro Gembre a zo dija eus ar re gentañ er bed ha bezh.

Gi Keltik

Courtesy V. Molinari

Summary: *Policies from the political parties to increase the number of women Assembly members have resulted in the Welsh National Assembly, with around half its AC's women, having a greater degree of sex equality than any other parliament in the world.*

Breton Party-Strollad Breizh celebrates SNP success!

Breton Party-Strollad Breizh wishes to congratulate the Scottish National Party, Alex Salmond, the whole SNP party leadership and all its militants for this fantastic victory. With its new 47 strong parliamentary group in Edinburgh, the SNP becomes the first party in the Scottish Parliament. This truly historic moment for Scotland clearly shows the will of its people to get a strong local democracy. Breton Party-Strollad Breizh fighting for the very same ideas considers the consistent progress and victories of the SNP as the best example for the democratic future of Brittany.

For the Breton Party-Strollad Breizh in London,
Christian Guillemot,
Head of the External Federation.

More information on
<http://www.partibreton.org/fedext>

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REGIONALISATION

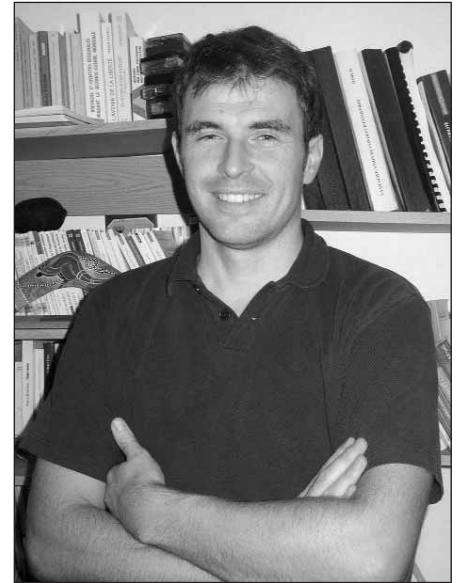
The Breton Democratic Union (or Unvaniezh Demokratel Breizh in Breton) held its two-yearly Conference in Kemper on the 11th and 12th of November 2006. During this conference Romain Pasquier, who teaches political science at Rennes University, gave a talk about regional reform in France, followed by a debate. At first, he said, it is not easy to conceive the way to reform regional policy. It is necessary to take into consideration French political traditions and institutions as they are. French institutions are different from those of Spain, Belgium, Italy, or the United Kingdom. It is better to devise a middle way of regionalisation which will be consonant with the spirit of French decentralisation.

When you compare the French situation with the European one, you will notice a lack of both political power and democratic legitimacy. You naturally have to work in both these fields. Let us also keep in mind what is essential for regionalisation: the changing of the composition of the French Senate, in which the defenders of the *départements* are very strong, and the giving of a democratic meaning to regionalisation.

To have a true regional democracy, you have to reinforce the regional powers. The French *régions* have to be allowed to manage more aspects of regional development. At present they have powers regarding the building of secondary schools and railway traffic; the value of their work in these both fields is positive. The second part of decentralisation has strengthened the regional power in the field of economic development and professional training and has opened the way to new experimentation. To go further it is necessary to have laws to give the metropolitan regions wider powers, which have already been given to the overseas *départements* and regions; it will be a way to fit national regulations to regional realities in many fields (culture, environment, coastal policy).

But regional democracy also means true regional parliamentary government. There are now in the regional council political groups and a presidentialised executive. But it is necessary to go further to have a clear separation of the legislative from the executive, which does not exist at present. The president of the regional council is at the same time leading the Executive and presiding over the Assembly. There is only one region in France with a clear separation of the executive from the legislative: it is the territorial community of Corsica with, on one hand, the Corsican Assembly with its chairman, and on the other hand the Executive Council of Corsica and its President.

There is also an important change to be



Romain Pasquier

furthered: to restrict more strongly the plurality of electoral mandates to cut the link between a national mandate and a regional one. This plurality tends to give the electors conflicting interests that prevent the clear expression of a national point of view about national questions. Instead, voters tend to be influenced by local interests, sometimes in a corporate way. In countries with a clearly identified and responsible regional ruling class, the link between the regional mandate and the national one has been cut.

Progress on regional reform is still going to be difficult. Unavoidably it will come up against the defenders of the *départements*, numerous in the Senate. The greater part of its members are representatives of the General Councils (governing the *départements*). For many decades the Senate has been restricting the regionalisation of French decentralisation. To succeed in regional reform it will be necessary to have all the local authorities represented in the Senate. It will be necessary to act quickly to overcome the organised opposition and to give to the drive for reform the required momentum to win over public opinion. The idea of 'participating democracy' may be a way of promoting this.

¹ The *département* is a local authority as big as or often bigger than a county. At the time of the French Revolution Brittany was divided into five *départements*. At present the Regional Council of Brittany includes members elected in only the four *départements* of the official *région* of Brittany.

(From an article by Romain Pasquier published in the December issue of Le Peuple breton.)

Y Jardin

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The Language of the Dragon

With a few more than half a million speakers, Welsh is not only the most spoken of the Celtic languages, it is also the one that is reconquering more of what it lost during the 20th century. But what are the causes of such good health which are tragically so contrasted by those of its continental cousin? An analysis of a Breton journalist in the country of the red dragon.

The Determining Role of Education.

The end of the 19th century saw an organised persecution by the English system of the popular languages of the people. It was the time of the "Not Welsh", the insular equivalent of the French "symbole", which made as much devastation as the denouncement instituted in France with regard to educational facilities. Yet, whereas the French hexagon steers deliberately towards a policy of eradication of any linguistic diversity, the United Kingdom is moving fairly swiftly towards a change of attitude. Since 1890, the use of bilingual manuals has been allowed there. In 1939, some years before the opening of the first school using the Breton language in Plestin, an entirely Welsh private school was founded in Aberystwyth. But whereas the French government mercilessly closed the one in Plestin in 1944, its British counterpart created in 1947 the first state school in Welsh.

More than half a century later, in a system where school politics depend extensively on the local authorities, the Welsh language almost shows evidence of unashamed health. In 1988, four years before the European Union drafted the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages - still not ratified by France - *The Education Reform Act* made obligatory the teaching of the Welsh in all educational establishments in the country. A law that has borne extensive fruits, since in the five years that followed its adoption, the number of primary schools where teaching was fully in the Welsh language increased from 417 to 460. They account today for 29% of the strength of the school population. In the same time, the English monolingual schools disappeared completely.

The Welsh Board

These results would probably not have been obtained without the continuing effort of the whole Welsh society and in particular of its cultural representatives. If the creation of the *Welsh Office*, in 1964, created conditions favourable to the use of Welsh in every day life, it was necessary to wait until 1967 and the vote on the *Welsh Language Act*, that recognised the validity of Welsh and English in administration and the courts, to see the language of Dylan Thomas

reaching a real official recognition. Recognition was further reinforced in 1988 by the creation of the *Welsh Language Board*. Today, with a strength of 75 salaried employees, this organism, that is anxious to keep its independence in relation to the autonomous government, endeavours to give back to Welsh its rightful place in all aspects of daily life. From badges allowing speakers to recognize each other and to enter naturally into conversation in the language of the country to the collaboration with the multinational Microsoft for the realisation of a computerised Welsh dictionary, its missions are numerous.

The W.L.B delegates for example to organisers in small communities where the strengths of the Welsh-speakers are decreasing, to create activity aimed at young parents in order to encourage them to enrol their children in Welsh monolingual events or at least bilingual.



A Shining Media Landscape

The united efforts of the school system and the W.L.B would probably not be sufficient if it were not for efficient and coordinated media politics. Already, since 1936 which saw the setting up of a service of the B.B.C in Welsh, the strengths of journalists and the number of weekly hours dedicated to the language of the country has increased. But the most important event of the last thirty years was probably the creation of a real monolingual public TV channel. Promised by the Tories at the time of their election campaign of 1979, *Sianel Pedwar Cymru* was created in 1981, after much canvassing and a threatened hunger strike by Gwynffar Evans that governed the destinies of Plaid Cymru, the Welsh nationalistic party at that time. Twenty-five years later, S4C is a dynamic channel, that employs 210 people directly and that generates more than 1200 indirect jobs.

Trends

The results of this popular linguistic politics could not wait. Following the vote by the British Parliament, in 1993, of the *Deddf Iaith Gymraeg* (Law on the Welsh language), that reinforces the principle of equality of the languages in administration and justice, the language of the sons of the red dragon began to reconquer the land lost since the beginning of the 20th century.



The most recent statistics establish that today Welsh is spoken fluently by close to 22% of the population, against only 18.7% in 1991. Better still, in fifteen years the Welsh-speaking population of Cardiff has doubled, from 15 000 to 30 000 speakers. And the 3-15 year old age group represents close to a third of the totality of Welsh speakers. This reversing is explained largely by this simple observation of Prys Davies: "Today, it has become an advantage to know Welsh. Before that it was the opposite!"

One is well aware, alas, in Brittany, of this reverse of this tendency. The French state persists in its refusal to ratify the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages, whose acceptance is one of the conditions of the entry in the EU of the new member states. The National Assembly has just repulsed, last January, an amendment to Article 2 of the Constitution, proposed by the Breton Deputy Marc Lefur, in favour of minority languages and the Ministry of the Education regularly violates the State-Region plan carrying on the yearly creation of posts of bilingual Breton-French teachers.

Thierry Jigourel

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AN IMPORTANT RENDEZVOUS

When politics and the people meet up around a ballot box, the result can be anything but predictable as the French rejection of the European constitutional treaty on the 29th of May 2005 showed. The French “non” was a significant rebuff at 54.68 per cent with a high turnout at around 70 per cent. As in 2002, it represented an unambiguous level of dissatisfaction with the main political parties who had rallied around the treaty. It plunged the Socialist party once again into disarray, as well as dealing a major blow to Jacques Chirac’s hopes of injecting some life into his somewhat unpopular second presidential term. Furthermore, this result was a terrible blow for the European Union (EU), in which France had always played both a founding and leading role. It called not only into question the direction that Europe had been taking in relation to enlargement and free movement of services, but also its future, as Europe is still searching for a way to relaunch its constitutional project.

The aim of my thesis, entitled *The 29th of May 2005 referendum. A European citizen at the bedside of a sick France*, was to analyse the reasons why France had voted no to this latest European project, a culmination of French leadership in the form of a former French president, Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, and of French design, that is, a project that incorporated previous treaties with the French stamp of approval. The “non” was more influenced by the French context than by the text of the treaty itself. It was the result of a negative vision of the EU as being the cause of most French economic problems, as well as being a threat to the French social model.

This vision is very much different to France’s positive view of European construction, from the fifties right through to the late eighties, as a means of ensuring peace on the continent after the two world wars, and more importantly, as a way of safeguarding her economic interests. It included a weak and divided Germany, and excluded Great Britain, thanks to General Charles de Gaulle’s objections. France could happily impose her “dirigiste” (planned economy) style of command, which consisted of controlling and distributing the gains and losses in advance by negotiation. However, with the end of the Cold war, the reunification of Germany, the subsequent entry of 12 new member states from eastern and central Europe and their marked interest in copying their British counterpart’s free market style of economics, France has

begun to feel somewhat overwhelmed and powerless in an organization that has now 27 members.

During the French referendum campaign, the opponents to the treaty based their arguments on the fact that the EU was more concerned about economic policy than about social policy, that is, more engrossed in ensuring that no member of the Euro zone had a deficit exceeding 3 per cent of its GNP (Gross National Product), than in tackling factory closures and social dumping by implementing fiscal harmonisation. However, if the EU seems more efficient on the economic front than on the social front, it is because France’s desire to use the EU as a means of re-establishing or creating its economic potential was far greater than its wish to strengthen the powers of the European institutions, even if special care was always taken to express this wish in written form in several European treaties.

Thus, one could say that if the EU is perceived as too liberal or “Anglo-Saxon”, it is perhaps due to the fact that France inadvertently overlooked the institutional limitations of its own organization, while it was busy attending to its economy. In addition, one could argue that the pessimistic idea of Europe as being a contributing factor in France’s economic and social woes conveniently allows France to escape the unavoidable truth: Europe’s



Maura Stewart

future depends on France’s future. Henceforth, all eyes are on the French presidential election whose campaign has so far been more diverted with stories about the secret services and political gaffes than with an open exchange of ideas concerning unemployment, immigration and Europe. Will these elections allow hope to spring in a country that is still in a somewhat cynical, gloomy mood following the “non” to the European constitutional treaty, the urban riots of November 2005 and the street protests against the government’s recent endeavour to introduce flexible labour laws? They say that “hope springs eternal”. Unfortunately, Europe cannot wait forever.

Maura Stewart



Yann-Kel Kernalegenn Remembered

Thirty years ago on the 29 of September 1976, Yann-Kel Kernalegenn died. He was an FLB activist and worked on the construction of the Ti-Voujeret military camp. Yann - Kel was deeply involved in all aspects of the Breton struggles. He was a Breton language activist and worked hard in the trade union movement and was also a member of the military organisation which was active in the 70's. In remembrance, the Souvenir Committee, specially formed for the event, organised a commemoration on the 30th October last in the Kêrfeunteun cemetery, where some eighty people participated. Eminent Breton language activist Pêr Denez, a University Lecturer, sent texts in both Breton and French which was read on the day.

Cynhadledd Ai'ta! 2007

Cynhaliodd Ai'ta!, y mudiad newydd yn Llydaw sydd yn ymgyrchu dros y Llydaweg drwy weithredu uniongyrchol ers ei sefydlu ym Mawrth 2005, eu cynhadledd gyntaf, Gouel Ai'ta!, ddydd Sadwrn y 14eg o Ebrill ym mhentref Tonkedeg ger Lannuon yn Bro Dreger. 'Roedd dirprwyiaeth o aelodau o Gymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg ymysg y cynrychiolwyr o rai mudiadau iaith eraill a oedd wedi cael gwahoddiadau i gymryd rhan mewn trafodaeth ar y cyd.

Yn y bore cafwyd trafodaeth rhwng aelodau o Ai'ta! o wahanol rannau o Lydaw - Bro Dreger, Roazhon, Kerne Izel, Naoned, Bro Wened - ynghylch strategaeth ac ymgyrchoedd y mudiad.

Drwy'r prynhawn cynhaliwyd trafodaeth gyhoeddus (yn Ffrangeg) gyda chynrychiolwyr o Ai'ta! ac o'r mudiadau iaith eraill a wahoddiwyd sef Cymdeithas yr Iaith o Gymru, Hartèra o Ocitania, ac Angelets de la Terra o Ogledd Catalwnia (y rhan o Gatalwnia a reolir gan Ffrainc). Cafwyd sgwrs gan lefarwyr Ai'ta! a phob un o'r grwpiau eraill yn eu tro am sefyllfaoedd eu hieithoedd ac amcanion eu mudiadau, ac wedyn trafodaeth agored i'r gynulleidfa o tua 60 ynghylch amddiffyn ieithoedd difreintiedig a'r anawsterau mawr oedd yn wynebu'r ieithoedd oedd o dan weriniaeth Ffrainc. 'Roedd aelodau o ganghennau Breizh a Chymru o'r Undeb Celtaidd yn bresennol.

Ar y diwedd cynhaliwyd cynhadledd i'r Wasg lle crynhowyd trafodaethau'r prynhawn, a gwnaeth y cyrychiolwyr o'r pedwar mudiad oedd yn bresennol - Cymdeithas, Angelets de la Terra, Hartèra, Ai'ta! - ddatganiad ar y cyd.

"Yr ydym ni, Cymry, Catalaniaid, Ocitaniaid, a Llydawyr, wedi dod ynghyd yma heddiw yn Tonkedeg er mwyn cyfnewid ein profiadau fel siaradwyr ieithoedd difreintiedig ac, yn fwy na hynny, fel amddiffynwyr yr ieithoedd hynny. Er bod ein sefyllfaoedd i gyd yn wahanol, mae ein hieithoedd i gyd yn rhannu'r cyflwr o fod yn ddifreintiedig - o gael eu gwthio allan o fywyd cyhoeddus gan y Saesneg neu'r Ffrangeg. Mae eu defnydd cymunedol wedi lleihau cymaint bod tair ohonynt* ers 2002 ar restr UNESCO o ieithoedd mewn perygl.

"I ni ac i bawb sydd â chydymdeimlad tuag at amrywiaeth ddiwylliannol, nid ydyw'r fath dynged yn anochel. Am resymau gwleidyddol mae ein hieithoedd wedi

cyrraedd eu cyflwr difreintiedig, sydd wedi arwain at gilio ac edwino. Mae gwladwriaeth Ffrainc, fel Prydain Fawr hyd at y degawdau diwethaf, wedi gweld ac yn dal i weld ei hun fel endid unffurf mewn iaith a diwylliant. Nid oes arni eisiau cydnabod yr amrywiaeth ieithyddol ar ei thiriogaeth. Ond ni fydd yn gallu aros yn hir ar ymylon y symudiad bydeang tuag at barchu amrywiaeth ieithyddol a diwylliannol, a diystyru adroddiadau ac argymhellion cyfreithiol rhyngwladol.

"Gallwn ddysgu o'r datblygiadau yn y system gweidyddol ym Mhrydain. Mae'r camau ymlaen a wnaed gyda'r iaith yng Nghymru yn y blynyddoedd diweddar ym meysydd addysg, y cyfryngau, a statws, yn dangos canlyniadau'r gydnabyddiaeth swyddogol mae'r Gymraeg wedi'i chael, ac effeithiolrwydd y grym gwleidyddol gymharol fawr yng Nghymru.

"Dyna pam y credwn na ellir adfywio a datblygu ieithoedd lleiafrifol gwladwriaeth Ffrainc heb gydnabyddiaeth a statws swyddogol. Galwn felly ar Arlywydd newydd Ffrainc** i arwyddo Siatr Ewropeaidd yr Ieithoedd Llai eu Defnydd, cam anhepgorol os ydyw'n hieithoedd i fyw. Cymdeithas yr Iaith (Cymru) Hartèra (Occitania) Angelets de la Terra (Catalunya) Ai'ta! (Breizh) "

Terfynwyd y diwrnod gyda fest noz mawr yn y neuadd a roddodd esiampl o fywiogrwydd y diwylliant yn Bro Dreger. Llond neuadd o ddau gant o bobl, a'r rhan fwyaf yn siarad Llydaweg.

Robot ap Tomos Nodiadau: Cymraeg, Llydaweg, ac Ocitaneg.

** Cynhaliwyd y gynhadledd ychydig o ddyddiau cyn rownd gyntaf etholiad arlywyddiaeth Ffrainc. Erbyn hyn, wrth gwrs, gwyddom mai'r ceidwadwr Nicolas Sarkozy ydyw'r Arlywydd newydd.

Summary:

The relatively new Breton language movement Ai'ta! held a conference at Tonkedeg in Bro Dreger on April 14th, with guest representatives from Cymdeithas yr Iaith of Wales, and North Catalan and Occitan language movements, taking part in a debate on minorized languages. A joint declaration was issued at a press conference.

The anti-colonisation pressure group Cymuned has sent over 600 letters, one to every town or community council in Wales, to ask them to declare their support for the ideas on the group's website Homes4Locals.com. The website calls for planning permission for new residential building to be restricted to local need only, as is already happening in Yorkshire and Shropshire in England.

"We believe the voice of our town and community councils is extremely important in the context of the current housing crisis," says Aran Jones, Cymuned's Chief Executive, "and although too much power has already been moved from community councils to county councils, the opinion of



town and community councils has to be taken seriously - they see the shattering consequences of the current system on a day to day basis in their own communities."

Cymuned's letter to all the town and community councils of Wales asks for two responses - for the council to answer Cymuned via post or e-mail to declare support for the ideas on homesforlocals.com, and for the council to contact the local County Council to request them directly to implement those ideas.

"This is the first step in a particularly important campaign," says Aran Jones. "There's been talk about the housing crisis for over five years now, but attempts to solve it have been few and limited. Too much emphasis has been placed on affordable housing and not enough on ensuring sustainable local markets. If the town and community councils of Wales respond positively to our request, every political party will need to engage in serious discussion on this matter as part of their Assembly election campaign this year."

Rally in Bangor for New Language Act



250 members and supporters attended another in the series of rallies being organised by Cymdeithas yr Iaith (the Welsh Language Society) for a New Welsh Language Act, this time in Bangor, Gwynedd, on January 27th. The speakers included Hywel Williams, Plaid Cymru MP for Caernarfon and party language spokesman, and Cymdeithas national chairman Steffan Cravos, as well as local *cysylltydd cell* Bethan Williams.

At the end of the rally the nearby Morrisons supermarket was targeted as an example of a company whose unwillingness to use Welsh exemplifies the need for legislation. The shop was occupied and the entrance blocked, while three members - Gwenno Teifi, Stiwart Edwards, and Bethan Williams - were arrested for sticking posters on the shop. Cymdeithas representatives had travelled to meet Morrisons at their headquarters in Bradford, England, last year and were given to understand that the company would adopt a bilingual policy, but nothing had changed. Steffan Cravos, Cymdeithas chairman and leader of the protest, said:

"The fact that Morrisons have not kept their word to introduce a bilingual policy is proof of the need for a New Language Act. We therefore call on all the political parties to commit to supporting a language act that would ensure a role for Welsh equal with English in the private sector."

Cymdeithas used this protest to draw attention to the need for the private sector to be included in language legislation. This was the last rally before Cymdeithas presented a petition calling for a new Welsh Language Act with over 10,000 signatures to the National Assembly on February 7th. The Assembly's Culture Minister, Alun Pugh (New Labour) had been invited to receive the petition and meet a Cymdeithas delegation to discuss the issue, but he refused. Pugh, seen by some as one of the most hostile to the language in the Assembly, had already taken an anti-language act stance. Pugh said:

"My position on the bilingual future of Wales is well known to all. I believe that it is far more important to concentrate our efforts on promoting the Welsh language for the sake of all rather than on creating new legislation."

A Cymdeithas spokesman's reply stated:

"It is strange that Alun Pugh should have such a strong attachment to the 1993 Welsh Language Act, a piece of legislation passed by the last Conservative government and which was justifiably condemned at the time by the opposition Labour Party for its weakness.

"We must ask why he is so intent on treating 'promoting the language' and 'new legislation' as opposites. Surely it is obvious to everyone legislation is necessary if we wish to promote the language effectively?"

"Mr Pugh's limp and weak attitude to the language is completely contrary to the consensus now growing amongst the opposition parties in the Assembly in favour of new language legislation."

Cymdeithas have drafted a provisional Welsh language law in consultation with a number of prominent individuals including former Archdruid Robyn Léwis, and various bodies including the government's language quango.

WIGLEY THANKS FORMER FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER

At the annual dinner of the Paris Welsh Society on the 9th of March, Dafydd Wigley, former Plaid Cymru leader and Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly of Wales, conveyed thanks to former French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier, recalling the way in which M. Barnier - at that time Regional Commissioner of the European Union - responded to a plea for help for Wales in problems they were suffering with the English government.

After meeting a delegation led by Dafydd Wigley, including two Plaid Cymru members of the European Parliament - Jill Evans and Eurig Wyn - M. Barnier raised with the Treasury in London the question as to why European regional grant money intended to help the Welsh economy, was not in fact being passed on to Wales, but was being kept by the English Treasury in London, with Wales getting no additional benefit whatsoever.

Dafydd Wigley said "Following our representations, and M Barnier's timely intervention, Wales was given £442 million (€630 million) which was of great benefit to the Welsh economy. Coming here to Paris today, I want to place on record our thanks to M. Barnier for his help".

PLAID CALL FOR BILINGUAL JURIES

On the 16th of January in the London parliament Plaid MP for Caernarfon, Hywel Williams, presented a 10 Minute Rule Bill which would allow a knowledge of Welsh to become compulsory for juries in Welsh-medium court cases. Mr Williams said:

"At present the 1974 Juries Act allows for jurors to be disqualified on the basis of that they do not have a significant understanding of English. I believe there is wide support for this provision to be extended to the Welsh language in certain cases.

"There has been growth in the number of cases heard through the medium of Welsh. Since the Juries Act was passed the Welsh Language Act of 1993 has been enacted which is based on the principle that Welsh and English should be treated on the basis of equality. Even though simultaneous translation has been used in courts across Wales I believe it is important that in certain cases the jury should have a direct understanding of the evidence. The practical way to achieve this is to have juries that are bilingual.

"The Government has consulted on this matter over the last 18 months, however they are yet to bring forward any proposals. I hope that this Bill will encourage the Government to take action. The Bill has support by both sides of the House, and is also supported by a wide range of legal opinion in Wales including senior members of the judiciary."



PLAID MAKE GAINS IN ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

The third Welsh General Election, to elect the members of the National Assembly of Wales, took place on May 3rd 2007. The results saw Plaid Cymru gaining 3 seats, and holding all those they already had, to give them a total of 15, and the ruling Labour party lose seats, dropping to 26 out of the 60 members so that they no longer have enough seats to govern alone.

Plaid entered the election holding five of the 40 constituency seats, the five most Welsh-speaking seats around the Bro Gymraeg in the west, and seven regional list seats. Since the previous election there had been radical boundary changes in the north west that saw the most Welsh constituency, Caernarfon, broken up between two not quite so Welsh areas. However Dafydd Elis Thomas won the new Dwyfor Merionnydd seat for Plaid with the largest majority in the 40 constituencies, over 59% of the vote. The new seat of Arfon also gave a mandate for Welsh independence, with Plaid's Alun Ffred Jones taking over 50% of the vote, as did Carmarthen East & Dinefwr where Rhodri Glyn Thomas was re-elected. Plaid held the seats in Ceredigion, where Elin Jones, taking 49%, withheld a strong Liberal Democrat challenge, and Ynys Môn (Anglesey) where leader Ieuan Wyn Jones won. Plaid re-gained, from Labour, Llanelli in the south and Aberconwy in the north (previously Conwy, with different boundaries), two semi-Anglicized seats adjoining this bloc, which they had held after their best ever performance in the 1999 first Assembly

election, Helen Mary Jones and Gareth Jones (a strong supporter of the language) respectively regaining their former seats. Plaid's third gain was in the South East regional list, where Mohammed Asghar gained a seat from the Tories to become the second Plaid member in the region, joining Jocelyn Davies. Mohammed Asghar is originally from Pakistan, and was hailed in the media as the first Assembly member from the "ethnic minorities" (not counting the Welsh-speakers as such). Plaid held all their other regional list seats - Janet Ryder in the North, Nerys Evans taking over the Mid & West seat, Leanne Wood and Chris Franks in South Central, and Bethan Jenkins and Dai Lloyd in South West.

Plaid's nearest miss was in Carmarthen West & South Pembrokeshire where John Dixon had only 250 votes less than the Conservative who beat Labour by 98 votes in what is now a very close 3-way marginal. Other disappointments were the failure to win a second regional seat in the North, where the former leader Dafydd Wigley was second on the list and whose experience would have been valuable, and the failure to make significant progress against a relatively unpopular Labour party in the Valleys, where Plaid had won two seats in the 1999 high tide, or elsewhere in English-speaking Wales.

On the unionist side the Labour party, squeezed by the Tories and Plaid, took its lowest proportion of the vote in Wales since 1918, in its formative years, but because of



Mohammed Asghar

the electoral system they did not lose many seats this time. However in 11 of the 24 constituencies they won their majority is now less than 2000, less than 1000 in four of these and less than 100 in two, so they will be defending many marginals next time with not much room for a further hostile swing without serious losses.

The Conservatives (or Tories), who on the surface at least seem to have given up their anti-devolution hard-unionist approach, gained four constituency seats from Labour but it cost them two of their regional list seats. One satisfaction for nationalists was to see the Tories take Clwyd West, the seat of Alun Pugh, Labour's "Culture" minister and one of the greatest opponents of the language in the Assembly, who is thus removed. The Liberal Democrats won the same six seats as before, for the third election running.

The make-up of the new Assembly, shortly to be given extra powers, is thus: Labour 24 seats (down 4), Plaid Cymru 15 (up 3), Conservatives 12 (up 1), Liberal Democrats 6 (as before), Independents 1. Labour's Rhodri Morgan continues to be First Minister of Wales, but he may need the support of Plaid to be able to govern.

Robot ap Tomos

CRE CYMRU DIRECTOR SPEAKS AT CYMUNED ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Director of CRE (Commission for Racial Equality) Cymru, Chris Myant, was a guest speaker at Cymuned's Annual Conference in Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd, on Saturday 14th of April. The Commission's largest ever project in Wales, the 'Croeso' project, was under discussion, and Chris Myant considered the responsibility communities face to welcome newcomers, and the responsibility newcomers face to integrate into their new communities.

'We are particularly pleased to welcome Chris Myant to our Annual Conference this year,' said Aran Jones, Cymuned's Chief Executive. 'We have worked increasingly closely with the Commission over the last three years, and we are very grateful for their support as we attempt to encourage

appropriate discussion on a very emotional subject - the future of our communities'.

Cymuned believe that newcomers to the Bro Gymraeg (Welsh-speaking areas) face a civic responsibility to learn and use the Welsh language in order to avoid doing irreparable damage to the future of the language and the future of rural Welsh communities.

'The Commission and Cymuned are agreed that the challenge for both of our organisations,' said Chris Myant, 'is to find ways of focusing on the bigger issue: how the increasing movement of people into and out of Welsh-speaking areas of the country, the overwhelming majority of which takes place without friction or rancour, can be accompanied by a strong development of the Welsh language as a welcoming, confident



Chris Myant Director of CRE

aspect of the life of these communities and one which will be taken up and shared by incomers as much as by those born into Welsh-speaking families.'



Éire



Albain ar bhóthar na saoirse

Is í ceist an neamhspleáchais an bhuncheist i bpolaitíocht na hAlban anois. Ní hé “An bhféadfadh?” an cheist atá á plé a thuilleadh ach “Arbh fhearr?” nó, go deimhin, “Cathain?” agus “Cén chaoi?” Léiríonn pobal bhreitheanna go bhfuil lucht tacaíochta an neamhspleáchais — an móramh — seasmhach ina dtuairim, go bhfuil an dearcadh sin forleathan i measc gach aicme den phobal agus i ngach áit in Albain agus, níos spéisiúla fós go nglacann na daoine atá ina aghaidh leis go dtiocfaidh neamhspleáchas luath nó mall. Ní hamháin sin ach léirigh daonáireamh i dtús na bliana go raibh 59% de dhaoine a ceistíodh i Sasana féin i bhfabhar scarúint na hAlban ó Shasana.

Tá Tony Blair agus Gordon Brown imithe fiáin ag argóint ar son na Ríochta Aontaithe. Táthar ag tabhairt le fios go mbeadh Albain scriosta ó thaobh na heacnamaíochta de dá mbrisfeadh sí le Sasana, rud nach bhfuil bunús leis. Is í tuairim chuid shuntasach de lucht gnó na hAlban gur a mhalairt a tharlódh agus níl an tuairim sin bunaithe an oiread sin ar ola fharraigí na hAlban. Níl aon cheist ach go bhfuil fadhb mhór ag na haontachtaithe. Le fada an lá tá Páirtí an Lucht Oibre i Sasana ag brath ar Albain le tromlach a thabhairt dóibh in Westminster. Sin fadhb do Shasanaigh ach dáiríre is mó d’fhadhb pháirtíchumhachta í ná aon rud eile ó is beag difríocht atá idir polasaithe na dTóraithe agus an Lucht Oibre le deich mbliain anuas. Le linn an fheachtas toghchánaíochta níl aon dabht gur éirigh le driopás mhuintir Blair agus a gcur chuige an náisiúnachas Albanach a neartú. Bhí sé sin chomh soiléir sin gur thug ceannaire na dTóraithe, David Cameron, faoi “mhaistínteacht” Blair ach ansin dúirt sé gur ceart d’Albain fanacht sa Ríocht Aontaithe mar go mbíonn Sasanaigh agus Albanaigh “níos sibhialta” i dteannta a chéile. A leithéid d’eitnealárachas! Ach in ainneoin na glórtha seo tá an stát Sasanach — an fíorstát — ag ullmhú don bhriseadh. Féach gur nochtadh tamall ó shin go raibh pleananna ann an lárionad fomhuireán núicléacha a aistriú ó Faslane na hAlban go Portsmouth Shasana a luaithe agus a bheadh neamhspleáchas ar íor na spéire.

Is é an léiriú is suntasaí ar neart an náisiúnachais an vóta mór atá bainte amach ag Páirtí Náisiúnta na hAlban (SNP) ach tá an-chuid Albanach i bhfabhar deireadh a chur leis an Ríocht Aontaithe taobh amuigh de lucht tacaíochta an pháirtí sin. Dhá pháirtí measartha láidir a bhfuil ionadaíocht

pharlaiminteach acu agus atá ar son neamhspleáchais is ea Páirtí Sóisialach na hAlban (SSP) agus Páirtí Glas na hAlban.



Paráid Independence First i nDún Eadain ag deireadh Márta

Tacaíonn an SNP, an SSP agus na Glasaigh le heagraíocht den ainm Independence First atá ag iarraidh feidhmiú mar chineál fronta aontaithe ag náisiúnaithe. Chomh maith leis an trí mhórpháirtí úd tá páirtithe beaga mar an Free Scotland Party, an Scottish Independence Party, Solidarity agus an Scottish Enterprise Party páirteach. Sheas an Conradh Ceilteach le Independence First ón tús agus nuair a bhí paráid ag an eagraíocht i nDún Eadain ar 31 Márta i mbliana bhí díorma de bhaill ó Éirinn i láthair le tacú le craobh na hAlban. Iompraíodh bratacha na dtíortha Ceilteacha ar fad agus cuireadh suntas mór i bpáirtíocht an Chonartha.

Dar le Independence First is í an chéim is práinní reifreann a bheith ann faoi cheist an neamhspleáchais. Geallann an SNP go mbeidh sé sin ann taobh istigh de thrí bliana ó theacht in oifig.dóibh. Éilíonn Independence First nach mbeadh ina leithéid de reifreann ach ceist shimplí amháin ar dhul “An bhfuil tú i bhfabhar Albain a bheith neamhspleách?” Is í an inní atá orthu go gcuirfí sraith de roghanna faoi bhráid an phobail, rud a d’fhéadfadh go leor daoine a chur trína chéile agus a mbeadh toradh doiléir ann dá bharr. Creidtear go mbeadh na Liobrálaithe Daonlathacha sásta tacú lena leithéid de reifreann ilrogha leis an t-éileamh ar neamhspleáchas a chur ó mhaith. Seachnaíonn Independence First mar eagraíocht ceisteanna a d’fhéadfadh náisiúnaithe a dheighilt dar leis, ar nós na ceiste faoi bhallraíocht san Aontas Eorpach a

bhfuil an dá thuairim ann faoi i measc náisiúnaithe. Ceist eile a sheachnaíonn siad is ea an rogha idir poblacht agus monarchacht. Dá dochreite is atá sé d’Éireannaigh tá roinnt mhaith náisiúnaithe in Albain a bheadh sásta ligint do mhonarc Shasana leanacht ar aghaidh mar cheann stáit ar stát neamhspleách.

Ach tá níos mó agus níos mó plé á dhéanamh ar an gcineál neamhspleáchais atá roimh na hAlbanaigh. Sin comhartha sóirt go bhfuil céim mhór glactha cheana féin ag cuid mhór den phobal, go bhfuil an chonstac

shíceolaíoch maidir le briseadh an aontais sáraithe acu. Buille ollásach in aghaidh an impiriúlachais a bheas ann nuair a bhrisfidh Albain le Sasana. Nárbh fhada uainn an lá!

Colm de Faoite

SUMMARY

This article deals with the progress made in Scotland in the drive towards Independence; it is now no longer a question of ‘if’ but ‘when and how’. Independence First is a platform of parties who campaign for a referendum to be held on independence. In addition to the SNP, the Greens and the Scottish Socialist Party it comprises the Free Scotland Party, the Scottish Independence Party, Solidarity, the Scottish Enterprise Party and the Scottish Branch of the Celtic League. A major rally was held at the end of March in Edinburgh. A delegation from the Irish Branch traveled across to support the event. They were warmly welcomed and the flags of all the Celtic nations were carried at the colourful event which culminated in an open air concert with some of Scotland’s major performers. The weekend was also availed of for discussions with Alba branch members and to sample the traditional music and song which is plentiful in the city.



Northern Power Sharing Executive Agreed

On May 9th power sharing was reintroduced in the North with the appointment of the Rev Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, as First Minister and Sinn Féin MP Martin McGuinness as Deputy First Minister of a Northern Executive of ten ministers. The occasion was marked by conciliatory speeches by both men. 'I believe that Northern Ireland has come to a time of peace, a time when hate will no longer rule. How good it will be to be part of a wonderful healing in our province', said Dr. Paisley, a remarkable statement indeed from one of the organisers decades ago of the attacks on the civil rights marchers at Burntollet and who opposed the Belfast Agreement. He also said 'I have not changed my unionism, the union of Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom which I believe is today stronger than ever.' Martin McGuinness stated 'I am proud to stand here today as an Irish Republican who believes absolutely in a united Ireland'. He also said 'As joint heads of the Executive the First Minister and I pledge to do all in our power to ensure it makes a real difference to the lives of all our people by harnessing their skills through a first rate education system, caring for our sick in the best health service we can provide and building our economy through encouraging investment and improving our infrastructure.'

While there were welcoming speeches from Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, who spoke of 'the historic beginning of a new era for Northern Ireland' and British Premier Tony Blair (who said 'During the past decade the relations between Ireland and Britain had been transformed. Today we are partners and friends') the day itself was almost an anti climax in comparison to the one at the end of March when it was announced that agreement on the restoration of devolution had been reached.

If most commentators has been pessimistic about the possibility of ultimate success in achieving agreement in the run up to the final deadline set by the British and Irish Governments in the St. Andrew's Agreement for agreement on power sharing in a new Executive between the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Sinn Féin it was not surprising given the many twists and turns in the last 11 years and the attitude of the DUP. A key element on the way to agreement was the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis, held after a series of public meetings across the North, which endorsed participation in policing on the basis of policing and justice powers being devolved. Another step on the road to success was the results of the Local Assembly elections which confirmed the dominant positions of Sinn Féin on the nationalist side and the DUP on the unionist side.

The DUP increased to 36 seats from 30 seats four years ago, giving them four of the ten executive departments. Sinn Féin, up four seats to 28, is now 12 seats ahead of the SDLP, compared to 2003 when it was only 6 seats in front. As well as Martin McGuinness, as a deputy first minister, it will also have

underpin the devolved Stormont executive for the next four years.

The parties also committed to agreeing a programme for government.

Within quick succession we had Dr. Paisley's visit to Bertie Ahern at the site of the Battle of the Boyne and the address by



DUP leader Rev Ian Paisley and Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams finally together for the first time

three ministries. The Ulster Unionist Party dropped to 18 seats, down 6 from 2003, but it did manage to remain ahead of the SDLP, which means that in a reinstated Stormont it will have two ministries. That edge over the SDLP also means unionists will have the majority of seats in the executive – six to four.

The basis for the dramatic development in agreement on a power sharing executive had been set in place at proximity talks involving Martin McGuinness and Peter Robinson of the DUP. The Sinn Féin chief negotiator and deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party did not have face-to-face discussions. However, they did work in neighbouring offices at Stormont castle a short distance from Parliament Buildings and communicated through senior officials. Among the documents transferred between the two were drafts of the leaders' statements. What they agreed formed the basis for a six week programme leading to the restoration of devolution and power sharing at Stormont and the appearance together for the first time at talks in Stormont of Rev. Ian Paisley and Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams. In addition to regular meetings between Dr. Paisley and Martin McGuinness, as prospective First Minister and Deputy First Minister, meetings were held among all four of the parties who are entitled to seats in the new executive. Further talks have since been held with Chancellor Gordon Brown on a peace dividend and a financial package which will

Ahern to the joint Houses of Parliament in Westminster, the first Irish Taoiseach to be invited to do so. In this speech while urging the need to sustain the hard won achievements made in the North he claimed that the relationship between Ireland and Britain has changed fundamentally for the better. Sinn Féin's Ard Comhairle meanwhile had given approval for three party members to take seats on the Northern Ireland Policing Board. Among the objectives the party had set was to ensure that:

- A civic policing service, accountable and representative of the community was delivered as quickly as possible.
- The Chief Constable and the PSNI would be publicly held to account and that policing with the community was achieved as a core function of the service.
- That political policing, collusion and 'a force within a force' along with any involvement of MI5 in civiv policing would be a thing of the past.
- That the issue of plastic bullets was properly addressed.

Among the party's manifesto launched in mid May for the general election campaign in the Republic were commitments that Sinn Féin, if in Government would complete a Green Paper on Irish Unity within the first year, introduce six counties elected representation in the Dáil and have a referendum on Irish Unity simultaneously North and South.

Campaign for Northern Language Act continues

The campaign for an Irish Language Act in the North, POBAL, was very satisfied with the fact that 93% of the 575 submissions made were in favour of the legislation. 2500 signatures were collected on the internet appeal and 1,266 post cards sent in support. However a later U turn by the British Government when they pulled back on a commitment to pass legislation in Westminster was condemned. While a draft Bill was published in mid March the British Culture Minister, Maria Eagle, announced another round of consultation which would take three months. In the draft bill seventeen public bodies will have to prepare implementation schemes which a Language Commissioner would supervise. Irish could be used in the court system and some official forms would be available in Irish. There was much however omitted, broadcasting in Irish and the question of signage in the language, for example. Janet Muller of POBAL said that the British Government ignored the 93% support and while they were now claiming that the public should have the opportunity to comment on the draft legislation they had refused to present these in the first consultation process. It is unlikely now that this legislation will be passed in Westminster and it would go to the reconstituted Local Northern Assembly. With the two unionist parties having stated openly that they would oppose such legislation it will be a difficult fight there. POBAL stated that one of most significant omissions in the second document was that no mention was made of status for Irish as an official language.

Interestingly an old Unionist myth, cultivated by the likes of John Taylor in opposition to demands for an Irish language act, that there are more speakers of Chinese than Irish in the six counties, was laid to rest when the same J. Taylor received an answer to a parliamentary question at Westminster that the actual number of Chinese speakers is 8,000. The 2001 census confirmed that there are 75,000 speakers of Irish in the six counties along with another 167,000 who have some knowledge of the language.

POBAL intend to intensify their campaign and have another demonstration in support planned to take place in Belfast for June 9th. The first march in February saw many organisations and a crowd of 5,000 turn out.

On the issue of rights it may be noted that Maire Nic a Bhaire (see previous issues of Carn) was found guilty in Jan. of disorderly conduct in her oft adjourned court case related to speaking Irish in public, she intends to appeal the verdict.

SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF IRISH-MEDIUM EDUCATION

The grave decision of the Minister for Education and Science with regard to the practice of immersion education in the State's Irish-medium primary schools has been received with astonishment and dismay by GAELSCOILEANNA TEO. and by Irish-medium schools throughout the country. The decision, taken by the Minister in mid May, is such that Irish-medium schools will be compelled to formally teach English by the beginning of the second term of junior infants at the latest. In the words of GAELSCOILEANNA TEO.'s Chief Executive, Bláthnaid ní Ghréacháin, "This action is not only ill-advised but has no educational, expert or linguistic basis to it".

At the request of the Minister, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) implemented a public consultation process on the development of language and literacy in Irish-medium primary schools. As a result of this process, which was based on expert research on international best-practice of immersion education, four models as well as recommendations were submitted to the Minister in January 2007, based on international best-practice with a view to developing a national policy on immersion education.



Gaelscoileanna Teo.'s Chief Executive, Bláthnaid Ní Ghréacháin

It appears that this decision dismisses the international expertise, the NCCA's own recommendations, the recommendations and submissions of the key players in the Irish-language and education sectors, as well as the results of the widespread research and submissions that were collected from parents and teachers throughout the country.

Gaelscoileanna has said that it does not accept any decision that will be to the detriment of the Irish-language immersion system as a whole and has demanded of the Minister not to issue the planned circular and to implement immediately the recommendations of the NCCA.

IRISH IN THE GAELTACHT

That the actual areas within the Gaeltachtaí in which Irish is spoken are much smaller than those enclosed by the official boundaries of the Gaeltacht has long been known and of course the number of Irish speakers is consequently much less than the actual total population within the Gaeltacht regions. Furthermore even in areas where the language is a community language there are many non Irish speaking families now. In such a situation it is difficult to gauge the real status of the language. An index that has been and is used to gain some knowledge of the real strength of the language as a family and community language is what is now termed 'Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge' (Scheme for Spoken Irish). This started in 1934 as a one which gave a grant of £2 for each child in an Irish speaking family; this was then increased decades later to £10. The scheme was revised and given its present title in 1993 with a grant of £200 (now €260) which has remained unchanged since. Many of the specific Gaeltacht agricultural and housing grants were linked to this scheme although that too may have altered in recent decades.

Figures were issued on the statistics of the scheme for 2005/6 by the Department of Rural Affairs, Community and the Gaeltacht in March. An analysis of these by the Conamara based language activist, Donncha Ó hÉallaithe, and comparisons with the 1995/6 figures was presented in Foinse. The

figures show that some of the stronger larger Gaeltacht regions have weakened while some of the weaker and smaller Gaeltachtaí have strengthened.

D. Ó hÉallaithe reckons, based on the 2002 census figures and a population growth of 6%, that there were about 10,000 families in the Gaeltacht regions eligible to apply for the scheme. 3,495 applied and 2,260 were awarded the full grant with a further 893 receiving a reduced grant. Detailed breakdowns for the different regions and areas within them show that in Conamara most of the southern coastal region, (taking An Cheathrú Rua, na hOileáin and Cois Fharraige together) has improved somewhat with a total of 709 in 2005/6 as against 674 in 1995/6 but against that the Camus/Rosmuc area dropped from 83 to 66 and the Aran Islands from 107 to 95. Northwest Donegal registered a drop from 515 to 468 (with Aranmore island dropping from 34 to 19) as did the West Kerry Gaeltacht, from 160 to 138. In the small Ring Gaeltacht, in Co. Waterford, the numbers increased from 12 to 24, in the West Cork Muskerry region there was an improvement from 32 to 59 and in Rath Chairn (in Co. Meath) an increase from 18 to 20. A number of years ago a review of the scheme was announced but nothing has yet emerged. It is clear that such is overdue as is a substantial increase in the grant amount which has lost considerable real value in today's terms.

50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE TREATY OF ROME – TEN POINTS WORTH BEARING IN MIND

1. THE EU'S MYTH OF ORIGIN:

The myth of origin of the EU is that it was a peace project designed to make war impossible between France and Germany. The truth is however that it was the American Government's insistence on German rearmament to meet the needs of the Cold War that precipitated the European Coal and Steel Community in 1950, which was the foundation of European integration. The pooling of coal and steel under a supranational authority, the precursor of the Brussels Commission, was crucial in overcoming French hostility to rearming its ancient enemy. Jean Monnet, America's man in the affair, saw it as a way of pursuing the project for a supranational Europe which he had been nurturing since World War 1. It was the Cold War, not the EEC - later the EC and EU - that kept the peace in Europe between the end of World War 2 in 1945 and the end of the USSR in 1991. During that time neither America nor Russia would have permitted a war between the member States of either rival bloc. After 1991 war broke out again in Europe, in Yugoslavia and Chechnya.

2. THE DREAM OF WORLD POWER OF THE EU'S FOUNDING MEMBERS:

The six founding members of the original EEC had all been, apart from Luxembourg, imperial powers, with colonies and dependencies in Africa and elsewhere. France, Germany, Italy, Holland and Belgium were defeated and occupied during World War 2. After that war they found themselves in a world dominated by the two superpowers, the USA and USSR. Their traumatised political classes were still nostalgic for world power. They decided that if their countries could no longer be Big Powers in the world on their own, they would seek to be a Big Power collectively through the EU/EC. One formula for understanding the EU is this: Take five broken empires, add a sixth one later - Britain - and try to make one big neo-colonial empire out of it all.

3. THE NEED TO REPATRIATE LAWS FROM BRUSSELS TO THE MEMBER STATES:

Two-thirds of all legal acts in the 27 EU Member States now come each year from Brussels. Only one-third originate in each Member State. This shows the loss of national democracy and independence entailed by membership of the European Union. The first step in remedying the EU's widely admitted democratic deficit is to repatriate policy-making powers from Brussels to the Member States. Any new EU Treaty should provide for this. Despite much rhetoric about subsidiarity from the EU Commission, there is not a single example in the 50 years of European integration of a national power that was surrendered to Brussels being repatriated. What is known in EU jargon as the "acquis communautaire" is sacrosanct. That is why some call it the "doctrine of the occupied

field". What Brussels has once occupied, stays occupied.

4. THE PUZZLE AS TO WHY NATIONAL POLITICIANS WELCOME THE GROWTH OF EU POWERS:

Government Ministers and aspiring Ministers welcome the transfer of powers from the national level to the supranational because it means a big increase in their own personal power, at the cost of a diminution in power for their own Parliaments and fellow citizens. At national level if a Minister wants to get something done, he or she must have the support of that country's national Parliament. Remove that particular policy area to Brussels however, where laws are made primarily by the EU Council of Ministers, and the Minister in question, who is part of the executive arm of government at national level and responsible to an elected parliament, becomes a powerful legislator at EU level - one of an oligarchy, a committee of lawmakers, making laws for 500 million people as a member of the exclusive club of the EU Council of Ministers, which is irremovable as a group. Simultaneously senior national civil servants, who prepare EU laws in interaction with the Commission bureaucracy, are freed from questioning by their fellow citizens. There is an intoxicating



*Manuel Barroso,
EU Commission President*

increase in personal power for the politicians and bureaucrats concerned, and a corresponding reduction in the power of their fellow citizens, national Parliaments and countries.

5. THE EU CANNOT HAVE A STABLE DEMOCRATIC BASIS BECAUSE A EUROPEAN PEOPLE, AN EU "DEMOS", DOES NOT EXIST:

Democracy means rule by the people, the "demos". There cannot be a political democracy without a people, a "demos", a national community, a "we", whose members feel sufficient solidarity and mutual identification with one another as to induce

minorities freely to obey majority rule. Minorities are willing to do this because they regard the majority as their majority, that is, as belonging to their own people and national community and as having the democratic legitimacy and authority which derive from that. This normally requires that people are able to communicate with one another in a common language, and share the same territory, culture, historical experiences etc. That is why democracy can exist at the level of Europe's ancient national communities. There is however no European people or "demos" that transcends and is superior to Europe's many nations and peoples, and one cannot be artificially created from above by Brussels. The EU can therefore never be a genuine democracy. Cooperation between Europe's countries can only be built from the bottom up, with the free agreement of the peoples, not from the top down at the behest of political and economic elites who aspire to build a European superstate which they see themselves as running.

6. THE EURO CANNOT ENDURE WITHOUT A POLITICAL AND FISCAL UNION; YET THE LATTER IS IMPOSSIBLE BECAUSE THE NECESSARY EU SOLIDARITY DOES NOT EXIST:

All independent States have currencies of their own and all currencies belong to independent States. A currency is necessary to enable a State to influence its rate of interest and exchange rate in the economic interests of its people. The interest rate is the domestic price of a currency and determines the cost of credit to citizens. The exchange rate is the price of the currency in terms of other currencies and is a key influence on a country's economic competitiveness. Abolishing one's national currency and replacing it with the euro means that a country surrenders control of its rate of interest and exchange rate to the European Central Bank in Germany, which is independent of all government control. The ECB's prime concern is not the welfare of the country in question, but what it decides is in the interest of the eurozone as a whole. In practice this means the interest of the eurozone's largest members, Germany and France. The euro is a political project designed to give the European Union one of the key features of supranational statehood, using economic means that are quite unsuitable for that purpose. "The two pillars of the nation State are the sword and the currency, and we have changed that," boasted Commission President Romano Prodi in 1999. However there is no example in history of a lasting currency union that was not part of one State, and therefore also part of a political union and fiscal union, with the common taxes and public services which all national States possess. The existence of such common taxes and services serves to compensate to some extent the poorer regions of a national currency union for their inability to balance

their payments with others by utilizing their own interest rate and exchange rate. Yet there is no possibility of the EU having common taxes and public services because the solidarity that is needed to underpin these - the solidarity that induces richer regions to finance transfers to poorer ones within each individual country - does not exist at the EU level. The euro-currency therefore cannot last. It is only a matter of time before the strains that stem from its member countries being unable any longer to control their own interest rate or exchange rate must force some countries to leave the eurozone.

7. THE EU'S EROSION OF NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP:

All independent States have evolved over generations the right to decide who are their citizens, in order to maintain their labour standards or their social cohesiveness as communities. They are free to decide for themselves the rules they apply for giving rights of citizenship to people born in other countries. But in the European Union such fundamental features of citizenship as the right to residence, to work, to buy property, to receive social maintenance when dependent, and to vote in local elections, are automatically extended by supranational EU/EC law, following a transition period, to whatever proportion of the population of the other 26 member countries decides to settle in a particular country. Thus rights of EU citizenship displace key rights of national citizenship as part of the effort to turn the EU into a supranational State, in which European citizenship and allegiance to a new country called "Europe" will transcend and be legally superior to one's national citizenship and allegiance.

8. THE PROPOSED EU CONSTITUTION AIMS TO MAKE US REAL CITIZENS OF A NEW EUROPEAN UNION IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL FORM OF A SUPRANATIONAL EU STATE:

The Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe proposes to do this by five precise legal steps: (1) This Treaty would repeal all the existing EU/EC Treaties and thereby replace the existing EU and EC with a new European Union that would be founded like any State upon its own Constitution; (2) It would transfer the powers and institutions of the existing EU/EC to this new Union, which would have the authority to decide all areas of public policy for its Member States either actually or potentially; (3) It would give this new Union legal personality so that it could act as a political entity in its own right, distinct from and superior to its individual Member States, whether as regards their domestic or foreign policy. At present it is the EC, as part of the current EU, that has legal personality; (4) It would make the Constitution of this new Union and the laws made under it superior to the Constitution and laws of its component Member States; (5) It would make us all real citizens of this new Union, and not just nominal or honorary EU citizens as at present, so that EU citizenship would be constitutionally superior to the citizenship attaching to one's own country or State. That

is why the proposed EU Constitution or any replacement Treaty based upon it that would seek to replace the existing EU/EC by a new Union with its own legal personality should be opposed by democrats across Europe, irrespective of their views on other things.

9. WHY PEOPLE SHOULD SUPPORT THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT IN DEFENCE OF NATIONAL DEMOCRACY:

The thrust of the EU integration project is to erode the democracy of the nation States of Europe. Internationalism presupposes the existence of nations. The champions of EU integration are seeking in effect to erode the democratic heritage of the French Revolution - the right of nations and peoples to self-determination - in order to clamp a form of financial feudalism on Europe. Hence democrats in every EU country, whether they are on the political centre, right or left, have a common interest in taking part in the international movement in defence of national democracy against the EU.

10. FURTHER EU ENLARGEMENT DOES NOT NEED AN EU CONSTITUTION:

Enlargement of the EU beyond the 27 Members provided for by the 2002 Treaty of

Nice can be done in the Accession Treaties of the new States concerned, as was done with previous EU enlargements. It does not require institutional changes or a Constitution that would centralise the EU further and make it even less democratic.

These points have been issued by the National Platform EU Research and Information Centre, 24 Crawford Avenue, Dublin 9, Ireland; Tel.: 00-353-1-8305792

We have recently produced the draft of a critical booklet on the EU and on the need for democrats in Ireland and the other EU countries to resist the attempt to make us all into citizens of a new country called "Europe" by means of the proposed EU Constitution, which the current German EU presidency is now seeking to revive. This booklet critically examines Ireland's experience of the EU. To get this printed and decently published will cost some 6000 and if you think this work is worth supporting, I would like to ask you if you could send us a donation to help us to produce it.

Anthony Coughlan

Election result in Republic - FF and Ahern back again

At the beginning of the election campaign it seemed that there was a chance that the pre-election pact of the two main opposition parties Fine Gael (centre right) and Labour (centre left) would pay off and that a change of government might ensue. It was also anticipated that the Green Party would do well and increase their representation while the same was expected for Sinn Fein, with the bonus of the being in government in the newly functioning Northern Executive. In the event all the pundits were proven wrong. The outgoing government party, Fianna Fail- FF, (who had been in coalition with the small Progressive Democrats -PDs) held on to their vote and almost their number of seats, 78 as against 80. While Fine Gael did recover from the losses they suffered in the 2002 election, increasing their seats from 31 to 51 the combined strength of Fine Gael and Labour (who dropped from 21 to 20) was insufficient to form a majority taking account of the positions adopted by smaller parties in relation to prospective coalition partners.



The PDs lost badly, dropping from 8 to 2 seats with the Party leader, Michael McDowell losing his seat in cliff hanger to the Green Party's John Gormley. The PD Party Chairman also his seat. McDowell resigned from politics entirely (and many who disliked his right wing views and pugnacious style were glad to see him go) but he was credited with having damaged

Sinn Fein in the pre-election TV debate with remarks about alleged criminality and the Northern bank robbery. Sinn Fein had expected to increase their percentage vote considerably with a commensurate increase in their number of seats but while they did go up one percentage in their overall vote they actually dropped from 5 to 4 seats and failed badly to gain in key target constituencies putting an end to any hopes of being in government in both parts of Ireland. The Green's did not fare so badly, retaining their 6 seats. The airwaves were thick with comments about the smaller parties and independents (down from 14 to 5) being squeezed by the resurgent two major parties.

The result of all this was to leave outgoing FF Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, who said stability would be his key goal, with a choice of coalition options in the 166 seat Dail. One would be with the two remaining PDs but requiring the support of a number of independents, some of whom are like minded but from others from the left also such as Tony Gregory and Finian McGrath, both elected in Dublin in disadvantaged constituencies and who indicated that support would be forthcoming if they got benefits for those constituencies. The second alternative was to get the Greens into government but even that needed some independent support. The indications were that Ahern would go for the PD option. By the time you read this it will have been decided, the money is on the former.



Mannin



Quoi va/ta ny Celtiee? Y feysht veayn

Haink lioar anaasagh magh er y gherid. T'eh enmysst 'The Origins of the British: a genetic detective story' as v'eh screut liorish Stephen Oppenheimer veih Ollooscoil Oxford ayns Sostyn. She ard-oayllee eshyn bentyn rish cooishyn GDN (DNA) as lorgey ny arraghyn jeh pobbleyn harrish ny eashyn meeillaghyn dy vleeantyn er dy henney. Dy çhelleeragh as mish jeeaghyn er y lioar hoshiaght, va mee beggan boirit ec y fockle shen 'British'. Dooy's, shen fockle hie er croo ec impiroilee Sostnagh tree ny kiare cheead blein er dy henney ry hoi tayrn ry cheilley er egin hene ooilley ny pobbleyn ayns y Vretyn Vooar as Nerin as ny ellany elley as cur orroo dy ve nyn Sostnee arrymagh. Agh tra t'ou lhaih paart jeh'n lioar shoh, t'ou feddyn magh dy vel Oppenheimer gymmydey focklyn myr 'British' er agh ta beggan seyr. Myr sampleyr, t'eh gymmydey yn fockle 'England' myr dy beagh y çheer rieu er ve ayn - eer syn Eash-Rioee. My oddys oo shaghney doilleeidyn myr shoh, ta'n lioar feer anaasagh as foaysagh, er lhiam, eer mannagh vel oo toiggal cooishyn gien-oaylleeaght (genetics).

S'anaasagh y fockley 'goaldagh' ayns Gaelg. My t'ou jeeaghyn er fockleyr Cregeen, ren çheet magh bunnys daa cheead blein er dy henney, t'ou feddyn magh dy nee 'a guest' va'n Baarle hug Cregeen er yn ockle shoh. My t'ou jeeaghyn er fockleyr John Kelly, va jeant ny smoo na daa cheead blein er dy henney, t'ou fakin dy row 'goaldagh' ny 'Goaldagh' keeallaghey 'a guest' as 'Welsh, English, foreign, Gaulish'.

Anaasagh. Ec y traa t'ayn, ta shin gymmydey 'Goaldagh' myr 'British'. Agh cha nel shen ayns coardailys rish y spyryd jeh lioar Oppenheimer: ta beoyn ersyn dy hayrn ooilley ny shenn phobbleyn jeh ny ellany shoh ry cheilley myr un phobble, ga dy vel eh goaill rish dy vel reddyn er lhez bentyn da ny Sostnee.

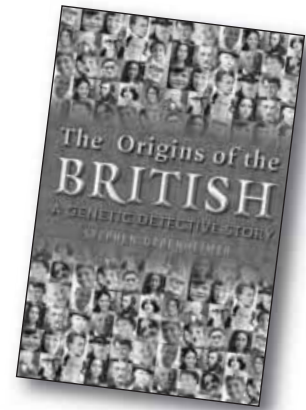
Er aghyn ennagh, she lioar doillee t'ayn. Cha nel eieyn Oppenheimer ayns coardailys rish ny eieyn cadjin mychione ny Celtiee ayns y Çheer Vooar Oarpagh ny ayns ny ellany shoh. T'eh gra dy vel ooilley yn stoo shen mychione ny Shenn Cheltiee as y thaloo dooie oc syn Austeyr (Austria) ny boayl faggys da shen, dy vel eh slane aggairagh. Haink yn eie shen, ta Oppenheimer gra, veih'n çhenn fer-shennaghys Herodotus, ren gra dy row thaloo dooie ny Celtiee faggys da'n voayl raad va'n awin Danube goaill toshiaght. Agh

smooincey Herodotus dy row yn Danube goaill toshiaght sy Rank sheear-ass. Ta Oppenheimer gra dy row Herodotus kiart bentyn rish thaloo dooie ny Shenn Cheltiee - son shickyrys va'n thaloo dooie oc sy Rank sheear-ass, reir Oppenheimer. Agh, reir Oppenheimer, hug marran Herodotus er ny sheelogheyn ny lurg dy ghra dy row thaloo dooie ny Shenn Cheltiee mygeayrt y mysh yn Austeyr, er yn oyr dy row fys kiart ec ny sheelogheyn shen raad ghow yn Danube toshiaght.

As, reir Oppenheimer, cha nel eh shickyry dy nee shenn Cheltiee hug ny cultooryn La Tène as Hallstatt er bun.

Ny sodjey na shen, ta Oppenheimer gra nagh vel undin Celtiagh ec y sleih t'ayns ny ellany shoh. Foddee dy daink kuse dy Cheltiee stiagh ayns ny ellany shoh tra ghow yn eiryns toshiaght. Foddee dy daink ny çhengaghyn Celtiagh stiagh ayns ny ellany shoh ec y traa cheddin - foddey, foddey ny s'leaic na'n eie cadjin dy daink ad stiagh beggan ny smoo na daa veeilley blein er dy henney. Agh my haink Celtiee 'firrinagh' gys ny ellany shoh, va poble elley ayn hannah - myr ta ram scoillaryn er ghra hannah rish ymmoddey bleantyn. Agh ta Oppenheimer gra dy vel shennayraghyn yn çhenn phobble shen ayn hannah ayns ny ellany shoh foastagh - as ta laue yn eaghtyr oc er yn agh gien-oaylleeaght (genetic). Ny sodjey na shen, ta'n bun gien-oaylleeaght kiart goll rish shen ec ny Bascee. As hannee yn bun gien-oaylleeaght shen er mayrn trooid meeillaghyn as meeillaghyn dy vleeantyn, ga dy vel kuse dy phobbleyn elley er jeet gys ny ellany shoh - Celtiee 'firrinagh', Germaanee, Romanee, Loghlinee, Normanee, as myr shen foast. Ta Oppenheimer gra nagh ren ooilley ny pobbleyn shen agh anchaslyssyn beggey da undin gien-oaylleeaght y phobble ayns ny ellany shoh. Hannee yn undin shen 'Bascagh'.

Ec jerrey yn Eash-Rioee, t'eh jeeaghyn dy daink sleih gys y Vretyn Vooar as Nerin (jannoo ymyd jeh enmyr jeianagh) veih'n Rank sheear-ass. Ec y traa v'ayn, cha row yn Vretyn Vooar as Nerin nyn ellany noadyr. Agh, dirree yn keayn as she ellany v'ayn. Myr shen, va'n sleih sy Vretyn Vooar as ayns Nerin scarrit rish y Çheer Vooar Oarpagh as haink ad dy ve poble 'er lhez' (va sleih sy çheer vooar Oarpagh rieu smooinghtyn dy vel sleih ayns ny ellany shoh 'quaagh!'). Ta ughtar y lioar smooinghtyn dy row daa trooan gien-oaylleeaght roie stiagh ayns ny ellany shoh harrish ny eashyn: nane (y fer



stroshey) veih'n near-ass (y Spaainey as y Rank sheear-ass), as y fer elley veih'n niar as y niar-hwoaie (Loghlin as y Ghermaan). Shen y fa, ta Oppenheimer gra (choud's ta mee dy hoiggal eh) dy vel anchaslyssyn eddyr yn sleih ayns Nerin, Nalbin, Bretyn, Mannin, Y Chorn as Sostyn sheear er un çheu, as y leih ayns Sostyn shiar er y çheu elley. Agh, harrish ooilley ny çheeraghyn shen, s'lajer ta'n undin gien-oaylleeaght 'Bascagh'.

Ta Oppenheimer shickyry nagh daink earrooyn mooarey dy h-Anglo-Hostnee dys y Vretyn Vooar shiar-ass ec yn un cheayrt lurg da ny Romanee v'er naagail, as dy ren ny Anglo-Hostnee shen marroo meeillaghyn dy chummaltee v'ayns shen hannah. Cha row kynney-ghunverys jeant, er lesh, er y fa nagh vel feanish jeh shen ry gheddyn. Ta Oppenheimer smooinghtyn dy row boghtynid as propaganda screut ec Gildas, y fer-shennaghys Sostnagh, tra screue eshyn mychione riegys Anglo-Hostnagh, as mychione ny Anglo-Hostnee cur mow 'Britnee' dy bollagh.

Y red smoo arganagh ta bentyn rish barelyn Oppenheimer, ta shen dy vel eh smooinghtyn dy row Anglo-Hostnee cummal sy voayl t'ad gra Sostyn rish roish my daink ny Romanee stiagh, as dy row sorch dy Vaarle goll er loayrt ayns 'Sostyn' bleantyn as bleantyn roish y lhing shen. Foddee dy nee Germaanee va ny Belgee as cha nee Celtiee, t'eh smooinghtyn, kyndagh rish reddyn va screut ec Julius Caesar (shimmey scoillar ta gra dy row kianglaghyn lajer eddyr ny Belgee ayns y cheer vooar Oarpagh as ny Belgee ayns y Vretyn Vooar). Paart jeh'n oyr ta Oppenheimer smooinghtyn myr shoh, ta shen er y fa nagh vel feanish ayn dy row kynney-ghunverys jeant myr va screut ec Gildas, as yn agh quaaagh dy vel eh jeeaghyn dy jagh yn cheney er caghlau cho aashagh ayns 'Sostyn' shiar lurg da ny Romanee v'er naagail. Foddee nagh row chengaghyn Celtiagh goll er loayrt feiy'n Vretyn Vooar tra haink ny Romanee, ta Oppenheimer smooinghtyn.

Gyn ourys erbee, bee scoillaryn dy liooar noi eieyn y dooinney shoh dy bollagh. My t'eh kiart lesh eer paart jeh ny eieyn shoh, bee scoillaryn dy liooar d'aascreue lioaryn dy liooar. Shimmey lioar stoamey ta ry gheddyn

continued on page 18

"LANDMARK DECLARATION" CLAIM AS UK TIGHTENS ITS GRIP

What has been described as "a landmark declaration" recognising that the Isle of Man "has its own identity and interests in the international arena" was announced in early May.

"The framework of principles" agreed between the two governments of the United Kingdom and the Isle of Man is supposedly aimed at reinforcing "the Island's separate status within the context of its constitutional relationship with the UK."

The Isle of Man Chief Minister, Tony Brown MHK, who signed the document on behalf of the Manx Government, said:

Quoi va/ta ny Celtiee?

continued

mychione ny Shenn Cheltiee as yn aght chroo ad cultooryn Hallstatt as La Tène. Vel ooilley'n stoo shen aggairagh? As bee eh feer ghoillee da ram sleih dy yannoo lesh yn eie dy row chengey Vaarlagh goll er loayrt ayns 'Sostyn' ymmodee bleaantyn roish my daink ny Romane gys y Vretyn Vooar. Agh ta Oppenheimer heose rish cooish noa – gien-oaylleaght. Nee Bascee shin? Surrys enn nagh vel ughtar y lioar shoh heose rish chengaghyn Celtiagh. T'eh screeu ayns shen nagh daink agh kiare focklyn stiagh ayns Baarle veih chengaghyn Celtiagh son shickyrys! Gyn ourys, ta ny sloo focklyn Celtiagh ayns Baarle na veagh oo jerkal rish, agh ta'n earroo foddey ny shlee na kiare.

Er y laue elley, ta foddey ny smoo keeall sy lioar shoh na ayns lioaryn goll rish 'The Atlantic Celts: Ancient People or Modern Invention' liorish Simon James. Ta Oppenheimer gra nagh y lioar shen cairagh. T'eh jeeaghyn dooys dy vel claare politickagh ec Simon James as e lheid. Ta Oppenheimer gra nagh vel eh kiart dy chraidey mysh cooish ny Celtiee. Ec y traa t'ayn, ta sleih dy liooar coontey'n chooish dy ve scanshoil da'n jarroo-enney oc. Shoh lioar feer arganagh as lioar anaasagh, erskyn ooilley tra t'eh briaught y feysht 'Quoi va/ta ny Sostnee?'.

Summary

'The Origins of the British' by Stephen Oppenheimer is a contentious and interesting book. Many people will be upset by ideas that the Celtic Iron Age homeland was not in Central Europe, that the virtually unperturbed genetic basis of most people in these islands is very similar to that of the Basques, and that some form of English was spoken in what became England before the Romans came. But in no way does Oppenheimer dump 'the Celtic thing' like some authors have tried recently.

Brian Stowell

"This is a significant step forward in the Isle of Man's evolution as a mature and responsible democracy. It confirms in writing that the Island has its own distinct and legitimate interests on the world stage, which may differ from those of the United Kingdom".

"The understanding that has been reached should help the Isle of Man to flourish as a reputable centre for international business. There is now greater clarity about the Island's position, which will be useful in dealing with governments, organisations and businesses around the globe".

The new arrangement however, far from further loosening the ties with Westminster closes off the potential for conflict between the Isle of Man and the United Kingdom as the Islands government increasingly adopts a divergent stance internationally.

International affairs have long been a retained prerogative for the UK as far as the Isle of Man and its other metropolitan dependencies are concerned. There was considerable behind the scenes irritation some years ago when the Manx government of the day openly developed cooperative contacts with Ireland in opposition to the United Kingdoms operation of the Sellafield reprocessing plant.

Since that time the Isle of Man's ability to 'plough its own furrow' and have an independent international strategy has been further enhanced and recent bilateral agreements with European States must have worried the UK.

The sub-text running through the so called "Framework", a copy of which is set out below, is that the United Kingdom, far from loosening its grip on Mann's ability for independent international initiative, intends to try to subtly control them. In point four the United Kingdom stresses that its role will be one of support not interference but anyone who has studied the track record of successive UK governments and their attitude to their dependencies will find it hard to accept this statement at face value.

Almost forty years ago the Joint Working Party looking into constitutional relationships between the Isle of Man and the United Kingdom identified that the sphere of International relations could be the one area which might provide the catalyst for a move towards independence.

It seems that by granting the Isle of Man the ability to evolve and mature its democracy the United Kingdom has subtly closed off that loophole. The May agreement means that the Isle of Man is still tied tightly to the 'apron strings' of its UK 'nanny'!

Bernard Moffatt



Tony Brown MHK, Chief Minister

Framework for Developing the International Identity of the Isle of Man

Following the statement of intent agreed on 11 January 2006, the Chief Minister of the Isle of Man and the UK Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs have agreed the following principles. They establish a framework for the development of the international identity of the Isle of Man. The framework is intended to clarify the constitutional relationship between the UK and the Isle of Man, which works well and within which methods are evolving to help achieve the mutual interests of both the UK and the Isle of Man.

1) The UK has no democratic accountability in and for the Isle of Man which is governed by its own democratically elected assembly.

In the context of the UK's responsibility for the Isle of Man's international relations it is understood that -

- The UK will not act internationally on behalf of the Isle of Man without prior consultation.

- The UK recognises that the interests of the Isle of Man may differ from those of the UK, and the UK will seek to represent any differing interests when acting in an international capacity. This is particularly evident in respect of the relationship with the European Union where the UK interests can be expected to be those of an EU member state and the interests of the Isle of Man can be expected to reflect the fact that the UK's membership of the EU only extends to the Isle of Man in certain circumstances as set out in Protocol 3 of the UK's Treaty of Accession.

2) The Isle of Man has an international identity which is different from that of the UK.

3) The UK recognises that the Isle of Man is a long-standing, small democracy and supports the principle of the Isle of Man further developing its international identity.

4) The UK has a role to play in assisting the development of the Isle of Man's international identity. The role is one of support not interference.

5) The Isle of Man and the UK commit themselves to open, effective and meaningful dialogue with each other on any issue that may come to affect the constitutional relationship.

6) International identity is developed effectively through meeting international standards and obligations which are important components of the Isle of Man's international identity.

7) The UK will clearly identify its priorities for delivery of its international obligations and agreements so that these are understood, and can be taken into account, by the Isle of Man in developing its own position.

8) The activities of the UK in the international arena need to have regard to the Isle of Man's international relations, policies and responsibilities.

9) The UK and the Isle of Man will work together to resolve or clarify any differences which may arise between their respective interests.

10) The Isle of Man and the UK will work jointly to promote the legitimate status of the Isle of Man as a responsible, stable and mature democracy with its own broad policy interests and which is willing to engage positively with the international community across a wide range of issues.

Signed on 1st May 2007 by:

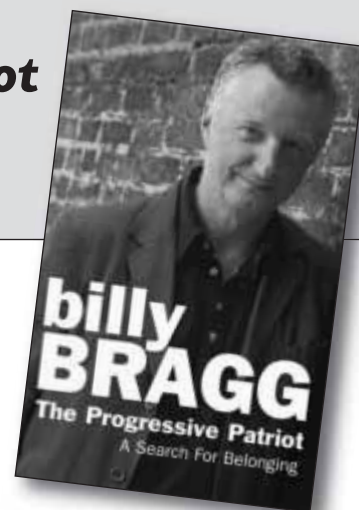
*The Rt Hon Lord Falconer of Thoroton
QC, Secretary of State*

Hon J A Brown MHK, Chief Minister

A New England? The Progressive Patriot

by Billy Bragg

296pp, Bantam Press, £17.99



It's unusual to read positive things about English nationalism here, maybe because of negative associations such as hooliganism, the far right, expansionism, and cultural imperialism. But what if you were a proud Englishman, and disgusted by this? Billy Bragg is, and as he says, "after years of feeling alienated by my country" he wanted to explore "my own sense of belonging, to reconcile patriotism with the radical tradition." Yet this man is also a socialist and a pioneer of "Rock against Racism".

What's more Bragg openly admits that Wales has been a conquered country for centuries and elsewhere has voiced support for Scottish independence.

This book, part-history, part-biography, part-polemic, is fascinating. Not only for the tour of English radicalism, or his musical career, the rise of Punk, and his engagement with English folk music (via America!), but for its very ordinariness and originality. He critiques English xenophobia

vs. identity without Queen and Empire, in the wake of Scots/Welsh devolution and Muslim terrorism. As he says,

"It's been years since our Welsh and Scottish neighbours stopped singing... 'God save the Queen' at sporting events. It didn't take an Act of Parliament... or the Monarchy to collapse... England's continued attachment to the British anthem smacks of a lack of self-confidence... Nobody ever makes the assumption that... a Welsh dragon on the back bumper [means it] must be driven by a racist... until recently, however, to display the St George's Cross on your car was to risk condemnation".

However, he dwells too much on the Second World War, a British fixation, and overrates Magna Carta. He also says "Britain" when he means "England" sometimes. But all forgivable - given the rest.

Amongst the surprises are his Italian ancestry, Barking's ancient importance, and the revelation that the first influx of Jamaicans, from the Windrush, had many RAF war veterans amongst them. He also issues stark warnings about a British security state which can arrest you on "hearsay evidence - that is gossip and rumour", Muslim extremism and interracial relations in England.

This book gives me great hope. Bragg, and his ilk, are a credit to England, and are trying to improve things. And in the end, England is our neighbour, so a better England is good for us too. Instead of the current set-up, it would give us all a future.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS GROW ABOUT GRAVEL EXTRACTION PLAN

Concerns, first articulated by the Celtic League, are growing as the potential for long term environmental damage associated with the extraction of large amounts of aggregate from the sea-bed off the North East of Mann becomes apparent.

The Isle of Man government, through its Department of Trade and Industry, has licensed an initial round of exploratory work covering a vast sea area from Maughold Head to the Point of Ayre.

Initial concerns from the Celtic League that the activity could disturb radioactive pollution in the settled sediment in the area have already prompted the DTI to pledge that all material from the exploratory works will be monitored for radiation.

However the Celtic League has since raised further concerns about the general damage which may be caused to Marine life and the ecology of the North Irish sea area by what is effectively the 'strip-mining' of aggregate to a depth of several metres over a vast area. We have written to Agriculture Ministers in Mann, Scotland, Ireland and N. Ireland to express our disquiet.

A response received from Isle of Man Department of Agriculture Minister, Phillip Gawne MHK, is extremely positive indicating that a number of issues that we raised are also of concern to his Department.

Meanwhile, a forceful stance is also being adopted by the Manx Fish Producers

Organisation (MFPO) who are lobbying government and local authorities on the issue. In a letter to the largest local authority in the North of the Island, Ramsey Commissioners, the MFPO not only highlight their own concerns about the impact on fishing stocks but also highlight that the removal of thousands of tonnes of aggregate could irreparably damage sea water movement in the area and possibly aggravate coastal erosion.

The Celtic League believe that part of the impetus for the proposed sea-bed extraction of such large quantities of aggregate is linked to the expansion of the Isle of Man Airport at Ronaldsway. The current somewhat questionable proposal for this expansion involves extending the main runway several hundred metres out to sea in what will itself be a major civil engineering project. Already concerns are being voiced in the House of Keys about this development and its cost.

It is hoped that other League branches, particularly those in Scotland and Ireland, will lobby their governments over this issue. The Mannin branch will probably submit a draft AGM resolution on the issue to this year's AGM, which is planned for late September in Cardiff.

It is absolutely vital that this major environmental threat to the North Irish sea area is vigorously opposed.

Bernard Moffatt

celtic league press releases

Those who would like Celtic League press releases via Electronic Mail can subscribe (free of charge) to the mailing list at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/celtic_league



Kernow



WORLD WIDE INTEREST IN CELTIC CONGRESS IN CORNWALL

Kernowak: Standard Profys rag Screfa an Tavas Kernowak

Ma bagas a dhyvers Kernowegoryon yn dadn an tytel "UdnFormScrefys" ow lavyrya warbarth dhia vys Gwydngala 2006 bis hedhyw rag darbary spellyans kesassoylys rag an tavas. Pan vo va athves, y fedh an profyans-ma danvenys dha Gomysysson an Tavas Kernowak avell radn a Stratejy MAGA rag an Kernowak.

Th'eran ny, esely an bagas, owth ajwon dêw dra dha vos res rag an lytherednans amendys, mars eran ny whensys dh'y welas degemerys gen an nyver brossa a gowsoryon. Yma an dhêw dra-na pecar del sew.

* Res yw growndya an spellyans wâr lytherednans an textys teythyak.

* Res yw leveryans pùb ger dha vos apert dhorth an spellyans y honen.

Parys yw lebmyan an kensa draft. An ehan-ma a'n tavas yw gelwys "Kernowak" hag yth ywa an kensa form bythqweh a vue darbarys gen bagas a dus, kyns es dre ober udn den y honen oll.

Y fedh draft a'n profyans settys hedhyw dherag Bagas Lavyr an Tavas (yn dadn scous MAGA) hag y hyller y dhyscarga ynwedh avell restryn PDF dhorth <http://kernowak.com/>. Ma bagas arbednek

omgossulyans, henwys "Profyans", dha gawas kefrys rag kenyer onen a vo dâ dhodha govyn qwestyons bo gorra yn rag amendyansow. Vysytoryon a vedh abel ynwedh dha dhsqwedhas mars er anjy ow scodhya an form kesassoylys-ma a'gan yeth ny.

Na vedh an bagas goleg y owth omgossulya adro dha'n spellyans kynnygys marnas wâr an lyst henwys "Profyans". Na vedh dadhel vith kefys naneyl wâr an lyst-ma nag yn tyller vith ken. Th'eran ny ow qwetyas debatyans bêw.

**Rag UdnFormScrefys,
Michael Everson**

Summary

Kernowak: A proposed Standard Written Form for the Cornish language
Since September 2006, a diverse group of Cornish users, working under the name "UdnFormScrefys", has been working together to devise a compromise spelling for the language. When mature, the proposal will be submitted to the Cornish Language Commission as part of the Cornish Language Partnership's Strategy for the Cornish Language.

WORLDWIDE interest continues to grow in the International Celtic Congress being held at the Combined Universities in Cornwall Campus at Tremough, Penryn this summer.

At a recent Celtic Congress meeting, members were delighted to discover that there had been enquiries not only from local people wishing to see the Campus in action during day visits and support from the Celtic Nations who have hosted events during previous years, but also from further a field due to the ranging themes which will highlight the contribution made by the Celtic people to the world of arts, science and industry.

Six different speakers, one from each of the Celtic Nations will contribute by sharing their experiences making full use of the state of the art audiovisual facilities available.

The packed programme (from Monday 23rd July until Saturday 28th July, 2007) includes details and prices of accommodation as well as all social events.

Contact booking secretary, Jerry Rogers

E-mail: jerryrogers@francescos.org.uk

Telephone: 01344 775946

or from Tony Piper,

E-mail: tonypipercornwall@tiscali.co.uk,

Telephone: 01209 711509

Issued by Cornwall Branch of Celtic Congress, Press Officer, 'Kessenyans' Little Water, Goonhavern, TRURO, TR4 9QG
celticcongresscornwall@hotmail.co.uk

THE TUDOR ROSE RETURNS TO KERNOW

Following reports received from some of its members, the Cornish Branch has written to the Director of 'Visit Britain' a Government body which exists to administer 'Visit England' and 'Enjoy England.com'.

After years of well publicised protest in respect of the use of the English Tudor Rose on road signs which resulted in graffiti and destruction of these signs by activists, such was the insult caused to many Cornish people that a Governmental change occurred allowing more appropriate signage replacing those causing offence changing them to display the St. Piran's Flag or other non English symbol.

All was well until the English Tudor Rose reappeared on metal plates outside approved tourist accommodation in the Duchy.

Already, some are being spray painted indicating public feeling. Accordingly, a letter has been sent to 'Visit Britain' asking for such signs to be replaced or removed entirely as was the case when it was previously used in the Duchy.

Michael John Chappell

ST PIRAN SHALL LEAD OUR WAY!

Picture shows Headmaster of Perranporth Primary School, Mr. Brian Odgers receiving donations and flags from Mike Chappell on behalf of three Celtic and Cornish Donor organisations.

Perranporth Community Primary School has been invited to take Cornwall's National saint, St. Piran to the Hampton Court Flower Show on 2nd July this year.

The school, which teaches Cornish history, culture and language from the Cornish 'Sense of Place' syllabus, has been asked to perform the new Perranporth Furry Dance and to take the huge statue of St. Piran accompanied by 48 pupils dressed as miners and bal maidens to open the School Garden which is being designed by Chris Beardshaw of the BBC.

The pupils accompanied by six teachers will thus bring St. Piran, Perranporth and Cornwall and its distinctive heritage and traditions to the widespread attention of many.

Following an appeal for funding, the Cornish Branch of the Celtic League and the separate Cornish Branch of the Celtic



Congress each donated £100 and Suzie Murley of the original Cornish Heritage Company donated three large St. Piran Flags and poles and no less than 48 St. Piran hand flags.

To discuss sponsorship, please contact Mr. Odgers at the Perranporth School tel. 01872 572021

CELEBRATION OF ENGLISH NATIONALISM NOT WELCOME IN CORNWALL



In mid March about 40 protesters gathered outside City Hall in Truro, Cornwall in the early morning to demonstrate their disapproval of the so called 'St George Loving Cup' ceremony taking place inside among the Mayor and Councillors of the city.

If this artificially created icon to St George had never come to Truro, it is likely that very few people in Cornwall would have actually heard about this event at all and what this symbol of English nationalism was or represented. The Cornish Branch of the Celtic League was one of the first organisations to make their feelings known about the planned arrival of 'the Cup' to Cornwall, as part of its tour of '50 English cities'. They rightfully concluded that as a symbol of English nationalism it was another attempt to subordinate and diminish Cornwall's distinct identity.

For Truro to be included as one of these English cities would have been bad enough,

but the intention behind the tour was to raise the status and profile of England and St George in Cornwall. For some reason, Truro City Council voted to host the event and become part of the tour. Obviously, as soon as the news was made public in Cornwall there was an outcry and swiftly the organisers of the tour and the City Council itself understandably received a barrage of complaints.

The City Council at first commented that the ceremony would be held on an early Monday morning in order to avoid notice, but then later added, after it was rumoured that they had called an emergency meeting to discuss whether the event should take place, that both England's National Day (23rd April) and Cornwall's St Piran's Day (5th March) could live comfortably together. A bizarre suggestion in view of Cornwall's unique cultural status and distinct National identity.

Spearheading the campaign to get the City

Council to change their minds was Celtic League Branch Secretary Michael Chappell, whose efforts during the whole campaign have been gargantuan to say the least. He succeeded in bringing together a number of different Cornish organisations to campaign collectively on this issue, has written a succession of letters and emails, spoken on the telephone to individual members of the Council, been interviewed by the media, received death threats and been threatened with arrest on more than one occasion.

Yesterday around 40 people were present at the demonstration outside a City Hall under police guard at 0745. Approaches by Michael Chappell to those who staged the event were inconclusive. They seemed unable to comprehend the offence the decision to proceed with the event caused.

Speaking after the protest the Kernow branch secretary said:

"This was a well attended Vigil considering it was on a working day and Monday morning and brought together representatives and individuals from many different groups."

The protesters were also joined by a number of Truro City Councillors and also the Deputy Mayor of Truro Councillor Mrs Mills (nee Vivian).

Celtic League General Secretary, Rhisiart Tal-e-bot, himself a member of the Cornish Branch believes that those who support events should be held accountable for decisions which erode Cornish unique and separate identity:

"If it wasn't for the huge effort that Secretary and the Branch put into this campaign, the event may have gone unnoticed, setting a precedent for future similar events which diminish the status and culture of our Cornwall.

Congratulations are extended to Michael Chappell and the Cornish Branch.

They provide an inspiration for the other Branches of the League."

SIGN THE PLEDGE

www.pledgebank.com/No-to-St-George

The Cornish are a Celtic People. A recent academic and scientific study by Professor Sir Walter Bodmer of Oxford University and other academics and scientists has established that the Cornish have the MC1R gene which makes them true Celts. Their arrival on these islands pre dates the Anglo Saxon English and their Country of England by thousands of years. The English Flag is not flown in Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man, Brittany or Ireland, nor should it be flown in our Celtic Country of Kernow.



Thousands of our people were murdered by the English and the flag of St. George is a threatening and warlike symbol.

If 100 people agree with me, I will run one month of advertisements in the West Briton Newspaper financed by a local wealthy Cornish businessman pointing out the fact that we Cornish do not care much for the Flag of Saint George on our churches or elsewhere. Our flag is the untarnished Celtic Flag of Saint Piran.

<http://www.thisisnotengland.co.uk>

<http://www.cornishnotenglish.com>

<http://www.theflagofsaintpiran.com>

Mebyon Kernow Election Success

Mebyon Kernow - the Party for Cornwall achieved its best-ever results in the May election for Cornwall's district and town and parish councils.

After putting forward its largest number of election candidates (33, of which 24 stood for district council seats), MK won seven district council seats, seventeen town/city council seats and four parish council places.

Highlights of the election include:

CARADON DISTRICT COUNCIL. Callington Mayor Andrew Long won MK's first seat on Caradon for 24 years. He topped the poll in his town's three-seat ward with 726 votes.

NORTH CORNWALL DISTRICT COUNCIL. John Chapman, in his first contest as an MK candidate, successfully defended his Bodmin St Marys Ward with 800 votes.

KERRIER DISTRICT COUNCIL. Loveday Jenkin and Helene Cullimore successfully defended their Breage & Crowan and Camborne South seats, while Stuart Cullimore topped the poll in Camborne West with 759 votes to leave MK with a three seat group on the Council. Sadly, Jane Acton failed to hold her seat in Porthleven & Sithney against prominent independent candidates.

RESTORMEL BOROUGH COUNCIL. Party Leader Dick Cole topped the poll in two-seat St Enoder Ward with 859 votes and is joined by Matthew Luke who received the most votes in Treverbyn Ward.

TOWN COUNCIL ELECTIONS. MK has maintained groups of five councillors on both Camborne Town Council and Penzance Town Council, with three new councillors also elected to Truro City Council. The Party is also represented on town councils in Callington, Liskeard and Penryn.



Dick Cole

Speaking after the election, Party Leader Dick Cole described the election result as a very good one for MK. "We are extremely pleased to have polled well throughout Cornwall. As a small political party, it is a great achievement to win local government seats and we have done especially well to be represented on four of Cornwall's six district councils as well as a number of town and parish councils. As Party Leader, I would like to thank everyone who supported the campaign of Mebyon Kernow - the Party for Cornwall." In the 2007 district council elections, MK put forward 24 candidates of which seven were successful. By contrast, the Labour party put forward 30 candidates in Cornwall of which four were successful while UKIP nominated 27 candidates. Only one was successful. According to the BBC website, the United Kingdom Independence Party won only five council seats over the whole of 'England' - less than what MK managed in Cornwall.

such a requirement prior to receiving official recognition. It is also unusual that, unlike the other members of the Council of Europe that have ratified the Convention, the UK is the only signatory state not to have produced an official list of minorities that it protects under the Convention. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to know whether the UK is compliant with the Convention, or not. Moreover, this important deficiency renders the government's claim, to be "fully compliant" with the terms of the Convention, virtually worthless as the government itself doesn't know which minorities are covered. Bearing this point in mind, and by refusing to acknowledge the right of the Cornish to exist as a national minority, the government is effectively saying that it doesn't possess a list of Framework Convention groups but, even if it does, the Cornish would not be on it!

Although the government is claiming to the Council of Europe that decisions of this nature are the sole remit of the courts, in practice, politically motivated decisions are being taken by the Executive that have an extremely adverse impact on the Cornish.

It is inequitable and unlawful to treat the Cornish in a different manner to other analogous groups currently mentioned in the Report in a Framework Convention context. To this end, a number of Cornish activists are currently seeking judicial review of the government's decision with a view to preventing this document reaching the Council of Europe. It is vital that the Cornish are included within the FCPNM at this point. Should the Council of Europe accept the government's position, it will be another seven years before the Cornish can again challenge this unfair decision. Please express your support and solidarity with the Cornish national minority by urgently voicing your concerns to:

Mr Ian Naysmith, Race Equality Unit, Department for Communities and Local Government, 7th Floor Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU
Email: ian.naysmith@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Copies of complaints etc should be copied to Council of Europe:

Mr Antti KORKEAKIVI, Executive Secretary, Council of Europe, Directorate General of Human Rights - DG II, Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and of the DH-MIN

F - 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel +33 (0) 3 90 21 44 33
Fax +33 (0) 3 90 21 49 18
antti.korkeakivi@coe.int

Further information on the recent application to the High Court, mentioned earlier, can be found at:

<http://cornishstannaryparliament.co.uk>

We trust the other Celtic Nations and their people can help us here in Kernow by giving this as much publicity as possible.

Dr Nigel Hicks

The 2nd UK Draft Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities Compliance Report

The UK's belated Report, received by Cornish NGOs on 13 December 2006, produced to comply with a Council of Europe treaty obligation, was finally submitted for public consultation in draft form, nearly three years late. Consultees were given only 5 weeks to complete their criticisms by the deadline of 20 January 2007 and it is felt that this 5 week opportunity was deliberately made to coincide with the busy Christmas/New Year holiday period in which the main contributors of criticisms would have been otherwise occupied at this time of year.

Once again, the only group to be specifically excluded by the government from the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCPNM) is the Cornish on the grounds that this group has not solved the government's Race Relations Act "formula" by not having set a successful precedent to a case of discrimination brought under this Act.

Whereas, the Cornish are obliged to submit their ethnic/national credentials for judicial scrutiny in the courts, other groups mentioned in the Draft Report have not been subject to

Celtica

THE PIRATE QUEEN A REVIEW

On April 29th, we completed our viewing of a trilogy of works relating to Irish history, language and culture by viewing "The Pirate Queen" at the Hilton Theatre. The trilogy began with Brian Friel's "Translations" which was thoroughly enjoyable and featured an unexpected treat. At the end of the play, audience interaction was encouraged with such notables as Nuala O'Faolain and Dr. Seamus Blake. We then viewed Ken Loach's compelling film "The Wind That Shakes The Barley" which was capably reviewed in the last CLAB newsletter and then hoped for a gratifying end to our Fenian cycle with "The Pirate Queen".

We were apprehensive due to the utterly awful reviews the musical had received in the major press. The New York Times review stated that it only contained knee jerk appeal to nationalism and feminism. Of course for both of us that content isn't much of a problem.

On the Broadway show level the musical is a disappointment. Using the benchmark of do you leave the theatre humming a show stopping signature tune (such as "Who Will Join in Our Crusade" from Les Miserable) the answer is sadly no you don't. The show is Riverdance with a dramatic plot about English oppression of the Irish. This fact alone is enough to leave in the trendy Left Anglophiles at the Old Gray Lady writhing in agony.

The greatest challenge faced was getting composer Claude-Michel Schonberg to join the musical. For The Celtic League this man is a wonderful attribute to the Celtic world. He is a Hungarian Jew who grew up in Brittany and was very familiar with Celtic music. There are echoes of "Miss Saigon" but there are also moments when Pirate Queen is massively Irish in its sounds. The fiddles and step dancing are woven into the score representing Ireland as a country. There is one scene in the Second Act that is my favourite and sets the scene for over 400 years of agony. The scene is called "Surrender" which depicts the chieftains taking the Queen's schilling. Eerily similar to what has happened in the north of Ireland recently.

The character of Grainne does not develop fully until the second act and the first act is

cluttered with a too rapid development of her early life. Elizabeth I is a caricature more than a character that plays off of Grainne's championing of her people's cause. The show stealer is the character of Richard Bingham, Lord Governor of Ireland. He is undoubtedly the best English villain since Tim Roth's Archibald in "Rob Roy".

On the historical and cultural level the play

is homage to a strong leader from Irish history and makes use of the Irish language, portrays customs based on Brehon law and sensitively treats the systematic destruction of feudal Irish society by the Elizabethan regime. Bringing these topics to the Broadway stage is a significant feat.

The strong female character of Grainne as an intelligent, independent and charismatic figure is in stark contrast to the Stepford entertainment of venues such as "Celtic Woman".

The show should be enjoyed and supported by the Irish community at large. Audience appeal makes a successful show not the critics. See while visiting New York City or catch when it comes near you on a road show.

Le Tomás agus Mairéad Magrath



The Pirate Queen Cast – left to right
Stephanie J. Block (Grianna), Hadley Fraser (Tiernan) and Linda Balgord (Queen Elizabeth)

CONGAN

A CELTIC SAINT OF THE ISLES
THE HIGHLANDS & ABERDEENSHIRE
IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

BY HAROLD WALLACE GARNER

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Deeds should match State pledges for Irish

Pledges regarding the provision of state services through the medium of Irish are not always matched by deeds, according to the 2006 annual report of An Coimisinéir Teanga, which was launched in March 2007.

The report shows that the number of complaints made to the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga has increased significantly in the past year, up 47% on the previous year.

This reflects an increase in public awareness of linguistic rights, rather than a decrease in services provided through Irish, according to Seán Ó Cuirreáin, An Coimisinéir Teanga.

However, a number of selected cases highlighted in the report show a wide disparity between the perceived state support for the language and what is actually provided.

- One such case involves the refusal of local authorities to allow members of the public to use addresses in Irish in the new register of electors. An Coimisinéir Teanga has suggested that such a practice undermines the concept of recognising addresses in Irish, or the use of bilingual placenames, signage or road signs. It would also ensure that the English version of addresses would be given further currency by their use in election literature, polling cards and for other official purposes, he argued.
- The report also casts doubt on the validity of specific pieces of legislation in relation to natural heritage protection in certain Gaeltacht areas. Since March 2005, the English version of official Gaeltacht placenames no longer have any force or effect in Acts of the Oireachtas or in statutory instruments. It appears, however, that English placenames were used after this date in statutory instruments which dealt with natural heritage protection in certain Gaeltacht areas and consequently appear to be invalid.

- Another case highlighted in the report involved a significant delay in the publication of an Irish version of child protection guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Science to all post primary schools.
- The report also highlights the fact that bonus marks are not being granted to pupils who provide their work through Irish in sections of the state examination system. These sections include projects and research work. This puts pressure on all-Irish schools to allow their pupils undertake these assignments through English, as many of the sources of information are available in that language only.



Seán Ó Cuirreáin, An Coimisinéir Teanga

The Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga dealt with 611 new complaints in total from members of the public during 2006, an increase of 47% from the previous year. Almost a third of these came from Gaeltacht areas (30%), while a further third came from Dublin (38%). Not all of the complaints, however, were in relation to specific breaches of the Official Languages Act and many were of a more general nature concerning interactions through Irish with state organisations at this introductory stage of the language legislation.

Membership and Subscriptions

All those who agree with the constitution and aims of the Celtic League are eligible for membership. The membership/subscription rates (including *Carn*) are: €23.00, Sterling £13.50, Europe (airmail) £17.00, Outside Europe £20.00. US\$30.00 (US funds, cheques drawn on a US bank).

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Articles for *Carn* should be e-mailed to the Editor. Appropriate photographs should be sent with them.

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