

BAS IN ERIN

A ROADMAP FOR THE UNITY OF IRELAND

LIAM PADRAIC MARTIN (guillermo_patricio_martin@hotmail.com)

FOREWORD

As a member of the Irish Diaspora I celebrate that the tragic 'troubles' in Northern Ireland seem to be over and that a new era of peace and prosperity can be attained.

However as a member of the Irish Diaspora I also wish that this new era realizes the dream of most Irishmen and Irishwomen: that Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland can be reunited again and constitute a Nation that can be shown as an example of how from virtual war between communities a democratic state committed to protect the human rights of its citizens and the equitable distribution of its wealth, can emerge.

This is clearly the message for the Irish Diaspora but not only for them. It is also addressed to other people of good will who can embrace this message that strongly recommends the substitution of violence by creativity to attain objectives which even being difficult can certainly be achieved when sectarian interests are set aside.

The Irish Diaspora has to be stirred so that it abandons its present dormant position. It has to acquire its own identity and has to establish links between its different members overcoming territorial, language and even cultural differences. The adoption of the roadmap for the unity of Ireland which constitutes the main objective of this work should be the starting point of such 'waking up' process

But then it will have to 'agitate' the rest of their communities so that all men and women of good will share such aims.

With the help of God I suspect all this can be achieved.

INTRODUCTION:

The moral justification for the aspirations set out in the foreword of this book is the systematic violation of human rights suffered by the Irish men and women for many centuries and the lack of guarantees that such discrimination will not happen in the future if the present situation is not reversed.

The Irish Diaspora needs no other proof of such violations and discrimination because it owes its existence to same and the ensuing emigration of Irish people to escape their consequences.

This has to be clearly explained in the process of 'agitating' the people of good will particularly in this present XXI century which will probably go down in history as the century of vindication of human rights.

Why shall it be known in such way?

1.- Because the previous century has the most appalling record on violation of human rights not only on individual cases –such as police brutality or other excesses done by governments or group of individuals –but massive discrimination and suppression of human rights by reason of ideology, race, religion etc.

This does not imply that in other centuries there were no other similar deprivation of human rights. The permanent deprivation of human rights suffered by Irish men and women for many centuries is one of the most remarkable cases of systematic discrimination as will be evidenced in this book.

Particularly during the 19th. Century, the Irish people were discriminated by the English occupiers to the extent of what I would define as the first of the modern holocausts. Indeed in mid 19th. century the great famine –be it by deliberate action or omission to act- led to the assassination of around one million Irishmen (men, women and children) by starvation and the forced exile of around another million to escape suffering the same fate

The last century however outperformed all previous centuries in cruelty taking into account the frequency and extent of the massive disregard of human rights of many populations. When referring to this disregard what immediately comes to our mind are the Nazi and communist regimes and their paradigmatic leaders Hitler and Stalin. The records of mankind never showed, and hopefully will never show again, the crimes committed against the Jews and on dissidents, opposing ethnic groups etc. carried out by the aforementioned regimes. Although there are sectarian groups that will deny the existence of such utter disregard of human rights under those political systems, the immense majority of the population need no proof of such atrocities and thus I will not advance any.

Again these hideous deeds were not the only ones during the XX century. At the beginning of that century there was the Armenian holocaust by the Turkish government of the time: In mid century other dictators like Mussolini in Italy, Franco in Spain and Zalazar in Portugal also deprived their opponents of the basic human rights.

And even in the second half of last century again we are faced with similar regimes in Europe (Yugoslavia), Asia (Afghanistan, Iraq etc.) and Latin America (Cuba, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay etc.)

2.- Because particularly in the latter part of last century and the beginning of the present century violation of human rights on massive scale do not remain unchallenged.

Probably the first attempt to punish human rights violators are the Nuremberg Courts which punished the Nazi criminals.

Human rights movements have now mushroomed and are a driving force in many communities. These movements are not satisfied in punishing the offenders after the crimes have been carried out, but also involve themselves in persuading governments to prevent –even by the use of force if necessary – continuous violations of such rights.

But even without resort to such extreme measures, the international community at large, and international organizations such as NGO's, and personalities like politicians, scholars, artists etc. have played an important albeit peaceful role in the downfall of communism, Latin American dictatorships and similar regimes and will continue to be the 'vigilant eye' in order to protect human rights in the future.

It is in this context that people of good will all over the world will sympathize with the Irish Diaspora message as outlined in this book.

As I said before, this book will prove the discrimination suffered by the Irish population throughout its history constituting one of the most remarkable cases of blatant disregard of human rights unparalleled in the history of mankind if we consider the length of time such discrimination has been pursued.

In order to put the ordeal in its proper perspective I will refer in Chapter One to the concept of human rights and why Governments and individuals are morally obliged to respect them in others.

Chapter Two will deal with the legal protection of human rights and the sanctions to be imposed on those Governments, Institutions and individuals that infringe them.

Chapter Three will analyze who is entitled to protection and whether the issue of human rights violations refer only to present deprivation of them or should also be applied retroactively

Chapter Four will compare three landmarks of such discrimination: the Jewish, Armenian and Irish holocausts, their similarities and differences.

In Chapter Five I will concentrate in the Irish holocaust, the lack of moral justification of the Irish colonization by the English occupiers and the moral responsibility that befalls on those who colonize only for their own advantage.

Finally in Chapter Six I intend to focus on the moral and legal redress that Ireland as such, and its people –including those that constitute the Irish Diaspora- are entitled to

seek and, under this framework, justify the drafting of a roadmap leading to the unity of Ireland.

The Epilogue is dedicated to the Irish Diaspora under the heading of 'bás in Ireland'. For them this book is not just a book to read but hopefully to make them the spearhead that draft entirely and carry out the steps of the road map aforementioned.

Chapter One. The concept of human rights and the moral obligation to accept them.

It is not my intention to indulge in a philosophical dispute about the nature of human rights, a dispute that has already been carried out by distinguished scholars, both with philosophical and legal education.

My intent is more modest: I will visualize human rights from the standpoint of common sense which is a precious guideline particularly on moral issues. It will become evident from the following chapters that the English occupier of Ireland whilst accepting and applying human rights to its own population did not proceed in a similar manner with the Irish population.

When dealing with human rights the first to come to our mind is the protection of life and physical integrity of every human being. In order to ensure that this is achieved common sense will recommend public policies that ensure legal and physical protection, the right of self defence and possibly some more contentious measures such as incentives to increase birth rates, proper education, adequate health protection, and means of living compatible with the country's resources and individual expectations etc.

Even the less controversial aspects are open to discussion: Does life protection extend to unborn and undesired babies or terminal illnesses? What are the limits to self defence? Should there be birth control in countries where the population is increasing rapidly and economic conditions are very poor?

Sometimes these controversial aspects are used ideologically to blur the fact that by and large common sense as experienced by the vast majority of the world's population will reaffirm the right to exist and will not tolerate unjustified restrictions of same.

The same applies to all categories of freedom: freedom of opinion, of expression, either oral or written, of association, of belief and the practice of religions, of movements either inside a territory or the right to migrate etc.

Again there are clear limitations of such rights: As has been appropriately stated nobody has the right to cry 'fire' amidst a crowded theatre. Similarly freedom of association cannot be argued to belong to a criminal band or freedom of religion to justify fanatical sacrifices.

Such limitations do not justify dictatorships to negate such freedoms or severe curtailments of same and again the common sense of the vast majority of the world's population will not tolerate such measures.

The issue of property rights is even more controversial. Communism for one denied private property of means of production and the Roman Catholic Church has exposed that ownership has to be exercised bearing in mind the doctrine of the 'social function' of property rights.

These limitations on the extent of ownership have convinced us that the extension given to same under Roman Law (i. e. the right to use and abuse of private property) can no longer be sustained.

However all present modern states recognize private ownership not only of personal effects, but also of houses, factories, land etc. intellectual property etc. albeit with increasing limitations (tax burdens mainly) and this is a consequence again of the influence that the common sense of the majority of the world's population exerts on Governments..

It is not debatable either that every individual has a human right to equal opportunities in the access to education, jobs, justice etc. What can be debated is the extent of such equal opportunities i.e. should members of underprivileged classes be entitled to social welfare programmes only because they are members of such classes? Rights taken for granted in first world countries (such as unemployment benefits) do not exist in third world countries or are clearly insufficient to cover basic needs of vast numbers of their population.

As I said at the beginning of this chapter it is not my intent to debate on the nature of human rights. My aim has been to set out in the clearest way that nowadays public policies have to respect human rights and that the public at large will not tolerate clear violations of same.

One last observation has to be made and that is that human rights do not belong to any political group and should not be 'monopolized' by any such party or ideology because if we allow this to happen when that political group, ideology etc. falls (as it usually happens) human rights are consequently repudiated and we are to make sure that this will not be so.

The second part of this chapter is to illustrate the point that the Governments and individuals are morally obliged to promote (or at least tolerate) the enjoyment of human rights by their populations.

From a pragmatic point of view that Governments should respect human rights of their people can easily be explained on utilitarian grounds as otherwise such governments would not be re-elected.

Political philosophy has raised the issue as to whether a majority should allow minorities to enjoy similar human rights as the majority, particularly when it is a structural majority

If one wants to assert that there should be equal respect for the human rights of majorities and minorities, in my opinion, one should adopt one of the following viewpoints:

The Kantian concept of dignity of the human being which prevents a person from being manipulated so as to sacrifice him for the attainment of other finalities that the State might wish to secure. I doubt that anybody will object to the concept of the dignity of all human beings at this stage of civilization. But I do realize there has been some impugnation as to the consequences of such principle. Is it morally objectionable that an individual on his free will decides to sacrifice his life for his country at war?

b) The admission of Natural Law and natural rights. There is little doubt that these concepts are highly controversial and indeed several distinguished scholars have disagreed with same. However I have since long ago adhered to such admission because I feel that even if there are very good rational arguments to justify both the existence as well as the negation of Natural Law and natural rights, there is one important point that –at least in my opinion- tips the balance in favour of such admission. Indeed the concept of justice that natural law advocates can not only be justified rationally but it also is justified from an emotional point of view. A blatant case of injustice like Socrates sentence of death or the degradation of Dreyfus in France have an emotional appeal on the vast majority of the population and no matter the arguments used to perpetrate such injustices they will be rejected vigorously by such majority. Again common sense comes in our support.

Thus, practically and theoretically we are all obliged to respect human rights of other people to the same extent and with all the same consequences that we demand that others respect our own human rights and this is the best moral justification of the protection of human rights for all.

Chapter Two.- Legal protection of human rights and sanctions on transgressors

Having explained in the preceding chapter the moral obligation to promote (or at least tolerate) the free enjoyment of human rights by all the community, it is understandable that they be protected through enforcement by the State.

Naturally dictatorships will not enforce protection of human rights particularly of those individuals, organizations etc. that oppose such systems or when forced by international pressure to enact such protection in practice will ignore same.

But also under governments considered democratic there are more subtle ways of violations of human rights such as police brutality, invasions on privacy of individuals, restrictions imposed that limit freedom of the press, restrictions to leave or re-enter the country, confiscations etc.

Sometimes blatant violations of human rights did not mean that the offending Government loses its status of democratic. Such is the case of the 'Penal Laws' enacted by King William of England and addressed to Irish Catholics by what was regarded at the time as the most advanced democracy of the world.- According to such laws: 'Irish Catholics could not sit in parliament or vote in parliamentary elections, they were excluded from the bar, the bench, the University, the Navy and all public bodies; they were forbidden to possess arms or a horse worth more than five pounds. No Catholic could keep a school or send the children to be educated abroad. The ownership of land was the subject of a whole complex branch of the penal code as a result of which almost all the remaining land still owned by Catholics passed into protestant hands. Division was fostered in Irish families by laws conferring extraordinary privileges on any member of such family who became a protestant. For example the eldest son, by becoming a protestant, could deprive his Catholic father of the management and disposal of his property. Catholic bishops and other high ecclesiastics were banished from the country and were liable to be hanged drawn and quartered if they returned. A certain number of registered priests were tolerated and unregistered priests were liable to the same penalties as bishops' (Maire and Conor Cruise O'Brien: A Concise history of Ireland.- Thames and Hudson 1980 page 77)

Perplexing as it may seem, sometimes legal protection of human rights is assured indirectly. Laws such as the penal laws which clearly discriminate against Irish Catholics become ineffective after some time. According to the authors cited above: 'The very fact that the criterion was one of religious confession and -therefore of voluntary application- made it impossible for the ruling caste to attain that implacable rigidity, due to a certainty of natural superiority', which is the heritage of the born racist' and 'racist doctrines- including the doctrine of the natural inferiority of the 'Celt' -did not become influential in Europe until a much later period, they may have been in part a substitute for a religious fanaticism. Had the chronology of conquest been different, a penal code based not on religion but on a theory of preserving the purity of the 'Anglo-Saxon race' from the 'Celtic' contagion, might perhaps have produced a more enduring conquest. As it was, the application of the penal code was capricious, sometimes ferocious. often mean, but often half hearted. With the spread of Enlightenment principles, and the growing incredibility of a Jacobite threat, the whole

system became increasingly distasteful to educated Protestants, who often helped Catholics to evade the operation of the laws. The moral position of the mass of Catholics, refusing the material benefits open to them if they conformed, impressed some Protestants: Froude refers to the 'steady courage and unremitting zeal' with which the Catholics maintained and multiplied the numbers of their priests, despite the penal laws (op cit page 79)

The 21 st century will certainly not tolerate doctrines that uphold racism be it by preaching the superiority of a race (Arian, Anglo Saxon etc.) or the inferiority of race, religion, colour of the skin etc.

New forms of discrimination have emerged. Indeed terrorism -such as in the case of religious fanatics- deprive the human rights of their victims and there can be no arguments, religious, moral or otherwise, that can justify such deprivation particularly when innocent civilian victims are involved.

The present century has already seen much of this activity and there is no indication that it will cease or diminish in the immediate future. The world has reacted against such surge of violence although the response has not been duly coordinated, in many cases it is ineffective and in other counterproductive. However the need to respond to such threat in an effective and appropriate way cannot be negated.

But terrorism nurtures itself on many other ingredients in addition to religious fanaticism. Structural poverty, the lack of a decent future for large groups, hatred and the spirit of revenge for past sufferings should also be tackled in response to the terrorist threat.

So it seems that violation of human rights is part of the nature of humanity and although adopting different manifestations it will be difficult-if not impossible-to eradicate.

The last part of this chapter will focus on the sanctions to be imposed on violators of human rights so that they constitute effective deterrents for future violations.

In this regard the first aspect to be highlighted is that the penalties should be of such entity that it effectively discourages other potential violators of human rights.

The recent execution of Saddam Hussein can illustrate what I stated above. I will certainly not be so naive as to think that his sole execution will act as an effective deterrent and that, consequently, there will be no more Saddam Husseins in the future. Leaving aside the way he was executed (and there has been some controversy on the matter) had he not been executed would probably have been interpreted as signal that, after all, some can escape punishment and an enticement to others to do the same that Saddam did.

Punishment should not only be restricted to the masterminds that are behind the violations. It should also be applied to those who carry out orders that lead to gross violations. This is aimed to have those entrusted with such executions to challenge the orders or to disobey their execution by fear that they will be penalized later on. Due obedience with the superior's instructions should not be allowed to be invoked to reduce the responsibility of all those involved in such violations.

And punishment should not also be limited to personal punishment. Usually violations of human rights are coupled with other crimes such as illegal appropriation of property of the victims. This is also to be confiscated from the transgressors and returned to their legal owners or to their heirs.

As I said above violation of human rights seems part of a second nature of humanity or at least of many members of the human race.

So an effective attack against such attitude should cover the following tentative agenda of human rights

Compulsory education of human rights from primary (or elementary) school onwards.

Public recognition and financial support for organizations and individuals who campaign for the defence of human rights

Mobilization of public opinion to ensure approval of international treaties that protect human rights and the enactment of internal legislation that contemplates severe punishment to transgressors of human rights

To avoid legal loopholes the declaration of inapplicability of the statute of limitations and the incrimination of violators of human rights wherever they are discovered including processes under foreign courts (extraterritoriality of penal laws for crimes as genocide etc.)

Reparation of economic difficulties that normally the victim and his relatives suffer as a consequence of infringement of his human rights applicable to the offender and, in subsidy, to the State.

Chapter Three. Who is entitled to protection

It is undisputable that the essential duty of a state- any state- is to ensure legal protection of human rights of all the inhabitants of such state and as we have seen in the preceding chapter for this purpose the state has to enact legislation protecting such rights and ensuring an effective system of sanctions to be imposed upon transgressors.

If a particular state does not grant such effective protection already steps have been taken to assure victims access to international courts or to foreign courts and with the support of international public opinion much more in this regard will be seen in the future.

Because in too many cases violations of human rights are decided by governments of individual states usually against minorities either of a structural character (racial, religious, sexual etc.) or circumstantial (belonging to a minority political party etc.) One would assume that when the discrimination is based on circumstances the majority would not violate their opponent's human rights for fear of reprisals when the present minority becomes the majority and this is possibly why discrimination in these cases is usually low key .

The serious cases are when the minority is of a structural character. We have recently known about the intents of a racial cleansing in the former Yugoslavia. The objective was to assure the supremacy of the Serbs against Croats, Muslims and others. In trying to achieve such aim thousands of people were killed, women raped, property confiscated or destroyed, suspects imprisoned without a fair trial etc.

Why was this allowed to happen? Public opinion within the country is usually brainwashed and the enlightened opponents suppressed. So the majority of the population either ignores what is going on or is persuaded that the actions taken are justified in the light of the prevailing circumstances.

And public opinion elsewhere is not usually timely advised of the nature and extent of those violations. Sometimes, but not always effectively, international organizations react . However such reaction is unfortunately in most cases too little and too late. So that effective protection of human rights of the minorities are not really protected. At most there is a search for the transgressors which if and when caught are subject to trial.

So when there has been no effective protection of human rights is there an entitlement for their heirs to claim some compensation? And this leads us to the second part of this chapter namely if compensation can be claimed by heirs and survivors retroactively i.e. not for immediate violations of human rights but also for crimes committed before.

Obviously common sense precludes an individual to claim economic redress for violation of human rights suffered by his remote ancestors as otherwise there would be no legal certainty. If as said previously economic redress should be imposed primarily on the transgressor, as in these cases the transgressors will long be dead, then his remote heirs and successors would be held accountable for such past crimes and this would not always be fair

The opposite is also against common sense. Indeed to limit entitlement to a fair compensation to contemporaneous violations is equally unfair, because when the violation has been carried out, usually with the support of a particular government, the claim for appropriate compensation can only be filed when the government is replaced by another government which will guarantee indemnity to claimants and the likelihood of a fair trial is in place.

So entitlement to seek adequate redress should be generously granted if one seriously wants that human rights be respected in this present century.

One related issue is the extent of the compensation to be asked for.

Sometimes such extent can be easily ascertained. As e.g. in cases of seizure of property, the victims or his heirs and successors are entitled to the restitution of the property seized (or its equivalent in monetary terms if the property has subsequently been destroyed) plus interests for lack of use of same. The issue becomes more complex when dealing with moral suffering. What should be the extent of the compensation for the kidnapping of a relative, or forcing a person into exile leaving behind family and friends, the use of his property and his way of living having to start again probably in adverse conditions with no money, no connections in a foreign country with a different culture such as was the fate of the Irish exiles after the famine in the 1850's and even later.

Again I would propose that a generous approach is taken in these cases. This will help mitigate moral sufferings but will also send a clear signal that violations of human rights are not to be condoned anymore

And although as I said hereinabove, one should go for the violators own patrimony when the violator is acting on behalf of a government, the responsibility of the state cannot and should not be ignored.

When the state is obliged to pay, this usually means that there will be an increase in taxation and this will impact on the pockets of the population of the country involved.

This could seem unreasonable to some who might refer me back to when I said that the internal public opinion usually has been effectively brainwashed and ignores what is happening.

But even so, the internal public opinion has to adopt an active role particularly when there are clear indications that substantial violations are being carried out against certain minorities within their own territory and making them pay for the detriment suffered by the victims of such violations can also contribute making the 21 st century the century of human rights.

Chapter Four: Landmarks of massive violations of human rights.

To conclude this outlook on violation of human rights and before concentrating on the Irish case, as aforesaid the most remarkable example of permanent discrimination and blatant disregard of human rights still unparalleled in the history of mankind, I will now proceed to compare it with the two other cases of massive violations of human rights: i.e. the Jewish and the Armenian cases.

There are of course many other cases of massive violations of human rights even carried out in recent years and the former Soviet Union under Stalin is a good example of another such case.

So why limit the comparison to the three aforementioned cases?

Because this book does not intend to analyze all massive violations as this would mean extending its scope. However such study should be carried out as there can always be lessons to be learnt from such comparison. For the purposes set out for this book we can gain, I hope, sufficient insight limiting our comparison to the three case study.

Let us begin with the common traits between the selected cases:

- a) It is now generally admitted that in all such cases there were massive violations of the most elemental human right that each individual enjoys for the simple reason of being a human person which is life itself. Indeed over a million people died in Ireland in mid 19th. Century, in the early 1900 Century more than a million Armenians were massacred by the Turkish Government and in mid 20th. Century probably some five million Jews were killed in the gas chambers in Germany. It is obvious that this fundamental human right was not the only one to be violated as physical integrity, property etc. were also taken away from the victims and to many others who were lucky enough to escape death. Massive violation of course should not be construed as having a threshold of a million people. Massive violation means the discrimination of human rights of a indefinite number of victims as can be seen in b) hereunder.
- b) In the three cases a mix of religious and racial reasons were invoked to justify the massive murder of a substantial number of members of the communities discriminated against. There probably were other reasons which were not stated but can be inferred (i.e. the unlawful takeover of the property of the victims) although were never proclaimed so as not to tarnish the 'morality' of the dogmas that justified such assassinations (the superiority of the Arian or Anglo Saxon races and the inferiority of the Jews, the Celts etc.)
- c) In all three cases the responsibility of the crimes lies flatly on the ruling authorities with the active support of some intellectuals and the passive accompaniment of substantial sectors of the majorities.
- d) In all cases- albeit in a different measure- all the blame was laid on the victims(laziness and sheer ignorance of the Irish, greediness of the Jews etc.) which constituted a threat against the establishment.

Possibly one could try to find other issues -common in all three cases- that could enrich the comparison and the lessons that can be derived from same. But for our purposes it is more useful to compare the differences between the cases:

- a) The Irish were discriminated although they were the majority of the population in their home country, whilst both the Armenians and Jews were minorities in Turkey and Germany. The reason that the Irish could be effectively discriminated in their own land can only be explained by the fact that Ireland had been militarily dominated by the English and was in fact a colony of the Empire.
- b) The way the human rights were violated was also different in the Irish case. Indeed both Armenians and Jews were massacred over a (relatively) short period of time (less than a decade in both cases) and by positive action physical assault, gas chambers etc.) In Ireland the highlight of such discrimination (the Great Famine) although also carried out during a short period of time during which the potato crops failed to feed the people the crime was done by omission or failure to act under the circumstances. This led to the starvation of around a million people, the forced exile of another million to avoid such ominous fate plus the death of many others whilst travelling abroad (There are records that such deaths happened although naturally the exact number went unrecorded) The English authorities could have adopted simple measures to prevent the famine or to reduce the death toll once the famine started such as promoting or at least allowing import of food into the country but they did not do so. Such fatal inaction has been tried to be justified on the basis of the economic teachings of the time that advised on the inflexibility of economic rules and advised against the interference by the authorities against the consequences of such rules. Really the purpose of the inaction was to decimate the Irish population to such minimum levels compatible with ensuring cheap labour and avoiding further uprisings. But let us not forget that this was only the peak of such discrimination because as is the theme of this book such discrimination began long before the Great Famine and lasts until today.
- c) The aftermath of these holocausts has also been different:
 - i) The German authorities that were appointed after the World war was over, stood behind the Nuremberg courts. Publicly apologized in every possible occasion for the crimes carried out against the Jews and other minorities and paid compensation to the victims and their relatives.
 - ii) The Armenian holocaust aftermath is still a matter of dispute. The present Turkish authorities refuse to admit that such holocaust existed. Thanks primarily to the efforts of the Armenian Diaspora that many countries have condemned the atrocities carried out against the Armenian population and have enacted laws and regulations to honour those who died at that time.
 - iii) Probably because England's propaganda was and still is one of the most effective in the world, the Irish holocaust is virtually not even mentioned and in most instances simply ignored. There has been no real punishment imposed upon the culprits (indeed the opposite is true as in most cases the violators were actually promoted), no public apologies have been given and of course, no compensation ever handed to the victims or their relatives.

If the present century is going to be the century that sees the full respect of human rights the least that can be expected is clear signs of attrition from the Governments of the countries that have massively violated human rights heretofore, the establishment of commemoration dates and monuments to honour the victims and similar measures

sending clear signals that violators will sooner or later be held accountable for their misdeeds and victims will be remembered.

In the case of the Irish holocaust there is still one perplexing anomaly, in my opinion, in relation with its aftermath.

As said above, the Irish ordeal began many centuries ago (around the mid twelfth century when one Dermot Mac Murrough seeked the support of the English King Henry II in his feud against Rory O'Connor and O'Connor's neighbour O'Rourke of Breffney) and lasts until today. It is true that the peak was the Great Famine I referred to previously. But the ordeal continued and during the early years of the 20th. Century the leaders of the Irish Easter Revolution of 1917 in the most merciless, brutal and despicable way.

Such crimes sent horror waves throughout the civilized world and paved the road to the independence of what is now known as the Republic of Ireland, but England manipulated in such a way as to obtain the partition of the island and so the six counties, which constitute Northern Ireland, remained a colony of England and systematic violations of human rights of the nationalist minority were carried out during the last century and continue to date in a less provocative manner.

The perplexing anomaly of the Irish aftermath refers on the one hand to the attitude taken by part of the Irish population living in the Republic of Ireland which seem detached about violations of human rights of the nationalist minority in Northern Ireland.

In John McGahern novel: 'That they may face the rising sun' there is a very enlightening dialogue between a certain Jimmy Joe MacKiernan (head of the local Irish Republican Army and thus against English domination of Northern Ireland) and one Joe Rutledge who reflects properly the attitude of detachment I was referring to hereinabove:

I will freely quote the dialogue so that my kind readers can follow the arguments displayed in the novel more easily but ensuring the spirit of same remains unchanged:

JJMacK: You do not seem to have any interest in our cause (the I.R.A.'s cause)

JR: No, I don't like violence

JJMacK: You don't believe in freedom, then?

JR: Our country is free

JJMacK: A part of it is not free

JR: That is a matter for the other part: I don't think it's any of our business.

JJMacK: I think differently. I believe it is all our business

(J. Mc Gahern: 'That they may face the rising sun' Paperview Ltd in association with the Irish Independent (2005) pages 285/286)

But also this perplexing anomaly can be seen from another point of view. In order to access this other viewpoint I will compare not he victims but the violators of the human rights in the holocausts referred above, that is what the English, German and Turkish had in common at the time same were carried out.

To begin with all such countries excelled in the arts (literature, music), in sciences, in their architecture etc. at least at the time the violations took place, and in some cases even before and after. However –on the negative side- all such countries had (again at the same time) a strong army and a tendency of their population to trust that what their army and their leaders were doing was fair and right and would never be challenged by others.

The main difference between the countries is that England had the reputation of being the champion of civil and political liberties as from the time of the Magna Charter onwards and that the English population enjoyed during many centuries a degree of freedom unheard of in continental Europe.

This is probably one of the reasons that explains the contribution England made to the cultural heritage of mankind.

Indeed with democratic institutions, a relative higher degree of tolerance within its boundaries as compared to continental Europe counterparts, all this led to a level of prosperity that allowed the emergence of reputed authors and scientists and welcomed Europeans unable to develop in more rigid frames

Even in its colonies abroad (with the notable exception of Ireland) England showed self restraint when facing military opposition

One can assume that this is logical when fighting against the U.S. during the Independence War. There was no racial nor significant religious differences so that their withdrawal from America was probably not a major concern. Against the Irish they fought against another race (Celts) and to a certain extent another religion (Catholics).

Still this does not explain why the English proceeded in a more civilized manner when withdrawing from places like India having certainly more differences with Indians than with Irish.

Indeed why such hatred? Why such zeal in the annihilation of a race that had hitherto produced, on a large scale, saints when the rest of Europe was still in a barbaric state and first class authors such as Swift, Joyce, Wilde and so many others.

Possibly English leaders (military and civilian alike) saw Ireland as the back yard of the Empire and could not (and possibly even nowadays cannot) accept the fact that Ireland becomes entirely a free and independent country. I feel that this more an emotional sentiment than a rational conclusion but still could be one of the reasons of such behaviour.

The other aspect of the perplexing anomaly I referred to above is that the English people at large seem much lesser emotionally driven on this issue. I even think that some feel some remorse over what Englishmen did in the past against the Irish and thus will not show too serious opposition if Northern Ireland was to integrate with the Republic of Ireland.

Chapter Five: Moral justification of colonization and ensuing responsibilities.

The usual justification for colonizing stems from the fact that the colonizer is more advanced culturally than the people to be colonized and so can improve the quality of life in the country to be colonized.

In the case of the Spanish colonization of Latin America the Spanish crown and the Spanish clergy considered that they had the obligation to convert the aborigines to the Christian faith and so ensure eternal bliss when they died.

In the case of the United States, the pilgrims left Britain to enjoy freedom in practicing their religion but in both cases and other similar colonization processes, generally there are advances in sanitary conditions, education, commerce, food and lodging of the native population and a certain degree of economic advancement .

Naturally colonization is possible when the military superiority of the colonizer exceeds that of the native population not only at the time of domination but also later on, as, usually, sooner or later the aborigines will rebel when they realize that colonization also implies confiscation of their property, restrictions to follow their cultural traditions, the spread of diseases amongst the natives etc.

Usually this confrontation lead to the decimation of the native population and the survivors are subject to severe restrictions such as being confined to small- and usually less productive- parts of their territory. Again it is only during the last years that the still remaining members of such native populations have raised their voices in places like America, New Zealand etc. demanding the return of their land and other measures based on the violation of their ancestors human rights and have had some degree of success and probably will have even more success in the future if they insist with their claims if the 21 st Century will mean, as I have stated repeatedly in previous paragraphs the age of human rights.

The colonization of Ireland was different. It is true that English politicians and historians have tried to justify such colonization on similar grounds that most other colonisations and have referred to the inferiority of the Irish race: The famous English politician Benjamin Disraeli –according to Thomas Cahill, and which I freely translate, stated:’ That (the Irish race) ideal of human happiness fluctuates between the tribal rivalries and the most blatant idolatry. It’s history is characterized by an uninterrupted circle of fanaticism and blood.’ (Cahill; Thomas: How the Irish saved civilization:_ Norma 1998 page 16) The same author quotes (and I again freely translate) the English historian Charles Kingsley justification of the English colonization on the grounds of the Irish race inferiority...’I am terrified with those human chimpanzees that I saw over one hundred miles of horrible land. I do not believe it is our fault. Not only do I believe that there are more of them now than before but also that they are happier and better, more comfortably nourished and lodged under our mandate that they ever were. But to see white chimpanzees is shocking. If they were black one would not feel it so

much, but their skins, except when tanned by the sun, is as white as ours (Cahill op. cit. page 17)

I am sure my kind readers will strongly reject such utterances which reflect the ugly face of racism and disagree that the English mandate that starved over a million people and sent another million into forced exile meant that the Irish 'were better...than they ever were before'

As Cahill demonstrated the opposite is true. As he states and once more I freely translate back into English: 'Wherever they went, the Irish took with them their books, many of which Europe had not see for several centuries .- And they took them tied to their waists as symbol of their victory, as in other times, heroes took in their waists the head of their enemies. Wherever they went they took their love for knowledge and their ability to produce books. In the bays and valleys that constituted their exile they re-established lecture and writing and gave new life to the exhausted European literary culture. This is how the Irish saved civilization '(Cahill op. cit. page 209)

Consequently colonization of Ireland has had no moral justification and can only be explained in terms of the greediness of the colonizers as the offensive attempt of historian Kingsley based on the Irish 'animalization' (human chimpanzees) has to be bluntly rejected with the same emphasis that his attempt to justify the ensuing political regime imposed upon the Irish by the English colonizer.

Edmund Burke reference to the consequences of the application of the penal code introduced by the English against Irish citizens seems to be a better and more accurate description of the English colonization effects:' (the penal Code) was a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance for the impoverishment and degradation of the people and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverse ingenuity of man (M & C Cruise O' Brien op.cit. page 78)

To prove the mismanagement of the English rule in Ireland, I will refer to Tim Pat Coogan ' In his novel 'Paddy's lament' the novelist Thomas Gallagher quotes statements from Gladstone and by The London Times prophesying the effects of the famine on the Irish Diaspora principally in America.- Gladstone wrote to his wife referring to 'that cloud in the west, the coming storm, the minister of God's retribution upon cruel and inveterate and but half atoned injustice.' The Times said:' We must gird our loins to encounter the nemesis of seven hundred centuries of misgovernment: To the end of time spread over the largest inhabitable area of the world and confronting us every where by sea and land, they will remember that their forefathers paid tithe to the protestant clergy, rent to absentee landlords and a forced obedience to the laws which these have made (Tim Pat Coogan: 'The Troubles' Arrow books.- 1996 page 12) and 'in all the famine years consigned some one million people to the grave, a further million to emigration and probably condemned a further million to a half-life of poverty and near starvation.- Previously there had been heavy emigration from Ireland, particularly after the Napoleonic wars when agricultural prices fell steeply.- But this swelling tide of human misery carried with it to America in particular, a lasting characteristic of anti-British feeling that forms part of the tradition of continuing support for physical force which, to a degree, continues to assist the IRA today' (T.P.Coogan op.cit. page 12)

This raises again the issue whether England was to blame for the famine. 'In Ireland- and above all among Americans of Irish origin, most of whom are descended from famine emigrants- popular tradition regard the famine as 'man-made' in the sense that England was glad to be rid of the Irish and did nothing, or very little, to check the ravages of the disaster. 'Thou shalt not kill but needst not strive officiously to keep alive'. Contemporary English opinion generally inclined to think of the disasters as one which had come on the Irish as a result of their own thriftless and improvident way of life. 'famine' as Spenser had written on an earlier occasion 'which themselves had wrought'(M & C Cruise O'Brien : op. cit. page 105)

Again Robert Kee gives us the contrast between the English and Irish view. The English view as depicted by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons in May 1849: 'I do not think any effort of this House would, in the present unfortunate state of Ireland, be capable of preventing the dreadful scenes of suffering and death that are now occurring in Ireland. I distinctly repeat that I do not believe it is in the power of this House to do so... I do not feel justified in asking the House for an additional advance of pounds 100.000 which at least would be necessary if the House should say there should be no possible cause of starvation in Ireland.

The Irish viewpoint differed according to the Dublin freeman's journal: ' We ask again, is it not possible to contrive some means of saving the people from the painful and lingering process of death from starvation? Do we live under a regular and responsible government? Is there justice or humanity in the world that such things could be in the middle of the nineteenth century and within twelve hours reach of the opulence, grandeur and power of a Court and capital the first upon the earth? (Kee, Robert: Ireland: a History Abacus.- 2000 page 101)

Robert Kee ends chapter 5.- Famine of his abovementioned book with three remarks I will quote beneath although altering the sequence they were formulated:

The first remark relates to the dreadful effects of starvation.-' In 1841, the population of Ireland had been of 8.175.124. Given a normal rate of increase it could have been expected by 1851 to have reached 9.088.799 but the census of 1851 gave the population of Ireland as 6.552.385. If the figure of about 1.500.000 who emigrated during the five years 1845-9 is added to the 1851 census total the result is just over eight million- or one million short of the anticipated population figure for that year: deaths from the famine years 1845-9 can therefore be estimated approximately at one million. Modern Irish historians whose objectivity is exemplary usually put the figure at around 800.000'.

The second remark addresses the issue that the deceased are anonymous martyrs : ' The names of only a few hundred are known. They are known from the inquests held from time to time on their emaciated bodies found in fields, by the side of country roads, in the middle of towns, or at their work places, where they had collapsed. But the vast majority of deaths went unrecorded.- There are few monuments to the dead. Irish nationalists would say their true monument is Irish freedom.

The last of Kee's remarks refers to the real impact that the famine had on the future of Ireland. 'Such (the queries asked in the Dublin freeman's journal quoted above) was the question the Irishmen were to continue to ask themselves for decades and it was the

inescapable answer to that question which, among other later influences was to lead them in the end towards an inescapable political conclusion: That Ireland should in the future, one way or another, run her own affairs: For nothing would ever be able to efface the memory of this monstrous thing that had happened in these years to Irish men, women and children in their own country, in the name of the British government in Ireland (R. Kee op cit page 101)

I certainly would like to comment on Kee's remarks before sharing M & C Cruise O'Brien's outcome on the controversy.

- a) Is it admissible, following Lord Russell's estimate of pounds 100.000 to end the starvation, that one million people were allowed to die valuing each life at the rate of 10 cents of a pound?
- b) Is it fair that one million people suffered the pangs of starvation before the release of actual death and that their bodies shoved into collective graves being thus unable to be honoured by their relatives?
- c) The famine gives full support to the claim of the Irish people for it's total independence and proves England is unfit to govern the Irish.

So who is right in the controversy about the famine?. As I said above subscribe to the view set forth by M & C Cruise O'Brien: 'Historians, both English and Irish, generally see the outbreak of famine as inevitable, but think that disaster on the scale which actually occurred could have been avoided by more determined governmental action. Some of them see the root cause of the failure to take such action as lying in the economic theory of the time: the doctrines of the Manchester School, forbidding state interference with the working of economic laws. This may be so, we cannot know whether the English government would have been equally faithful to the Manchester School had famine broke out in, say, Manchester. It is possible that they would: Governments and economists of the period were inclined to regard the sufferings of the poor, of whatever nationality, as part of the natural order of things. But it is also true that the English governments had never interested themselves energetically in the affairs of Ireland, except when these presented, or seemed to present, a threat to the security of England. The famine did not seem to present such a threat, rather it must have seemed to reduce a threat which had long existed, in the presence and growth of a population known to be animated by inveterate hostility towards England. Granted all this, the lack of urgency in the English's government approach to the problem has nothing mysterious about it. Some individual Englishmen, and groups of Englishmen and Irishmen –notably the Society of Friends- did all they could to mitigate the effects of the tragedy, but help on the great scale which alone would have sufficed to avert it , was not forthcoming (M.& C. Cruise O' Brien op. cit. page 106) '

Chapter Six: Redress to which Ireland is entitled.- The roadmap for Irish unity.

One of the characteristics of the English colonization of Ireland is that it was not limited to the occupation of the land, the exaction of wealth by virtue of confiscation, taxation etc. as is the case in the majority of colonial regimes.

Even in many other countries England occupied all over the world in order to constitute the most gigantic Empire the world has ever known, the native population was allowed to remain in their land and there was no systematic plan to introduce and 'settle' people with foreigners with a different religion and sometimes of a different race as was done with the so called 'plantations' in Ireland. In the former cases when the occupation ceased -whatever the cause of the cessation- the withdrawal of the English administration, officers and soldiers was carried out peacefully and the country carried out it's normal business with virtually no hindrance. This has been recently depicted in the withdrawal of the English from Hong Kong which culminated in the solemn lowering of the Union Jack.

In these cases past grievances are forgotten and reprisals and acts of revenge, if they happen, are generally limited both in scale and in time. This is so because the happiness the natives enjoy when their country becomes independent heals the wounds they suffered during the occupation.

As said in the preceding paragraphs England did not proceed in a similar fashion in the Irish case. It was decided that in order to ensure the continuous domination of Irish territory England should entice protestants from Scotland, Wales etc. to settle in Ireland. As M & C Cruise O'Brien state: 'The best answer from an English point of view, was to uproot the hostile native population and replace them with loyal protestants from England, Scotland and Wales, the method of 'settlements' recommended by Machiavelli in Chapter III of 'The Prince?.- Raleigh had tried and failed in Munster, Mary in the midlands.- The flight of the earls, however, cleared the way for a new plantation, this time, in much more propitious conditions. The estate of the earls were declared forfeit to the Crown, and an effort was made, which was partially successful, to have a large territory -most of Ulster- settled from England and Scotland. If this policy had been consistently and generally applied, England could have solved it's Irish problem, but in fact no policy was consistently applied over any long period, Ireland's affairs received only intermittent attention, perfunctory, except in times of real danger' (M & C Cruise O'Brien op. cit. page 61)

According to Kee: ' The real effective plantation of Ulster took place from a different source altogether. Through an originally small privately-organized protestant settlement of Scots that had begun on the Ards peninsula of Ulster's east coast a few years earlier. There Scotland lies only just across the water. For centuries before the reformation, Scots had been coming across this north channel and settling on this part of Ireland, usually becoming indistinguishable from the Gaelic Irish people among whom they settled. But just before the 1610 plantation- in 1606- a private settlement had been undertaken by two Scottish protestant adventurers named Montgomery and Hamilton after a deal with the local Gaelic chieftain.- The eastern protestant plantation of Ulster prospered rapidly and became the bridgehead by which, for the rest of the century and beyond, individual Scottish settlers flocked to Northern Ireland. They spread outward from there through the town of Belfast, over the whole area of Antrim and Down.- They

even spread right across Ulster to fill out the gaps left in the official plantations of the west. The geographical distribution of protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland today reveal clearly the two separate settlements of Ulster of over 300 years ago' (Kee: Robert Op. cit pages 41/2)

The object of this book is naturally not to analyze how and why the settlements occurred but if must focus on them it is because most of the grievances both communities still have derive from this fact. In M & C Cruise O'Brien' words: The conquest also created its own vested interests, not always coinciding with those of the dominant country. The 'undertakers' responsible for most of the Ulster plantation were supposed to have the natives completely removed from their lands; in practice they accepted Irish tenants, because it paid them better to do so. Ulster was to become, not a solidly protestant province, but a province with two populations: Catholics and protestants, mutually antagonistic, with religious animosity, overlying the bitterness of a dispute over land. The protestants of Ulster –and the much less protestants in the rest of Ireland- had, in a much more immediate and lively way. The same feelings of insecurity as Englishmen generally had about Ireland in critical moments, and they added their growing weight to the demand for strong measures (M & C Cruise O'Brien Op. cit. page 60)

Kee explains how these grievances amounted to hatred between the communities.' Thus gradually and overwhelmingly the English and Scottish settlements of Ulster was established. Ulster, once the most Gaelic and Catholic province of all, now had a mixed population of opposed interests and beliefs, often so closely entangled with each other that streets in the same town would be named 'Scotch quarter' and 'Irish quarter'. From the very start fear was in the minds of the new settlers quite apart from the feelings of those original inhabitants who, as labourers or tenants, were all about them. It was well known that there were some 5.000 former swordsmen of the two Gaelic Earls still lurking resentfully in the bogs and mists and on 23 September 1641 what protestants had long been dreading happened: there was a great rebellion of the Gaelic and Irish Catholics who, through loudly proclaiming their loyalty to the Crown, struck swiftly and fiercely for the return of their lands.

The rebellion was directed against the new settlements everywhere in Ireland but, because the Ulster settlements was the largest, it was there that the effect was most shattering. What made the effect so shattering were the atrocities, or most particularly. The reports of the atrocities, with which the rebellion's outbreak was accompanied. For instance, one of the many colourful banners carried by Orange lodges on the 12 July processions through Belfast to this day vividly depicts what happened on the bridge at Portadown a cold November day in 1641.

On that day- and there is contemporary evidence to substantiate the incident- a party of some 100 protestant men, women and children who had been seized from their homes, robbed and stripped of most of their clothes, were herded together onto the bridge. They were then thrown or driven over the parapet into the water below were they drowned or if they could swim, were shot or knocked on the head as they came to the shore. Some of the Irish even took to the boats and bashed them with oars as they floundered in the waters. There was said to be a ghastly figure which arose from the waters for months afterwards. A woman, naked to the waist, very white, her hair dishevelled, her eyes, it was said, seeming to twinkle in her head as she cried 'revenge'! 'revenge'! (Kee Robert: Op.cit. page 42)

And indeed revenge she got. According to M and C Cruise O'Brien: 'Cromwell, like most other Englishmen and all puritans, had been deeply shocked by what he heard of atrocities against protestants in the rebellion of 1641... Cromwell and his comrades therefore fell fully justified in treating the Irish rebels with the greatest ruthlessness, and such ruthlessness could also meet a political need: to clear out the rebels and put English ex soldiers in their stead would serve the double purpose of settling Ireland and of removing a potential source of turbulence from England' (M & C Cruise O'Brien Op. Cit. page 68)

Another author, Richard English concurs: 'Whether they were thoroughly hostile to English rule or keen on royal reconciliation the rebels were perceived by Cromwell in a fully negative light. Parliament had won the day in the civil war and Irish Catholic affection for Crown authority was hardly likely to win friends in post-monarchical England. Cromwell was determined to avenge the slaughter of protestants which had taken place in the early part of the decade. He also wished to restore English order to unruly Ireland, and to stamp on the head of any Irish remnants of royalism. In September 1649 the violence began, carried out by a tough military machine. Drogheda was attacked and, following its refusal to surrender, the garrison was killed by Cromwell's forces. A similarly atrocious procedure occurred in October at Wexford. Military suppression succeeded in bringing about the defeat of the Irish. Cromwell himself, departed from Ireland in 1650. Henry Ireton then acted as enforcer, followed, after his death, by Charles Fleetwood. Between these two, English military command was effectively exercised by Edmund Ludlow and this succession of figures- Cromwell, Ireton, Ludlow, Fleetwood-oversaw the defeat of the Irish resistance' (English, Richard: History of Ireland.- Gill and Mac Millan 1991 page 65)

These rather extensive quotations prove, I think without even a shadow of doubt, that the violation of human rights in Ireland affected both communities, although in a very different scale.

This implies that redress from past grievances should be recognized in both cases and only the measure of redress should be proportionate to the extent of the damage suffered. Indeed if we concluded otherwise I feel we could be accused of being biased in favour of one of the parties.

So to pursue the issue of redress further I think it is advisable to distinguish the case of the Southern and Northern Ireland. Obviously this would not have been necessary had England not imposed partition of the island confirmed by the ensuing treaty which was ratified by the Irish authorities albeit under duress.

As T.P. Coogan appropriately states: 'If he (Michael Collins) did not seize the opportunity of setting up an imperfect twenty six county state, the British might not withdraw from the South either. There was precedent for such missed opportunities for Ireland in Parnell's career and what had happened to home rule... Collins did not regard the treaty as a perfect solution but as a 'stepping stone' as he put it to full and final freedom (T.P.Coogan op. cit. page 25)

Let us begin by Southern Ireland and concentrate on the protestant community living there

It is obvious that before partition the community felt insecure and sometimes suffered in the hands of their Catholic counterparts when these rebelled against the authorities but this was generally short-lived and the damage suffered small.

One could assume that as has happened in many parts of the world, when the South of Ireland became independent, there would have been a hunt for protestants considered to be collaborators which might then have been assassinated, their properties seized etc.

Nothing like this happened.- If there were people killed after partition they were Catholics in the civil war that occurred as a consequence of the approval of the Anglo-Irish treaty ratifying partition between those who agreed and those that opposed the Treaty.

So, I think there is little to redress as far as the protestant community living in the now republic of Ireland is concerned.

Now let us turn to the Catholic majority in the Republic of Ireland and include in this category the many other people that had to leave Ireland because the successive English administration made shambles of the Irish economy for many centuries and whose consequences persisted for decades after independence and only recently was the republic to develop in great success.

We have described in previous chapters of this book the atrocities this community suffered during centuries.- As the former Taoiseach Eamon De Valera said addressing himself to Winston Churchill's unfortunate remarks: ' Could he not find in his heart the generosity to acknowledge that there is a small nation that stood alone not for one year or for two, but for several hundred years against aggression, that endured spoliations, was clubbed many times into insensibility, but each time on returning consciousness took up the fight anew, a small nation that could never be got to accept defeat and has never surrendered its soul' (Kee R. op. cit. page 220)

It is true that passage of time tends to heal the wounds and that the claim for redress of past grievances has debilitated and many might think that it is time to forgive and forget.

I think otherwise: In line with what has been stated abundantly in this book, I feel redress should still be forthcoming if we are to send a clear signal to the mighty of today that if they violate human rights of the weaker they will be held accountable sooner or later and when perhaps they are not so mighty.

Under this frame I propose that the Irish wherever they are should work together in order to proclaim a commemoration date to honour those who died or were forced into exile by the English administrations and would suggest the date coincides with that of the execution of the great Irish rebel Padraig Pearse but would agree on any other date.

Following the path opened by our Armenian brethren, we should ask all countries to recognize the Irish ordeal in whatever form they feel appropriate.

I also would propose that the Irish should demand an official apology from the English government for the atrocious crimes perpetrated against the Irish throughout centuries as has been documented by impartial and objective historians.

These are only some measures to be undertaken. Many other similar measures should be devised and timely implemented.

But the only real and necessary redress for such horror is to reintegrate Northern Ireland with its twenty six sister counties a matter to which I will refer in the following pages.

Before we do that, let us turn to Northern Ireland.

To begin with let us state that Northern Ireland was not segregated from the rest of Ireland just to ensure that England would continue to have a foothold on the island. It was also addressed to endure that the protestant majority continued to enjoy all the privileges and the Catholic minority subjected to continuous abuse and discrimination.

As T. P. Coogan states: 'When James Craig (one of the leaders in the protestant community of the time) declared that the 'Belfast parliament was a 'protestant parliament for a protestant people' his hearers understood the custom and usage meant that the protestants got and would continue to get the jobs and the houses at the expense of their Catholic neighbours (T.P.Coogan op. cit page 27)

And they did. According to K. Neill: 'Economic discrimination was even more blatant. Most council jobs went to protestants, while local utility companies usually employed very few Catholics. The electricity department of Belfast Corporation, for example, counted less than fifty Catholics among its 1000 employees in 1949. Many private firms also avoided hiring Catholics whenever possible. Harland and Wolff was one of the many loyalist concerns: there were never more than a few hundred Catholics among the eight to ten thousand employees of the giant shipyard' (Neill. K. Illustrated History of the Irish people. Gill and Mac Millan 1985. page 191)

Coogan adds: 'The sizeable Catholic minority in the Northern state viewed the Treaty(he refers to the Anglo-Irish treaty which agreed on partition) with considerable apprehension because the prospect of being handed over to the tender mercies of the unionist and protestant majority '(Coogan T.P. Op. cit. page 25)

But no tenderness or mercy was to be shown then and even now as discrimination against the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland continues as demonstrated above. If the discrimination is not so much in the front line today, this is because the public opinion is more aware and less tolerant with violations to human rights, so they must be hidden as much as possible.

But let us begin with the grievances of the protestant majority in Northern Ireland. As explained in the first part of this chapter the protestants not only suffered uncertainty but also were deprived of their human rights in incidents as those depicted during the Irish rebellion of 1641. Even after partition there were other incidents attributed to the Irish Republican Army that also increased their sense of insecurity and some times led to bombings, assassinations etc. These sufferings also should be addressed.

Obviously there can be no comparison to the ordeal suffered by the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. As has been previously stated from being (Ulster) the most Gaelic and Catholic province of Ireland it is now only a minority of the population after being killed and forced to leave the county by the thousands. Contrary to what happened in the now republic of Ireland where the protestants were left unmolested, the Catholic minority, in Ulster after partition, were and continue to be discriminated as seen from Neill's quotations. I think such sufferings can only be redressed by granting the unity of Ireland a matter I promised to touch below.

And so now, in order to redress legitimate grievances of all parties concerned, I propose the drafting of a roadmap that having in mind that aforementioned objective at the same time adopts the necessary measures to ensure a peaceful and economically developed fully integrated society.

Drafting this roadmap cannot be the task of an individual but must be the result of the collective thinking primarily by Northern Ireland's politicians and also-hopefully-with the active involvement of the Irish and it's Diaspora.

However I feel that some guidelines can and should be advanced:

1.-To begin with violence must be excluded. As I am sure most of my readers share with me the same moral restraints I have against the use of violence, I will not elaborate further on this. But even from a pragmatic point of view, as the Irish history proves, violence achieved very little if anything. Suffering violence is however another story. It is difficult to ascertain the exact impact that the assassination of Padraic Pearse and his colleagues that fought in the Easter rebellion of 1917 for the independence of Ireland, but it would be unrealistic to underrate such impact.

2.- The second guideline is much more controversial. I feel that only the unity of Ireland will prove adequate redress for all the sufferings and deprivation of human rights that the Catholics in Ireland experienced throughout their history. I do not feel that this could affect in any way the protestant minority in the now Republic of Ireland because as has been stated in this same chapter, they are now totally integrated with their Catholic neighbours. But I cannot underscore the effect this will have on the protestant majority in Northern Ireland. The only way I think we can overcome the misgivings this community will have it to ensure them that after the unity they will enjoy a better quality of life than that they have had heretofore.

Thirty or more years ago when the Republic of Ireland was economically prostrated and Northern Ireland (comparatively) enjoyed a better economic standing the unity of Ireland would probably have resulted in the lowering of the standard of living of the inhabitants of the latter.

But the reverse is true today. The Republic of Ireland is called 'the Celtic tiger' because it's economic development grew exponentially over a relative short period of time as did other Asiatic economies which were also called 'Asiatic tigers'

A leap forward that would upgrade Northern Ireland's economy and achieve the republic's standards would in turn ensure members of the communities that they will all share the standard of living already attained in the South.

This should be implemented by:

- a) a massive influx of capital investments to develop fully Northern Ireland's resources; industry, commerce, tourism etc. But foreign investors will be reluctant to invest large sum of monies if peace is not assured over a long period of time and this is only possible after unity in Ireland as demonstrated in the South of the country.
- b) A substantial decrease in the level of taxation not only for corporation but for individuals which will have a direct effect in improving their standard of living and which should ease the way for unity.
- c) Lower taxation for individuals will increase domestic consumption and this in turn will promote further domestic investments so that a 'virtuous circle' will be established.

Undoubtedly this will have a cost and the question to be asked is who should finance such cost.

Certainly England who is primarily responsible for many of the people's sufferings should be required to participate possibly as a follow up to their apologies I referred to above. But many others should also contribute: Ireland, the United States and other friendly nations, the European community and the Irish Diaspora

Ireland assistance should never be construed as to affect the standard of living of the Irish living in the republic of Ireland. The objective is pulling up the quality of living of the northern Irish not levelling down same of the southern Irish. Even the standard of living of the latter might well improve. The unity of Ireland will produce a larger market and the increase in commerce between the two parties.

I feel the unity of Ireland should be pursued not through violence which usually generates more violence but through a positive approach as I have tried to outline above..

Am I being too optimistic? Maybe so. But I think the purpose really deserves to be pursued in the most effective manner. There will be diehards (protestants and even Catholics) who will oppose this process for different reasons and will not be persuaded that improving the standard of living of families and individuals in Northern Ireland is better than feuding over, hopefully, past differences. I would suggest we give these people (again hopefully a negligible minority) all possible solutions including generous economic terms to entice them to relocate wherever they prefer.

3.- There will have to be changes in Ireland's legislation-even at constitutional level- to ensure both communities are adequately represented and their views, interests and desires duly protected. I will leave the experts to progress these changes but hope that joint committees (i.e. protestants and Catholics working together) will produce the changes that will allow the communities in Ulster the same degree of peaceful integration as has been achieved in the Republic from independence.

Other guidelines should be added to the list as well as detailed implementation of same. I am confident that this roadmap can lead to the emergence of a new united Ireland which paramount concerns are the respect of human rights of all of its inhabitants and

that the economic progress is fairly distributed amongst the people. If this is achieved it will become a remarkable example of how to achieve a peaceful and durable solution starting from a society plagued with terrorist threats.

For let us not fool ourselves. If this road is not followed sooner or later the ugly face of terrorism will re-emerge. This is not intended to be a threat. As I said before I have moral restraints for advocating the use of violence. But sooner or later if grievances are not addressed peacefully violence is bound to come back and this should be avoided by all means.

EPILOGUE: BAS IN ERIN

Many of the Irish emigrants shared a dream.-BAS IN ERIN.- to die in Ireland.

They were forced to accept living and working in different countries away from their native land, in places with different cultures, sometimes with different language or religion. They raised their families, made a living for themselves and their children but dreamt that at the closing of their days 'BAS IN ERIN' rest in peace in their homeland.

It is true that descendants of the Irish emigrants have different dreams: visiting Ireland and seeing where their ancestors were born, educated etc., finding out their roots etc. and this shows that these new generations are emotionally attached to the land of their ancestors.

Now my kind reader can ask himself how do I link 'BAS IN ERIN' with the purposes pursued in this book and which were explained in the preceding chapters.

As I said in the previous chapter the main aim of achieving unity of Ireland should be through implementation of the roadmap and not through violence.

But I would be far too optimistic if I persuaded myself that such implementation will be necessarily successful. This does not imply, on the other hand, that no strenuous efforts should be made in order to obtain the desired result.

However even if after the efforts are made, success is not forthcoming I think we should attempt another solution to avoid the possible renewal of violence(possibly even more destructive now than before because weapons of mass destruction are and will be more easily available than years ago)

I thus propose a long march into Ulster and further suggest that Easter 2017 could be an appropriate date for such march so as to commemorate the 100th. anniversary of the Irish rebellion that led to the Independence of the Republic of Ireland.

This long march will begin at the homes of the marchers-hopefully as members of the Diaspora are spread all over the world- from different continents and should meet at designated places to be selected by the organizers of the long march: From these meeting points the marchers will enter Ulster in a peaceful and coordinated manner.

Why Easter 2017? Aside from the symbolic meaning of the date, it is expected that by that time it should be clear whether the roadmap has been a success or otherwise.

But the date should be flexible: Indeed if by that date substantial progress has been made under the roadmap the long march can be postponed or even cancelled.

It is likely the marchers will face violence but will not be allowed to answer with further violence. It is certain that they will be harassed in many ways, many will be sent to jail and possibly tortured and some- hopefully few, might be killed. BAS IN ERIN. The dream of their ancestors will become real several generations later.

But if the march is a success in the sense that thousands arrive from the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, Latin America and the rest of the world, the unity of Ireland will also become a reality.

I hope common sense prevails and there is little violence. Indeed will the northern Irish diehards risk alienating public opinion assassinating peaceful marchers coming from virtually all over the world?

And will the governments of such countries turn a blind eye when seeing such crimes perpetrated on peaceful people ?

It is obvious that Northern Ireland will be disrupted as a consequence of this peaceful invasion into it's territory and when the economy comes to a standstill the only viable way is to negotiate the unity of the country.

A price will be paid, but through its history the Irish have paid very high tolls and the back bone of their resistance has never been crippled. The fact that this will be the last fight and that victory is around the corner will strengthen the will and determination of the marchers and will make them tolerate the suffering.

Those that survive will be able to tell their children and grandchildren that they made things happen for the unity of Ireland.

And those that fall BAS IN ERIN. When their children and grandchildren visit their tombs they will repeat as a litany BAS IN ERIN.

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the Irish people.

To the Irish that died anonymously during the great famine and to those forced into exile to avoid starvation and to their descendants.

To the Irish that fought for the independence of their country and either died or survived and to their descendants

To the Irish that succeeded in making Irish economy strong as it is today and to the Irish Diaspora to which I belong.

And to several Irish men and women who inspired me into writing this book and in particular to my father from whom I inherited my Irishry.

Buenos Aires, Easter 2007