

AFFAIRS OF THE NATION



IRVING IN A STATE OF DENIAL

THROUGHOUT FEBRUARY there were reports that convicted Holocaust denier David Irving, who dismissed the Auschwitz gas chambers as a “fairy tale”, had fallen ill. Then in late February it was incorrectly reported online that he had died. There was some irony then when Irving’s family took to the internet to deny his death. Despite this, a number of Irish far-right figures were eager to mark his illness and supposed demise.

Justin Barrett of the National Party paid tribute by posting a picture of Irving, clearly waving his right hand but looking not unlike he was giving a Roman salute, with the text: “David John Cawdell Irving. 24th March 1938 – 20th February 2024. REQUIESCAT IN PACE.”

Also posting about the claims of Irving’s death were Philip Dwyer of Ireland First, the NP’s Keith Woods (aka Keith O’Brien) and independent hard-right activist Gavin Lowbridge.

Irving, who liked to present as an academic, had been reduced in recent decades to speaking to gatherings of right-wing extremists such as meetings of the National Alliance in the US, the British National Party and the German People’s Union. While he had been invited to speak in Ireland at public meetings organised by various college debating societies in the 1980s, ’90s and 2000s, all of these meetings were scuppered by protests.

Irving’s best-known book, *Hitler’s War*, demonstrated his drift towards conspiracy theories. While a 1977 edition clearly accepted the Holocaust, a new edition of the book published in 1991 had no mention of it, with Irving claiming: “You won’t find the

Holocaust mentioned in one line, not even a footnote, why should [you]? If something didn’t happen, then you don’t even dignify it with a footnote.”

Dwyer shared a message in tribute to Irving, which included a TikTok video of him denying the Holocaust and an image of *Hitler’s War*, along with the claim that “Irving helped prove the Jews Holocaust lie... Without the Holocaust lie there is no Jewish control of the West or Israel”.

Barrister and GAA columnist Joe Broly reacted strongly to Dwyer’s tribute, posting an image of it with the text: “Philip is a leader of the Irish hate movement. They hate everything & everyone except Hitler. They also admire David Irving, who describes ‘the gas chambers fairy tale’.”

Of course, Broly and Dwyer are of an age that they will remember the popular opposition to Irving in Ireland down through the years.

Back in November 1988, Irving had been invited by Trinity College Dublin’s Philosophical Society to deliver a paper entitled, “The Holocaust: Did Hitler Know?” At the time that the meeting was supposed to start, the

building was blockaded by a large crowd and, when a brick was thrown through a window beside the main door, Trinity authorities called off the meeting.

While the Philosophical Society president denounced the protest as anti-free speech, Irving claimed the protest had been infiltrated by the World Jewish Congress and left-wing activists.

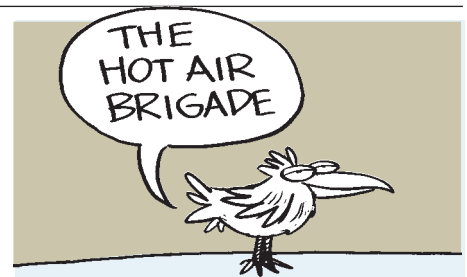
Eleven years later it was the turn of the toffs in the Philosophical Society in University College Cork (UCC) to invite Irving to speak. Again, Irving was prevented from speaking.

Headlines the following day in newspapers such as the *Irish Examiner* – “Kicks and punches fly in riot at college” – and the *Evening Echo* – “Gardaí hurt in riot at college” – give a flavour of how intense the protest was.

In the aftermath, UCC authorities suspended a number of college societies for three years from being active on campus including Sinn Féin, the Socialist Worker Student Society, the Socialist Party and the Socialist Society.



David Irving



When in this country did the ‘common good’ ever mean anything other than the good of men? **Jennifer O’Connell, Irish Times**



Jennifer O’Connell

Charting the Scylla of draconian defamation laws and the Charybdis of contempt is difficult enough, but now it’s been confirmed that taxpayer-funded officials will deliberately shaft you. **Fionán Sheahan on Catherine Martin bugging up his paper’s RTÉ exclusive, Irish Independent**

“I believe a Minister must be truthful,” [Catherine] Martin countered with a riposte as shocking to the body politic as an electric volt. **Justine McCarthy, Irish Times**

It behoves RTÉ, culturally as well as financially to carve out a space in this market and meet the demand of families, school groups and the lucrative Christmas gifts market. **Rory Coveney’s business plan for the Late Late Toy Show Musical, Irish Examiner**

I knew Andy Farrell would be a great manager because of the way he treats his wife. **South Africa’s Brendan Venter on the Irish rugby team’s manager, Irish Independent**

Deasy is the Ronaldo of investment banking. **Nick Web on Barclay Bank’s Cathal Deasy, Sunday Times**

When it comes to Irish hotel royalty, the Brennans were the crown. **Nicola Brady on John and Francis Brennan, Irish Independent Weekend Magazine**

I will do my best not to be an entertainer or that public figure so much, and business is what I’m more interested in. I’m always trying to build empires. **Boyzone’s Shane Lynch, Sunday Independent Life Magazine**

His comment acts as a nice ice-breaker, but it also betrays a sense of authenticity that is uncommon among lawyers at the top of their game... it becomes clear that Murphy is not a typical corporate legal eagle. **Catherine Sanz on Alan Murphy, head of EY Law, Business Post**

Call it Hegelian dialectics, call it yin and yang, but every action requires its own reaction, every movement its opposition. But from Rotten Tomatoes to GoodReads to Discover Weekly, the algorithmic information economy leaves little room for creative antipathy. **Hugh Linehan, Irish Times**

When something you’ve made up brings tears to your own eyes, you know you’re doing something right. **Author David Downing, Sunday Independent Life Magazine**

Please send suitable contributions to: The Hot Air Brigade, The Phoenix, 44 Lr Baggot St, Dublin 2 or email: hotair@thephoenix.ie

