



International Headquarters
PO Box 1716 • Morristown, NJ 07962
Tel: 973-605-1991
www.iaci-usa.org

Welcome to the latest edition of the IACI e-news.

Founded in 1962, the IACI is the leading Irish American cultural organization. The IACI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national organization devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America.

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Irish American Solidarity

By

Raymond D. Aumack

Catholic social teaching emerges from the truth of what God has revealed to us about himself. We believe in the triune God whose very nature is communal and social. God the Father sends his only Son Jesus Christ and shares his Spirit as his gift of love. God reveals himself to us as one who is not alone, but rather as one who is relational, one who is Trinity. Therefore, we who are made in God's image share this communal, social nature. We are called to reach out and to build relationships of love and justice. Catholic social teaching is based on and inseparable from our understanding of human life and human dignity.... Every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with that dignity. Human dignity comes from God, not from any human quality or accomplishment. It is not a feeling about helping other people, but rather a way of life that recognizes that we are all brothers and sisters regardless of race, creed, or ethnic background. It has a global dimension. Pope Paul VI taught that if we want peace, we must work for justice.

Fr. Jim exclaimed, "June, I am so sorry that we have been passing each other like ships in the night. I was on retreat before John's wedding. I had several Jesuit administration meetings, and being Jesuits, each one took about three days to define and settle issues. By the way, we are the North Star in the Jesuit sky. We have become the model for urban ministry. After much prayer, fasting, and plain groveling, I will remain as President here, probably for the rest of my life, and I couldn't be happier. Everyone wanted to come here, until I told them that Theresa and I started this without even a nickel in the 'piggy bank.' Theresa, Maeve, Maria and you are the catalysts for where we are today."

June laughed. "For ten years we walked around the block outside this building brainstorming outrageous ideas that turned out to be the program we have today, including the money we raised to finance this dream."

"Before we start our meeting," requested Fr. Jim, "fill me in on the stories I heard at your wedding. All America, this....top of the class that.....Most Valuable Player, Phi Beta Kappa, Presidential limos. Fill me in."

"Wow, you guys do a lousy job of vetting."

"You were never vetted, You were appointed by mother Theresa. Of course the Ph.D. from UPenn caught my eye."

"Well, you already know my family history. My interracial great grandparents and my grandparents built the town of Gettysburg. There is a history published and there is a copy at the parish church, my father's bank, the school libraries, and several at the community library. They built an infrastructure and then gave the businesses to the people that had run them for decades. The community was interconnected from the very beginning of its existence.

From the time I was in the fifth grade, I played basketball at the playground with the boys. I practiced, practiced, and practiced some more, and got to be pretty good. I loved basketball and made the varsity girls' basketball team as a freshman. We had a great undefeated season and one the school's first state championship in anything. I led the league in scoring, and I made the All – County team and honorable mention All-State. I also led the league in scoring and assists all four years. I loved the teamwork. I made all of my teammates heroines. In my Junior and Senior years, the entire team was All County. We won the state championships in our division in each of our four years. I was on the All -State team in my Sophomore, Junior, and Senior years. I played basketball in high school and college without ever losing a game."

“That is quite an achievement. That is why you think big and then makes it happen.”

“Jim, nobody does that without a great team behind them.”

“That is a great insight. Ignatius would be proud of you, is proud of you.”

“Notre Dame and about seventy other schools wanted to offer me a scholarship. I got to be friendly with Muffet McGraw, the great coach at Notre Dame. However, after learning discernment at a Jesuit retreat I attended, thanks to the youth group at St. Margaret’s, I practiced discernment about my choice of a college. If I attended Notre Dame, my total college experience and entire life would be about basketball. I wanted more than that. I selected Immaculata University to the shock of the entire nation. I really wanted a Catholic college and Immaculata was the best. After seeing my SAT scores and vetting my basketball credentials, they also gave me a scholarship. I was an Academic All - American in all four years and an athletic All - American in both my Junior and Senior years. I was the Valedictorian, Maeve was the Salutatorian, and Grace O’Malley was right there with us, the three of us were separated by hundredths of a point. We were inducted together into Phi Beta Kappa.?”

“What a great story,” exclaimed, Fr. Jim. “What about the Presidential Limousine?”

“One of my high school classmates is a Secret Service Agent assigned to Camp David. He met Brian and me when we were picnicking on the mountain. It wasn’t just him, though. The whole town turned out for the wedding. I was embarrassed on one hand but thrilled on the other. It was Brian who supported me. There was a parade from our house to the church for the rehearsal dinner, a party that was larger than our reception, at the school auditorium.”

“Is that why you lobbied for the basketball court?”

“No, no, no, no! That is for the kids. I might join them just to show them how it is done from time to time.”

“I’m sure you will,” laughed Fr. Jim. “I understand I am joining you in the dining room for dinner this evening. What is going on tonight?”

“We want to discuss a human relations/race relations program that we can sell to schools. Catholic high schools are our primary market. Maeve, Maria, and Theresa, are working with me. If it is successful, we’ll train some of our college interns. This started as a request from Gettysburg High School. This will be an income producing venture. We can’t depend on fundraising forever. We have to develop some income producing programs.”

“Sounds good. I’ll look forward to it.”

Dierdre O’Rourke and Tommy Farrell arrived at St. Paul’s Rectory for the first session of the pre-Cana encounter meeting. Father Fred led them into the parlor chatting amiably with small talk to hide his own nervousness.

Dierdre and Tommy sat in opposite comfortable chairs in front of the fire place. Each of them had plenty of light to read their letters to each other.

Dierdre's letter was longer and most of it was news to Tommy, since they had never discussed it. She described her childhood, reasonably happy, though her mother had died when she was very young. Dierdre was a tough kid. As sweet an image that she had, she protected everyone who was a victim of a bully.

She had excellent grades near the top of her class. She was an outstanding athlete on the soccer field and the tennis courts. With her grades and athletic ability she had her choice among the many colleges in the country. Tragically, her father was killed in a construction accident just after her eighteenth birthday. She postponed college to deal with her grief. Her friends, neighbors, and every adult in her parish provided a lot of support. As an extraordinarily responsible adult she handled all the arrangements for her father's funeral. Money was not an issue. As a highly paid construction worker, her father had savings of over \$40 thousand. The pastor of her parish referred her to a trusted attorney who made certain that she had all the insurance death benefits to which she was entitled. He also negotiated a handsome settlement from her dad's union, from the company he was working with, and finally from the scaffolding company. The final total was over three million dollars. The money was deposited into an investment account managed by the company's top analyst. With the intense attention of her attorney, her investment doubled in value every six years and the account has been held for more than fifteen years.

When all of her friends went off to college, she made the decision to join the Marines to the shock of her friends and the community. After her basic training, her computer skills became obvious to her superiors. They offered her the opportunity to attend the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, on a Marine scholarship to study computer science and receive special high-level training in Search and Rescue. She would have to commit to the Marines for five more years. The five years included her college residency and she worked in the administrative offices as the "go to" computer analyst. After graduation, she trained Search and Rescue teams. As a computer analyst, she was top level and could hack into telephone conversations of the top leaders of the countries of the world including her own. Her last tour of duty was for two years and she asked for an assignment in Afghanistan to train her own Search and Rescue team. During those two years she was involved in fifty missions, most of them high risk. She worked her team hard, and they were best. They could become invisible if they needed to and in some situations it was a handy skill to have. In those two years, Dierdre was awarded fifty combat ribbons, the Croix de Guerre, for saving a French soldier from the NATO force, and the Silver Star. Her courage and analytic wisdom in battle became the stuff of legend among the Marines.

When they mustered out, the three teammates went through every psychological exam imaginable. They did not show any evidence of PTSD.

Tommy knew all about Dierdre's military bio, but it was her life bio as little more than a child that touched him.

Tommy's letter was shorter. His childhood was also traumatic. He went to community college for two years and finished at St. John's in New York City. His course was basic Business Administration. His home life was a mess. The country was in a recession. He couldn't get a job. He took care of younger siblings while his parents slowly drank themselves to death. One of his younger brothers was once hospitalized for alcohol poisoning. When he couldn't get a job, Tommy put the last of his savings into an EMT training program and got a job with the New York Fire Department. After a year, when the Fire Department was facing layoffs, he joined the Army where he received additional EMT training but was assigned to a combat unit as the result of clever military deployment strategies.

Tommy treated and recovered from PTSD, to the extent that anyone recovers from PTSD. He treated at the VA hospital and with Fr. Fred for counseling and spiritual direction. With Dierdre in his life and her active social life, together with his work relating to veterans, most of whom were severely suffering from PTSD and the world they built around themselves to avoid any kind of social relationships, he was very happy and finally living the life he always dreamed. Tommy, as a Purple Heart recipient and a combat veteran, was acceptable to the homeless veterans with whom he worked. His role was to prepare them to accept therapy, whenever possible. Otherwise, Tommy just accepted them as they are. It started with sharing coffee in the street. Step two was to get them into the Mission for coffee or a meal. There was escape from the cold. Beds were available. The next step was to just spend time with Tommy to escape the hell of battle fatigue and the hell they now live with.

The discussion went on for two and a half hours. When Dierdre realized this, she suggested that they discuss this at home during the week. Though each had their own apartment, they spent a lot of time together. For Tommy, Dierdre was the tunnel to a world outside of his own head.

As they flew over Pennsylvania, Grace O'Malley and Charlie Columbo discussed the visit with her father. Her father didn't know anything about Charlie until a few weeks ago and he was looking forward to this visit. Grace was always very private about her personal life. At least this was his thought. In truth, he was never available to her and periodically expressed shock at how much she had grown. He knew she worked with Sotheby's, but he had no idea of her rank, what she did, her titles, or her earning level. He had several accounts for her including an account to fully fund her college tuition that was untouched because she won a Presidential Scholarship with her extremely high SAT scores. Her dad did attend her graduation but secretly wondered why she chose Immaculata. His wife thought of it as a Catholic finishing school. He did a private investigation of the school and found that it was an intellectually demanding university, ranked highly among similar universities in the country and one of the best in Pennsylvania. The university also provided all the resources the giant name public school offered. What he didn't realize was that her choice was part of her escape from the cheerleader culture and the expectations of her mother. All of this thanks to a senior year boyfriend who was a talented

basketball player, a devout Christian and a faithful Catholic, and a very level-headed young man who graduated on the same day, from Stamford. He had inspired the same values in Grace. Her dad had no idea about her social life in college.

One of the first questions he asked about Charlie was if he knew anything about the money she had.

Hiding her annoyance, she responded, "Dad, I don't know anything about money that I have except for what I have earned, invested, and the little house I bought and mortgaged with my own credibility. I am a vice president with the salary that goes with it. I also own a modest car that Mom would mock. Charlie is a Forensic Engineer and gets paid accordingly. He owns his apartment and also a reasonable mid-sized car. I met his family including his extended family and they are wonderful people.

After investigating Charlie, he investigated his own daughter. He was crushed about how little he knew about her life. She was supposed to be the most significant person in his life, and he missed almost all of it. He would have to review that.

As their phone conversation wound down, Grace invited her father to come and spend a weekend with her to meet all of her friends. "They will amaze you."

"We'll talk about it when you come here."

“Great!! We are arriving for dinner on Thursday evening.”

The plane touched down on the runway as gently as a sparrow on a branch. Grace had called in advance to rent the Chevrolet, not out of spite but to reenforce her personal image.

Charlie whistled a wow when they pulled into the circular driveway and parked in front of the main door to the castle-like Tudor structure. The household staff did not come out to greet them like they did at Downton Abbey. Charlie retrieved the two suitcases and followed Grace into the house. Grace called out, “Hello, is anyone home.”

Mrs. Reilly, the cook, quickly ran out of the kitchen. “Oh Grace, well look at you now. Aren’t even more gorgeous than your last visit.”

“The last visit wasn’t great. But it is great that we can both hug each other without getting dressed down for it. I’m so glad to see that you are still here. This house and its kitchen wouldn’t be the same without you.”

“Oh, and this is your young man. Welcome.” She then embraced Charlie as well.

“Mrs. Reilly, this is my friend, Charlie Colombo. No pressure, but he is a cooking critic.” Mrs. Reilly’s eyes widened. “No, just kidding Mrs. Reilly.”

Grace’s father came out of his office, hugged Grace, and shook hands with Charlie. “Hi, I’m Joe, Grace’s Dad.”

It is a pleasure to meet you, Mr. O’Malley.”

“Please call me Joe. I’ve looked forward to meeting you. Grace has never brought a boyfriend home with her, so you must be special.” “Well Grace is special for me too.” “Good reply,” thought Joe. “I think I like this guy.”

“Put your bags aside. We’ll pick them up before dinner. We’ll go to the smaller parlor. There is a fire in the fireplace. I’ve asked Mrs. Reilly to bring in some snacks and wine.”

“Please sit down and make yourselves comfortable.”

“Thank you,” said Charlie. “I’ve looked forward to meeting you.”

“And I looked forward to meeting you. How long have you been dating?”

“For several months,” replied Grace. Charlie filled in, “eight months, five days, fifteen hours, and several minutes. Grace invited me out on our first date. It was for Sunday Mass.”

Grace chimed in, “it was followed by a four-and a-half hour lunch with some friends. We first met the day before at my office.”

“Grace, I understand you are the Vice President of Institutional Advancement. What does that even mean?”

“I help colleges and institutions that depend on community support to raise funds for their programs.”

“That must be hard work.” “Not so much,” replied Grace. “I get to meet terrific people like Charlie. I’m also very successful in what I do. I have raised millions of dollars. I am currently doing volunteer work, pro bono, on

a golf tournament to raise funds for the Jesuit Urban Mission in Philadelphia. I ran an auction for them two years ago, as part of a gala. The entire program generated four million dollars. Charlie and I are doing our pre-Cana with one of the Jesuits there.”

“Charlie, I understand you are a Forensic Engineer.” “Yes,” responded Charlie. “I did my graduate and undergraduate degrees at Carnegie Mellon. I then discovered that degrees in Engineering are learner’s permits. I am studying with mentors and learning the trade. I have been with the firm for seven years and it has been a delightful experience. The work that I am doing currently is evaluating structures for stability. For instance, if a bridge has a fatigue weakness, I report it to the owners and with my colleagues establish a strategy for repairs. We work in teams so we can check each other’s work.”

“It sounds interesting. Bridges and roads seem to be collapsing all the time.”

“These structures, once they are built, have to be carefully maintained. When they are not maintained, they become victims of the environment and the risk of damage increases exponentially. There is also carelessness in the construction. I have x-rayed welds that were poorly done and that spells weakness in the structure. When they built the Alaska pipeline, every weld was x-rayed. If it was faulty, the weld had to be burned off and redone.”

“I am told that you were an excellent teacher of your peers.”

“I’m glad you noticed. I love identifying and solving problems. I am paid extremely well for what I do, and my salary grows with every level of problem identification and solving. While I love to teach, it currently doesn’t match the excitement of what I do.”

“Do you have any investments?” “Yes I do. I have a 401K plus and an investment account, currently with Smith Barney. I need to raise a little more capital before I seek out an Investment Manager, such as yourself.”

“Well, it looks like you are both in a position to support each other.”

“Dad,” exclaimed Grace, “between us we will make almost a half million dollars a year. I know you can do that in a half hour but that is not the way the rest of the world works. Both of us experience genuine joy in our work. The average annual family income with two wage earners is about \$75 thousand a year. Charlie and I are both professionals and growing as professionals with our work. I have discovered that there is something empowering about work. I believe that Charlie and I feel the same sense of creativity as the result of our work.”

Grace was getting passionate and Charlie chimed in, “Joe, I am the first in my family to graduate from a four-year high school and certainly the first to go to a University. My father was a Pipefitter, now retired, but he loved his work. Hopefully, we’ll have children who will enjoy the fruits of our labor and then pay it forward.”

“Well thank you,” said Joe. “Let me get you to your rooms and give you a chance to freshen up. I’ll alert Mrs. Reilly that we’ll be ready in a half hour.”

“That sounds great,” said Grace. “They don’t even serve peanuts on airplanes anymore, and I am starving.”

“I’ll help with your bags. Grace, you can use your own bedroom. And Charlie, we have a very comfortable guest room for you. This house is so big, I’m not sure I have been in all the rooms yet. Charlie, the bathroom is

down the back stairs to the back yard. There is a bucket of water on the porch for washing up. Charlie looked at him and Joe burst out laughing. Just pulling your leg, Charlie. We'll meet in the dining room."

When they were descending the staircase, Grace told Charlie that she never heard her father laugh before.

Mrs. Reilly provided a terrific dinner of roast beef. It was cooked with love for the little girl she practically raised. Dinner conversation was light and filled with fun. Joe was talkative and affable. He didn't say much about her young years or her high school years. He did attend both graduations and did meet her boyfriend, Lou Massa, a basketball star bound for Stamford. He was amazed at her academic achievements and her admission into Phi Beta Kappa. He didn't meet any of her friends although both Maeve and June came over to hug her and posed for photos with her.

She met her friend Lou for a lunch date the following week in town. Lou was going to Rome, Italy to play basketball in their professional league. He thought it would give him the opportunity to play in all the capitals of Europe, learn a couple of languages and absorb their cultures. They parted as best friends, ever grateful for the love they shared. For Grace, it was a semi sweet parting. She prayed that their relationship meant as much for Lou and it did for her. They didn't write much but exchanged Christmas and birthday cards with letters detailing the activities of their lives.

Lou's career lasted three years before he tore up a knee that required replacement. He would be fine and walk and run as he normally did, but he would never play professional basketball again. Meanwhile he had a wonderful career with a league championship. He learned to cook Italian food, fluently spoke Italian and Spanish, and fell in love with an Italian American girl. They married. Her father was a high ranking official in the American Embassy. He now works at the United Nations in New York.

Joe paid a surprising amount of attention to Charley, even to the point of discussing his business. They made plans for his visit to Philadelphia in May. Grace had to tear Charlie away for a lunch in town. The grand tour of the area wasn't much. Grace brought him to her high school, a regional school in the next town. The towns were small enough that everyone personally knew everyone else. Several recognized Grace and stopped to say, "Hello." A few asked after her mother. Grace was discrete but frank with her answers. "She is being treated as well and effectively as possible. Her progress, as expected, is slow. She is otherwise very well."

They visited her parish church. Grace wanted to say "Hi" to the priest that she knew so well. He had been transferred to another parish the previous year. As much as things change in a few years, the heartbeat of a community continues.

Grace took him the short distance to Pittsburgh, an area Charlie knew so well from college. The day warmed a bit with the high sun, and they strolled along the river walk. Charlie told her about his school experiences. They had a wonderful Catholic Campus Ministry that he felt outweighed his experience at Georgetown. Charlie was a Lector and a Eucharistic Minister. After Mass on Sunday evening they would have beer, soft drinks, and sandwiches. The discussion started with the liturgy and the sermon and took off from there. It was a wonderful experience.

"We had a wonderful class room experience with Theology at Immaculata. Yes, I learned to put words to my faith and thoughts. I learned a lot from classmates. Maeve Garvey and June to a lesser extent drove our Moral Theology professor crazy, especially in discussions of sexual morality. For our final paper, Maeve interviewed a dozen girls, who would remain anonymous, about their intimacy with their boyfriends. She quoted Thomas Aquinas on the Natural Law, a number of councils through the centuries, contrasted the conflicts of one position against another, highlighted the teaching of Popes Paul , John Paul II, and John XXIII and concluded

that none of the girls were sinning. Maeve, June, and I went out to party after the Phi Beta Kappa awards and Maeve confessed that she received an “A” for the course but doubted that the professor read her paper. She made a copy for each of the girls who shared their story.”

“We had Mass on Campus in the main chapel on Saturday and Sunday evenings and on Sunday Morning. We also had dorm Masses in the Common Room of the dorms on Sunday evenings. These were neat Masses, informal, and we usually participated in the homily. At the Eucharist, plates of hosts were passed around as was a cup of wine and we shared the Eucharist by feeding each other. I found myself attracted to that.”

Saturday came too fast and with tearful goodbyes from Mrs. Reilly and surprising embraces from Joe O’Malley, Grace and Charlie made their way to the airport for the flight home after an extremely pleasing weekend.

Dr. June Guillian Garvey, Maeve Garvey Malone, Dr. Maria Costo Dowd, and Theresa Malone Garvey occupied a table at the back end of the cafeteria. June is the current Executive Director, Maeve, a leading philanthropist and the Center’s Attorney, Maria is a communications consultant and teacher, and Theresa, the founding Executive Director, met with Fr. Jim Keenan, for dinner and conversation. The three joined Theresa when she founded the program with Fr. Jim. For ten years they walked

around the block talking, thinking, brain-storming, and dreaming. Their dreams actually materialized with the success of the gala and the money they were able to raise. The Center was totally staffed with office administration. They had forty fulltime volunteers for whom they provided housing and board. They had several youth academic programs, English as a Second Language, taught by Maria Dowd, a full-service urgent care center, an ambulance to help the city deal with emergencies, an insurance program to provide the community with health care coverage. All of these programs cost money, lots of money. Almost a million dollars went into the development of the urgent care center. However, that is a fee for service program and the insurance program subsidizes it. It is starting to pay for itself including salaries of the staff. It will take three to five years at this rate to restore that million dollars.

Everyone contributed to the plan. Each component was discussed individually and as everyone approved the specifics, June would incorporate them into the guts of the workshop. “Can I make a recommendation,” asked Fr. Jim? Doing a three-day workshop isn’t enough, even though your plan is outstanding. It is easily forgotten. I recommend adding in films, Shindler’s List, A bio-pic of Malcolm X, another biopic of Dr. Martin Luther King, and the movie, To Kill a Mockingbird.”

“ What an outstanding recommendation!” said June. “You are going to have to walk around the block with us a few times.”

“One more suggestion, incorporate the Social Studies teachers into the program. They will be invaluable for the discussions on the films. Also their feedback will be very valuable. This is a first time. We’ll want to do many of these.”

Dierdre O’Rourke met all the local congresspersons as well as State Assembly persons for photo ops when she was awarded the Silver Star.

Her first follow up visit was with Congressman Jonathan Seachuk. He appeared very tolerant but disinterested, a constituent visit that he just had to get through. Dierdre picked up the symptoms of disinterest immediately.

“Gee, Mr. Seachuk, you were very interested in this when we posed together for photos when I received the Silver Star.” Her bold response got his immediate attention. “You might remember that we discussed the programming of the Jesuit Urban Ministry.”

“We don’t provide financial support for religious endeavors,”

“Ah, but you do,” replied Dierdre. “You support the Salvation Army and Catholic Charities. The Jesuit Urban Mission has a significant impact on the community. And we are not promoting religion. We are healing humanity. Our religion dictates that.”

“And the Jesuit Mission has an even more significant impact on the community. For instance, this year we opened an urgent care center to make up for the lack of community health care in that whole section of Philadelphia. We have an after-school homework and supplemental education program for 150 high school and grammar school students. We provide English as a Second Language programs. We are doing incredible work with the homeless in the area, a population that is totally ignored, many of whom are former military who left the health of their minds on some battlefield on behalf of our country. Not only are we getting them off the street, but we are getting them jobs. If you talk to anyone doing that work they’ll tell you how difficult the work is and that no one really wants to do it. We provide shelter because there is no shelter available in that area of Philadelphia. We have forty college graduates who are taking a year before they forge their own future, to work in the Mission. They also have on-going education for them from professionals on just about every area of social service development. They get room, board, and a paltry monthly stipend.

“Our support comes from free will gifts from all over, especially from the crème de la crème of Philadelphia society, all the professional sport teams, and entertainers such as Bono, Bon Jovi, and Josh Groban.”

“We also publish a monthly e-newsletter where we keep our donors up to date with our activities. Helping us would keep your name fresh among these wealthy donors. I’m sure the name Dave Garvey and his vast influence is known to you. I am the Director of Security for Garvey Legal. Mr. Garvey was the lead sponsor for the last fund-raising gala and is also the lead sponsor for an upcoming golf tournament. I would love to be able to write a piece about your help for the mission stating that Congressman Seachuck gets things done.”

“You play hardball, don’t you young lady.”

“You are aware that race relations is one of the great divides in our country. Studies show that education is the key to dealing with that. We are introducing a program, a three-day symposium on race relations for high school students. We are inaugurating that program next month in Gettysburg.”

“Let me recommend that you come with me as my guest to visit the Mission and meet Fr. Keenan and our staff. You will see some of our program in action.”

“Well, I’m really quite busy.”

“I thought you might be. It is, however, an opportunity to have your name published in our newsletter, read my many of your most wealthy constituents as someone who is interested in getting things done. I’ll pick you up here on Friday at Three O’ Clock.”

“All right. You are a tough lady.”

“I was educated by the United States Government. Don’t make me work so hard the next time.”

Dierdre visited with five Philadelphia Congresspersons. She approached them in the same manner as she did with Seachuk. The next step was to prepare for the meetings.

Bernadette Whelan, *De Valera and Roosevelt. Irish and American Diplomacy in Times of Crisis, 1932-1939* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Conducting diplomacy in times of crisis has always been fraught. At the centre of practising diplomacy is making and keeping contacts and obtaining information and intelligence. The methods to achieve that are formal through official meetings, negotiations, treaties and agreements and informal through soft, or public or third track diplomacy. The absence of the latter during the last few months has been noted by political commentators. An unnamed diplomat told *The Guardian* journalist Patrick Wintour “So many conversations on Zoom end with ‘I will tell you the background to all this over a cup of coffee later’. This is the problem now – ‘You cannot get hints, nods and winks to guide you.’ Yet the practice of diplomacy is thousands of years old and was constantly reinvented in times of global wars, civil wars, economic crisis, pandemics and other upheavals. The inter-war period in the twentieth century although a time of peace, was another fraught time of upheaval for America and Ireland.

The 1930s which started with the consequences of the 1929 Wall Street crash and ended with the outbreak of a global war in 1939, offers another opportunity to examine how diplomacy operated under difficult conditions. International affairs were dominated by debt, disarmament, depression, the rise of fascism and military preparedness. Further challenges for diplomats relate to specific national interests. For a small country such as Ireland which had gained its sovereignty only in 1922, bringing its national concerns to the attention of a large superpower such as the United States of America, was even more challenging. A handful of Irish diplomats used the methods of diplomacy to implement their government’s vision for Ireland in Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s America. They became adept at organising and structuring soft diplomacy to pick up on the ‘hints, nods and winks’ and turn them into useful information to be sent back to headquarters in Dublin.

Ireland’s American policy centred on entangling US governments in the quest for political sovereignty, economic independence and international legitimacy. The Irish diplomats’ worked hard to manage de Valera’s demands and not cause a break-down in the diplomatic relationship particularly due to issues arising from the Irish Hospitals’ Sweepstake, the Dáil Eireann bonds repayments scheme, securing a US-Ireland trade agreement and de Valera’s proposed visit to the US in 1939. The Irish post was not a demanding one for American diplomats all of whom indulged their personal interests in rural pursuits. Nevertheless, they also had to temper de Valera’s expectations that the American polity, public and press and Irish-Americans in general were intensely interested in Irish affairs particularly to help end partition and to invest in the economic development of the Irish state.

National interests also involved consular business. Consular work is often criticised as routine bureaucracy but deportations, extraditions, inheritance work especially ‘estate chasers’ and ‘heir hunters’, remittance and compensation were all part of the transatlantic human relationship during the 1930s. Such work was more demanding for the Irish diplomats in the US because of size of the Irish-American diaspora. After the end of mass migration to the US in 1930, US diplomats in Ireland dealt mainly with ‘whereabouts’ work locating relatives in inheritance and estate cases, distributing pensions and insurance compensation monies. Immigration and emigration matters in the United States and Ireland in an era of crisis also illustrated common approaches to borders. Roosevelt and de Valera shared a

restrictionist approach to inward migration which resonates in to-day's world. A further unsurprising lesson from Irish and American diplomacy in the inter-war period is the danger of claims to exceptionalism in foreign policy.

FEBRUARY IRISH HISTORY

1st

1943 - Central Bank of Ireland established.

1982 - Corporal punishment banned from schools in the Republic.

2nd

1880 - Charles Stewart Parnell addresses the United States Congress.

1972 - The British Embassy is burned in response to Bloody Sunday.

3rd

1881 - Michael Davitt is arrested.

1917 - The father of Easter Rising rebel Joseph Plunkett wins a seat at Roscommon North for Sinn Féin.

1919 - Éamon de Valera and two others escape from prison in England.

4th

1933 - De Valera's Fianna Fáil win their first overall majority in the Dáil Éireann.

1992 - On the day Mary Robinson becomes the first President of Ireland to visit Belfast, an off-duty RUC officer in Belfast kills three people in a Sinn Féin office before committing suicide.

5th 1992 - Loyalists kill five Catholics in a betting shop in Belfast.

7th 1991 - The IRA mortar bombs Downing Street.

8th 1929 - De Valera sentenced to one month in jail for illegally entering County Armagh.

9th

1983 - The IRA kidnap a racehorse, Shergar.

1996 - The IRA breaks its ceasefire by bombing Canary Wharf.

10th

1922 - Treaty Bill introduced in the British House of Commons, providing the dissolution of the 'Southern Ireland' parliament and the election of a new parliament for which the Provisional Government will be responsible.

1958 - Trade Unions vote to end a 15-year split, forming the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

1972 - The IRA announce a ceasefire.

11th

1867 - Fenians try and fail to seize Chester Castle.

1925 - A resolution is passed making divorce and remarriage illegal.

1926 - The performance of The Plough and the Stars leads to violence in Dublin.

2000 - Devolution suspended in Northern Ireland.

12th

1939 - The Department of External Affairs recognises the government of General Franco in Spain.

1972 - Ulster Vanguard Movement is launched.

1989 - Belfast solicitor Pat Finucane is shot dead by Loyalists.

13th 1966 - The Bishop of Clonfert complains about the content of The Late Late Show.

14th 1981 - Forty-eight young people die in a fire at the Stardust Ballroom.

15th

1956 - Owen Sheehy-Skeffington calls for an end to the corporal punishment of girls.

1995 - English football hooligans riot at Lansdown Road.

17th

1960 - The Television Bill passes through its final stages in Seanad Éireann.

1978 - Twelve people die in the La Mon restaurant bombing.

18th 1948 - John A. Costello is elected the second Taoiseach of Ireland.

19th

1901 - Thomas O'Donnell is prevented from addressing the British House of Commons in Irish.

1987 - Charles Haughey returns as Taoiseach.

21st

1843 - Dublin Corporation debate on the Repeal of the Act of Union.

1910 - Sir Edward Carson becomes the leader of the Irish Unionists.

22nd

1933 - General Eoin O'Duffy is forced to resign from his post as Commissioner of the Garda Síochána.

1995 - Taoiseach John Bruton and British PM John Major launch a framework document for Northern Ireland.

23rd

1910 - St Patrick's College, Maynooth, becomes part of the National University of Ireland.

1943 - 35 children die in a fire at St. Joseph's orphanage, Cavan.

26th

1852 - The Birkenhead, which has sailed with insufficient lifeboats, founders. Recruits to the British Army who had boarded at Queenstown stand to attention while women and children are placed in the lifeboats.

1934 - Protest by boys at a school in Thurles over classmates wearing blue shirts (in support of the Blueshirt movement).

1992 - Ban lifted on a 14-year-old rape victim in the Republic going to England for an abortion.

27th

1903 - Mansion House meeting welcomes a move to establish St Patrick's Day as a national holiday.

1920 - Text of the Home Rule Bill published, providing for two parliaments in Ireland.

1997 - Law providing for divorce comes into effect in the Republic.

28th

1973 - The National Coalition of Fine Gael and Labour win an election in the Republic

1985 - IRA kill nine RUC officers at Newry.