

# Reforming Global Governance – Challenges Ahead for the UN

## ■ Erskine Childers\*

*Despite international conflicts the 1990s have given hope of a new dawn for democracy; in Sub-Saharan Africa since 1990, 31 multiparty elections have been held – in 21 cases for the first time. But the machinery for global governance is viewed by many to be in tatters. Taking an Irish perspective Childers assesses the measures needed to strengthen the UN and to enable it to fulfil its Charter obligations. He emphasises that structural reform of the UN in isolation is not enough. Reform of member states behaviour is essential. He concludes forcibly with a challenge to all world citizens and NGOs, who comprise “We the Peoples”, to press for people power to be institutionalised with a UN parliamentary Assembly being an important first step in this regard.*

An Irish perspective on the United Nations encounters much that is surreal. Consider only the following:

- Its members celebrated the 50th birthday of a UN that was on the brink of bankruptcy and closure, largely from being held to ransom by, of all things, its *host* country.<sup>1</sup> The US was deliberately withholding dues it is legally obliged to pay. But even after a decade of this, Europe’s representatives merely and timidly expressed displeasure.

\*Sadly, Erskine Childers died while this journal was in preparation. Trócaire is pleased to include his article along with a tribute from Tom Kitt TD and Ian Linden, General Secretary of the Catholic Institute for International Relations, London.

- In a UN Conference on the non-proliferation treaty the nuclear powers used economic intimidation to get the Treaty extended indefinitely without serious disarmament commitments. The Venezuelan Ambassador resigned over his changed instructions after his government had bowed to economic threats. Asked about the extortion, Indonesia's Foreign Minister said bluntly, "So what else is new? It happens every day".<sup>2</sup> Europe said nothing.
- Neither the International Monetary Fund (IMF) nor the World Bank warned the world of the acute danger of unregulated short-term investment flows that triggered the collapse of their "Mexican market-miracle". Only UNCTAD and the UN regional commission issued such warnings.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, prominent Northern reformers were proposing that the IMF and Bank should play larger roles, and UNCTAD should be abolished.<sup>4</sup>
- IMF/Bank "structural adjustment", requiring developing countries (among other things) to dismantle up to 35 per cent of their health and education services, continued to wreak its havoc. There was still no sign that Northern governments endorsing these diktats realised they were destroying with one hand services their own "aid" had helped to build with the other. They were busy criticising the UN's "failure to coordinate" in the Economic and Social Council.
- The North-South poverty gap has doubled: in 1960 the poorest one-fifth of humankind could earn one-thirtieth what the richest fifth was earning; now the poorest earned less than one-sixtieth, and 80 per cent of humankind now account for only 19 per cent of world trade.<sup>5</sup> But the industrial powers refused to discuss world macro-economic policy at the UN, claiming that the IMF and World Bank were doing this, which they were not. With the UN effectively disenfranchised from the real world economy, no institution anywhere was addressing the socio-economic needs of all of humankind.
- The deepening impoverishment of many developing countries, and the end of Cold War restraints on merely frozen cultural and political legacies of the age of empires, was leading to more and more mass unrest and even armed conflict.<sup>6</sup> When such conflicts then burst upon the UN, the major powers were refusing to authorise adequate UN responses. When the UN was then caught in impossibly under-resourced peace-keeping roles, media and politicians in the same countries called the result "another UN fiasco".

These glimpses of our existing machinery for global governance are not very promising. In an era that is supposed to witness a new dawning for democracy, our only universal public service institution – dedicated to “the equal rights of nations large and small” – is pervasively dominated by the foreign and economic policy elites of a handful of countries. In UN matters the known views of the citizens of those countries are also substantially ignored.<sup>7</sup> This tiny minority of the membership dominates the whole spectrum of the UN’s mandated activities, deliberately preventing it from properly implementing its primary Charter mission – to address the causes of conflict by “the economic and social advancement of all peoples”.

Before looking at what can be done about this, some major conclusions can be drawn. A first such conclusion is that structural reform by itself will not overcome these problems; there must also be reform of member-state behaviour, particularly the behaviour of a handful of members. It is not, however, safe to sit back and wait for change within these countries’ governments; the rest of the membership must act to convince them to alter their behaviour and, where they do not, override it.

Much of the world is still heavily influenced by the ingrained sense of intimidation before “great powers” that developed during the age of empires and which was heightened when they acquired their ultimate weapons of terrorisation. But imperialism itself was at all times 95 per cent bluff punctuated by 5 per cent periodic massacre, and Mahatma Gandhi showed how the bluff could be called by sheer people-power solidarity. The rest of the UN’s members need to realise that the balloon of bluff behind intimidation at the UN can also be burst by more active solidarity, and more alert use of their real powers.

The majority seem to have lost their knowledge of what powers they do have in the Charter and in the General Assembly. For instance, it is commonly asserted that the Security Council is “the supreme organ of the United Nations”.<sup>8</sup> It simply is not, not even by virtue of its binding sanctions power. The Charter states clearly (Article 24) that the “members” – meaning all the members – “confer” (a delegating verb) on the Council only “primary” responsibility for peace and security; and that it acts on their behalf”. Moreover, under the Charter the Council “shall act in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the UN”, of which the paramount interpreter is, beyond question, the General Assembly.<sup>9</sup>

The Security Council cannot appropriate any funds for a

military operation. Only the General Assembly has budgetary authority.

Countless other examples could be cited of the real and fully legal powers that the vast majority of humankind and their representatives do actually possess in the Charter vis-à-vis any attempt to exercise minority control. Yet intimidation has been so effective that “waiting for the Perm Three” to reveal their views on any and every aspect of UN work has created in New York an atmosphere like a medieval court, waiting for the word to be given from the inner chamber.<sup>10</sup> No country with any pride should accept this at the end of the 20th century.

A final overall observation touches Ireland very directly. Ireland is a member of a regional union that contains two of the permanent members, and that has an inherited (and NATO-inspired) stance towards the United States that varies between virtual subservience and unwarranted politesse.

Ireland, of course, has her own “special relationship” with the US; but Irish citizens and their NGOs have shown a clear ability to distinguish between friendship with the USA and US policies that are judged abhorrent. The problem is that Ireland’s foreign policy, at the UN no less than elsewhere, is constrained within the European Union formulae. The decision-making processes of a universal world organisation based upon the direct membership of individual states endowed with sovereign equality of expression and voting have been diluted.

The particular problem is that at the United Nations the EU is not a union of equals; it does contain two permanent members who have archaic self-arrogated privileges at the UN that are wholly dissonant from modern European democratic principles. The dilution is subtle: Irish diplomats bend every effort to exert their Irish influence on their EU colleagues, but on key issues the submergence is there, and painful to watch.

What, then, can be done to rescue the UN from these conditions? The recommendations that follow are only “uopianist” or “unrealistic” if the reader assumes that we are condemned to live in an imperialist continuum.

## **Upholding the right of free voting**

Members must take far greater care to protect, use, and nourish the ethical principles of the Charter, and to insist on behaviour according to the norms of international law.

The universality of the UN must be made real against those who seek to exercise minority control over it. The very countries that most frequently preach democracy to the rest of the world threaten highly indebted, low-income countries with no or less debt relief, no or less "aid", no or less IMF credit-rating everywhere in the world, unless they vote as instructed. The economic extortion of votes is a form of state terrorism against the lives and livelihood of tens of thousands, even millions of civilians, the number potentially menaced depending only on the size of the country "targeted" by the extorting power. It is a criminal felony under the laws of the countries practising it. And, of course, it is an outright violation of the international law of the UN Charter.

If this loathsome behaviour is not stopped, the South will cease to see sufficient value in the UN to continue participating in it, and the already very dangerous economic apartheid across the North-South divide will be completed by a geopolitical sundering of our planet likely to lead to global chaos.

Like the individual victim of blackmail, the victim-country dare not publicly reveal these menaces. It must either have the assurance of solidarity from fellow-members or it will probably have to submit, as has repeatedly happened in the Security Council, and all too often even in the General Assembly.<sup>11</sup>

Incredibly, Ireland has voted against a General Assembly resolution condemning such practices.<sup>12</sup>

Ireland can regain the respect of the UN majority by three measures. First, it should announce readiness to join in a vigilant "Blackmail Watch" at the UN, to provide to all potentially threatened members the assurance of immediate solidarity that will alone permit them to break the silence that their extortionists demand. Secondly, Ireland should contribute to a UN Blackmail Defence Fund. Thirdly, Ireland should be ready to become a state party to litigation at the World Court against any member attempting such extortion.

## **Working the powers in the Charter**

A series of strategic reforms across the spectrum of UN responsibilities can emanate from a decision to begin fully implementing the Charter. An astonishing number of the provisions the founders made for majority decision-making have simply remained inert.

In a whole sequence of Articles the United Nations is clearly mandated through international law to be the leader and centrepiece for the formulation of macro-economic strategy and policy for “the economic and social advancement of all peoples”. Instead, we have a rudderless world economy in which 20 per cent of humankind command 80 or more per cent of all income, research, productivity, savings, investment, consumption, trade —and are the sources of over 80 per cent of the environmental degradation of our planet. In their respect for the most dangerous fundamentalist religion on earth – that which worships “the magic of the market” – industrial leaders have abandoned their national reserves and their citizens’ savings to unknown and totally unaccountable private speculators. It is now urgent, and it is even vital to world peace, that the UN be re-mandated, and resourced with top-quality staff, to formulate macro-policies that will bring the commanding heights of the world economy which is supposed to meet the needs of its 6 billion people under a necessary modicum of equitable management.

Key in this is that the international financial institutions (IFIs), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation, in particular, must be properly brought into the UN System, and their policies co-ordinated by the General Assembly (Article 58, presently lying inert).<sup>13</sup> The UN’s development funds should be consolidated under a single UN development authority. There should be a Deputy Secretary-General for International Economic Co-operation and Sustainable Development, with rank above all other executive heads in the UN system.

## Vitiating the power of veto

The virtually feudal veto-powers of the permanent members must be relentlessly clipped until their own citizens become ashamed of the antiquarian arrogance of their governments.

The General Assembly must fully assert its Charter mandates (Articles 10, 11, 13, 14, 15) for international peace and security and the advancement of international law, and as guardian of the Charter. It has the Charter authority (Article 96.1) to refer to the World Court “any legal question”; it should be alert to use this power over dubious proposals in the Security Council, and be ready to despatch its own fact-finding missions.<sup>14</sup> Ireland is

well-experienced to help the Assembly urgently develop a comprehensive “Declaration on Principles for United Nations Humanitarian Intervention within a State”. Invoking its sole budgetary authority (Article 17), the Assembly must make it clear to the Security Council (i.e., the permanent members) that it will not authorise peacekeeping operations unless there are transparent, standing procedures for consultation between the two organs and, additionally, for detailed ongoing consultation with the troop-contributing countries in any UN operation.<sup>15</sup>

## Security Council reform

The current issue of enlarging the Council and giving Germany and Japan permanent member status yet again involves the power of intimidation. The composition of the Council can only be altered by Charter amendment; the powers can veto an amendment they dislike but they need a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly to adopt one. Here again, members can show enough solidarity to resist extortion, or new splitting manoeuvres.<sup>16</sup> They can prevent any change until the arrogance of elites in three to five countries is worn down, and a democratically elected Council can be established based on regional representation and graduated majority voting according to the gravity of decision.

Should it prove impossible to bring the “Perm Three” into the modern world, and a real showdown becomes necessary, the final power of the General Assembly as the supreme organ of the UN can be invoked. It can paralyse the Council by denying it the two-thirds of its membership that the Assembly does elect and, under Article 22, creating its own peace and security body. Unimaginable? Only so long as we remain intimidated by a handful of tired emperors most of whom have already lost their clothes, and the “super” one of whom cannot afford them any longer.

## The secretary-general

In the “new age of democracy” it is also scandalous that 5 out of 185 members can veto a nomination for the chief public servant of humankind, the secretary-general. Here yet again, however, seen without intimidation their power is only the negative; they

cannot *elect* a secretary-general; only the General Assembly has that power. But the Assembly has never used its obvious authority to determine the manner of selecting a nominee to it, in which the powers have shown such gross incompetence that we have had only two outstanding secretaries-general, Dag Hammarskjöld and U Thant, both by accident. The Assembly can, and should, instruct the Security Council how to search for the best candidate, and should it make abundantly clear that it will reject, and reject again, any candidate deemed unacceptable. Given the indifferent to abysmal performance of men in world affairs, it is time for us to be led by an outstanding woman at the UN.

## **Flexibility of UN response**

Again and again, UN peacekeeping operations have been severely handicapped by lack of flexible response-instruments. In many instances, the urgent need has been for protection of humanitarian and human rights operations, largely carried out by NGOs. We need a distinct UN humanitarian security police force of especially trained volunteer police on 72-hour standby with graduated weapons-authorisation. Such a force, rapidly deployed, could often obviate the need for full UN military deployment.

## **Giving the UN the means it needs**

Hanging over all the UN's present efforts and all issues of its improvement, however, there is now the threat of its slow or possibly even sudden extinction through outright financial bankruptcy. Several initiatives only await governments' courage.

It is not safe for the UN, to be dependent on any member-state (tomorrow it could be another) for 25 per cent of its budget. In 1985 the Olof Palme, Prime Minister of Sweden, proposed that no member's contribution exceed 10 or 12 per cent, and that the (very modest) difference be apportioned among other capable members.<sup>17</sup> This should be adopted forthwith. The US should not be asked to agree to have its political stranglehold thus eliminated; the majority should just vote it, with the reduction in US dues to become effective when it has paid in all its arrears, and the interest levied on them.



The General Assembly should also decide that any member-state defaulting on its dues for political purposes (i.e. not from economic difficulties) cannot benefit from UN procurements (the US still earns some \$400 million a year from the UN).

Ireland should energetically join other members now ready to study additional sources of financing the UN's work, including international taxation (of transnational financial flows, airline tickets, and other possible sources based on the principle that their activity benefits from a peaceful and stable world).

## **Establishing people-power at the UN**

Finally, the history of the UN in its first fifty years demonstrates that its mandated responsibilities on behalf of "We, the Peoples", are far too serious matters to be left to executive governments alone. Not least, the often supine conduct of our governments in face of one or a few bully-members indicates that they need their spines stiffened by their citizens.

In 1995 we saw two global UN meetings intended only for governments, the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development and the Beijing Conference on Women, being surrounded by tens of thousands of impatient, energetic citizens and NGOs from all over the world. An era of international people-power is indeed aborning, but it must be institutionalised.

It is plainly time that we move to create a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly beside the present General Assembly of executive governments. This is no more "utopian" than was the vision of the European Parliament – or, for that matter, the recurring demonstration in India that electors among over 900 million by no means homogeneous people can make a democratic parliament function. The population of the world is only six or seven times that of India.

## **Conclusion**

The measures we need to take to strengthen our United Nations, and to enable it to fulfil all of its Chartered mission, are "not so wild a dream as those who profit by postponing it pretend".<sup>18</sup> They need the active support of Ireland, a member-

country with no axe to grind, conscious of how much agonised experience it shares with most of humankind, and imbued with a belief that principles are worth defending.

Time was when Ireland – herself, alone – played so singular a role in the United Nations, bridging the great chasm between North and South, that austere journals in London like *The Economist* even referred to “The Afro-Irish Assembly”.

Time is when the member-people of the world’s highest per capita citizen-donations to international development and humanitarian relief must do more to strengthen their UN. This deep Irish sense of our one-ness on this planet, of “the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small”, must be given new meaning in a resolute drive to save our common global public-service institution from its predators, and to bring it to its full capabilities for achieving peace and justice everywhere.

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## Erskine Childers: Two Appreciations

*by Tom Kitt TD and Ian Linden*

**D**uring my time as Minister of State for Development and European Affairs, I had the opportunity to work with many development practitioners, policy advisors and politicians. I subsequently invited a number of these to contribute to a book I planned to edit on key foreign policy and development issues which Ireland needs to address in the years ahead. For various reasons the book did not materialise.

However, I am very pleased that Trócaire has agreed to publish in this year’s *Development Review* one of those articles entitled, “Reforming Global Governance” written by the late Erskine Childers, a man whom I admired greatly.

In my correspondence and conversations with him he was always enthusiastic, inspiring and above all else courteous. His idealism, sense of justice and equality are evident in all of his writings. His conviction and his constant questioning both apparent in his article will hopefully inspire politicians and decision-makers worldwide to face up to the challenges that lie ahead and take action rather than merely write just another report.

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*Tom Kitt TD*

There is something very poignant in reading Erskine Childers' urgent prose and knowing that he is dead. He spoke just like he wrote with that prophetic wrath. He died in the midst of meetings set up to coincide with the UN's fiftieth anniversary, an organisation to which he had dedicated most of his intellectual life and administrative skills.

CIIR's relationship with him dates back many years, but recently we got to know him more closely when he edited a CIIR book: **Challenges to the United Nations: Building a Safer World**. It focussed on UN reform from the perspective of some of the themes found in the paper above, with a particular focus on the UN's role in world development and peace.

He was an extraordinarily diligent editor. Nothing got stuck on his desk very long. The faxes hummed, often with his special brand of chiding humour, and he celebrated the publication launch by taking all our publications staff out to dinner.

But what was most appealing to the staff of a small, radical NGO was his unswerving commitment to social justice, his visceral mistrust of propaganda, and a shared assumption that, on the whole, established authority was more often than not up to no good.

He told me one day how, as a young man during the Second World War, he remembered Churchill sending a secret envoy to his father's house (Erskine H. Childers, of course, later became President of Ireland 1973-4). The message that the boy overheard was that Churchill was about to denounce the Irish government for pro-Nazi leanings, but that he did not mean a word of it. "Merely a ploy for domestic consumption, old chap". Childers went on from there to analyse the multiple betrayals of the poor in international diplomatic life.

Childers' core message and example, like that of anyone gifted with a prophetic clarity, was relatively simple. It was that the United Nations represented in its founding documents and vision an aspiration for humankind that was utterly essential for the future of the planet and, thus, to which it was worth dedicating his life. For it set out to do no less than eliminate the scourges of war, poverty and disease.

The UN vision had been distorted by misrepresentation, misinformation, the machinations of powerful elites and the rise of what became rival centres of global governance like the International Monetary Fund. It risked foundering on the rock of the Great Powers' intransigence and quest for global dominance. Now was the time to do something about this

betrayal before it was too late. The need for the United Nations to fulfill its original mandate was urgent.

Were this to have been all, and to have ended with a vague call for “repentance” Erskine Childers would have been happily relegated to the bin marked “crank” by those who feared the message.

Indeed the danger of calling anyone prophetic is that this is an invitation to ignore them. His career at the UN was certainly blocked on a number of occasions. But his denunciations were based on sound analysis and were accompanied by suggestions of new ways forward, reform options for the security council and the appointment of the secretary-general and a range of creative yet concrete proposals based on a detailed knowledge of the small print and how the UN really worked. Perhaps he may yet be seen as having played John-the-Baptist to a future secretary-general, Mary Robinson. It would be a fitting tribute to his work as one of Ireland’s most distinguished international civil servants.

Several of his insights have begun to gain currency in the corridors of power. This year, the June-July session of the UN had cooperation between the United Nations development bodies and the Bretton Woods institutions (BWIs)” on the agenda. Despite resistance, there are some efforts being made to reel in the BWIs and bring them within a framework of UN development policy. As Erskine Childers has repeatedly demonstrated, they were never intended to operate independently of the UN system, and they have usurped the role of the world body.

Erskine Childers’ thought was based on a premise of democracy in international public life that made him an able interlocutor for proponents of a “global civil society”. The subject of his vision for the UN was always, to some degree “we, the peoples...” against “them, the superpowers”. Organisations like Trócaire and CIIR, therefore, saw in Erskine Childers a champion of a critique of global governance that they wished to advocate, and an able exponent of ideas that came out of their experience of development.

This led him, as it led us, to a passionate concern for all those denied expression of their democratic rights. He wrote eloquently on the Palestinian cause in the 1960s. And I remember a conversation with him near Stockholm, two years before the Gulf War, when he explained how the plight of the Kurds and the Quechua, tens of millions of people with a shared culture and language divided by nation-state boundaries, denied

any national expression and repressed, would prove to be one of the most explosive issues of the coming decade.

As he wrote in his introduction to *Challenges to the United Nations*: "The real problems of humankind are no longer subject to suppression and distraction under empires or cold war. History is now making its full claims. Unleashed with greater force because of their long neglect, they are very dangerous. The costs of continuing to neglect them and then trying to cope with their consequences in conflict and mass human misery will prove quite insurmountable".

Ian Linden

### Footnotes

- 1 On 31 August 1995 the United States was in arrears of \$315 million on its contributions to the regular budget of the UN, 37 per cent of the total arrears, and for \$1.6 billion on its obligatory contributions to UN peacekeeping budgets, 40 per cent of those arrears. Apart from the enormous amount of arrears from a single member, the distinguishing feature was that this delinquency was not for reasons of economic difficulty, which are recognised in the Charter (Article 19), but under official US statements that all other members must accept unilaterally required changes in UN policy, decision-making procedures and administration.
- 2 The Ambassador of Malaysia stated that, if member states had been able "to decide with their conscience" by secret ballot, the outcome would have been different. cf. detailed report in B.P.Menon, *International Documents Review* (Weekly Newsletter on the United Nations), Vol. 6 No. 18 8-12 May 1995, New Jersey, USA.
- 3 See detailed account by C. Raghavan in *Third World Economics*, Issue No. 107, 16-28 February 1995.
- 4 See *Our Global Neighbourhood*, Report of the Commission on Global Governance (Oxford, University Press, 1995). The Foreign Minister of Indonesia, a member of the Commission, issued an explicit dissent from its recommendations on the closure of UNCTAD.
- 5 *Human Development Reports*, 1992 et seq., UNDP, New York
- 6 IMF structural adjustment impositions closely preceded the unfolding internal upheavals in Algeria, in former Yugoslavia, in Mexico (the Chiapas rebel leadership openly states this), and in Rwanda. There have, of course, been underlying tensions and other causes of such upheavals; but "triggers", the gasoline poured on simmering embers, have again and again been the combination of Northern-imposed interest rates on debt repayments, Northern-dictated deprivation of trading opportunities, and then Northern-demanded "structural adjustment" measures.
- 7 In repeated annual public opinion polls over many years, basic support for the UN has never dropped below 55 per cent in the United States; even after the last year of virulent demagoguery by Republican leaders and extreme

right-wing groups, June 1995 polls showed that 67 per cent of Americans still supported the world organisation. Their elected representatives behave as though of some other country.

- 8 This astounding statement appears even in the report of the Commission on Global Governance, *op. cit.*, page 319. It shows once again how the intimidation of the age of empires and “great powers” is all too alive and well.
- 9 Article 10 states that “the General Assembly may discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the present Charter or *relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter*” (emphasis added).
- 10 “The Perm Three” refers to Britain, France and the United States, the principal and continuous actors in intimidation. The Russian Federation, economically further crippled by the “magic” of Western marketers after Cold War expenditure, is only periodically involved in the “Permanent Member” cabal. China manifestly wishes to be seen to be detached, and in fact is associated with the developing countries in the standard formulation, “the Group of 77 and China”.
- 11 Among countless cases, economic menaces and/or bribery were involved in all Gulf Crisis Security Council decisions after the initial condemnation of Iraq; again in the Libya PanAm 103 decisions; in the rescinding of the General Assembly resolution about Zionism and Racism; and in the first Assembly attempt to refer the threat of nuclear weapons to the World Court.
- 12 Vote on General Assembly Resolution A/RES/48/168 entitled “Economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries”, recording Ireland “Against”; cf. UN documents A/48/717/Add.2, 17 December 1993, and for text of resolution, A/RES/48/168, 22 February 1994.
- 13 The IMF signed a Specialised Agency Agreement with the UN under Article 63 but the USA ensured that it was very loose. The G-7 are actively blocking any attempt to have the WTO made a specialised agency, as is explicitly required under Article 57. If Ireland acquiesces in this further example of deliberate weakening of the UN it is complicit in violating the international law of the Charter.
- 14 Another classic example of the force of intimidation is that many believe the Assembly could not do this, since Article 12.1 denies the Assembly authority to make any “recommendation” on any dispute of which the Council is already appraised. To accept this would be to subordinate issues of law to operational proposals.
- 15 This involves another vivid example of the inertia of other members before the “power” of the Permanent Members. Only in 1994, after over 30 years of UN peacekeeping, was it even agreed in principle that countries contributing troops – including Ireland – would be kept regularly informed and consulted by the Council.
- 16 A clever trick promoted at one stage was to offer a few large Southern countries (Brazil, Nigeria or South Africa, India) permanent membership – but without a veto.
- 17 Contrary to right wing disinformation, the cost of the UN is minuscule. The US 25 per cent share of the UN regular budget is only \$315 million a year (about the amount Americans spend on cut flowers and pot plants in 12

weeks). Reducing it to 12 per cent, other capable countries would only have to divide among them about \$150 million a year.

- 18 The American poet, Norman Corwin, in "On a Note of Triumph", written for D-Day

