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Gerard Casey's American Allies

by Mags Glennon   
  
The plush surroundings of Dublin’s Davenport Hotel, and the Cashel Palace   
Hotel in Tipperary, will play host to an unusual international gathering   
from May 21st to 28th.  
  
The Rockford Institute, a US far right think-tank, is holding it’s ‘Third   
International Convivium’ in Ireland and the headline speaker is none other   
than Dr. Gerard Casey, UCD philosophy lecturer, arch Euro-sceptic and serial   
election candidate for ‘family values’ causes.  
  
The Rockford Institute, founded in 1976 and based in Illinois, describes   
itself as "the authentic voice of the American Heartland". The Institute   
defines itself as ‘paleo-conservative’, which it describes as "the   
expression of rootedness: a sense of place and of history, a sense of self   
derived from forebears, kin and culture." It deplores multiculturalism,   
immigration, the weakening of ‘Christian institutions’ and the "distraction   
of the general population by sports, sex, the internet and the booming   
economy." It opposes American interventions abroad, such as the Iraqi and   
Kosovan wars and is strongly pro-Serb. US far right Presidential contender   
Pat Buchanan is a long time supporter of Rockford and the Institute has   
international links with the anti-immigration Northern League in Italy and   
Haider’s Freedom Party in Austria.  
  
Joining Casey at the redneck shindig will be Rockford Institute big-wigs Dr.   
Thomas Fleming, President of the Institute and editor of ‘Chronicles’; Dr.   
George McCartney, a Professor of English at St. John's University, New York;   
and Scott P. Richert, the executive editor of ‘Chronicles’.  
  
The public perception of the modern Southern confederate is of tattooed   
trailer park ‘white trash’ with confederate bumper stickers and gun racks on   
his pick up. A registration fee of $3,795 indicates that the Dublin event is   
not aimed at such riff-raff. The US visitors take pride in listing their   
academic qualifications and cultivate a scholary image to promote their   
intellectual racism.

The best known and most controversial speaker is Dr. J. Michael Hill,   
President of the League of the South. He believes that the American people   
should "Tell the courts to go to Hell, take back their Second Amendment   
right to arm themselves and organise well regulated Militias state by   
state." Hill has a long term interest in Ireland and has penned volumes on   
Celtic Warfare and Ulster history in the 16th century. The League of the   
South classifies Southern people as ‘Anglo-Celts’ rather than ‘Anglo-Saxons’   
and runs a ‘Hedge School Seminar program’ which it claims is based on the   
Irish Hedge Schools during the Penal Law period.  
  
The LOS, founded in 1994, It is a ‘neo-confederate’ body which hearkens back   
to the good old days of Southern secession, when the ‘Stars and Bars’   
confederate flag flew over Dixie. It is one of the key groups in the rise of   
‘neo-confederate’ ideas in the Southern states. The other is the ‘Council of   
Conservative Citizens’. The League has gained prominence and support in   
recent years with its campaign to keep the Confederate flag flying over   
State government buildings. The LOS denies that it is racist and presents a   
plausible veneer of a respectable cultural and historical organisation led   
by academics. However it opposes non-white immigration, integrated schools   
and interracial marriage. The League and it’s allied groups also promote the   
‘academic racist’ theories of differing racial IQ scores being responsible   
for poverty, illegitimacy and crime rates. Hill also defends slavery,   
stating "No apologies for slavery should be made. Christians who owned   
slaves in the South were on firm scriptural ground".  
  
Nothing in Gerard Casey’s past political history - former leader of the   
Christian Solidarity Party; chairperson of the Christian Centrist Party;   
spokesperson for ‘Parents Against Stay Safe’; committee member of the Youth   
Defence run No Divorce Campaign; spokesperson for the Public Policy   
Institute of Ireland (a body "based on the natural law and Christian   
principles'") - offers any immediate explanation for the interest his new   
American friends would have in his views. Indeed in an interview with the   
Cork Examiner in 1996 Casey denied that that the CSP was financially aided   
by right-wing religious groupings in the US.  
  
Indeed in the shadowy world of Irish fringe right groups only one, the   
Ulster Independence Movement, openly supports the Confederate cause. The   
UIM, and it’s magazine and website ‘Ulster Nation’, are run by Belfast based   
David Kerr, a former National Front activist in the 1980s. Kerr’s group is   
affiliated to the US based ‘American Council of Conservative Citizens’,   
which he addressed in 1997, during a US visit when he also paid homage at   
the grave of Civil War Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Kerr describes   
the CCC as resisting "the liberal-leftist war against America’s culture,   
heritage, and civil liberties". Kerr’s website sells key rings with combined   
Ulster and Confederate flag designs and includes links to the ‘League of the   
South’ and ‘Southern Traditionalist’ sites. He has also announced that he is   
running in West Belfast in the upcoming British general election.