



NEWSLETTER

INDEPENDENT SENATOR GERARD CRAUGHWELL



In a proud moment of historical celebration and civic reflection, *Senator Craughwell* launched a beautifully crafted keepsake brochure titled "*Leinster House, From Ducal Mansion to the Heart of Irish Democracy*", tracing the transformation of Leinster House from aristocratic residence to the beating heart of Ireland's parliamentary life.

What makes this publication especially compelling is the collaborative voice behind it: **Emily Hunt**, a History and Politics student at University College Dublin, whose academic curiosity and storytelling flair bring fresh insight into the brochure's pages. Inspired by the ideas and narrative arc of the 1955 volume *Tithe an Oireachtas, Houses of the Oireachtas, Tigh Laighean - Leinster House*, Hunt bridges past and present, anchoring architectural grandeur in democratic legacy.

Her contribution not only captures the intricate evolution of the building itself, but also reflects the societal shifts that have unfolded around it. Hunt's background in History and Politics - a timeless pairing for those seeking to explore governance and societal change - infuses the brochure with thought-provoking analysis. She examines why societies evolve, and helps readers consider the enduring issues that continue to shape our world.

In an age where democratic institutions are often taken for granted, this brochure invites us to pause and appreciate the spaces that hold our collective story. It's not just a publication - it's a testament to the power of academic curiosity and civic pride.

You can find limited copies distributed throughout Leinster House this month, with public access scheduled later in the year. *Keep an eye out.*

IN RETROSPECT 2025

CFSP/CSDP IPC Conference, Copenhagen 26-28 August 2025, EU Copenhagen Hosts Key EU Security Conference

Copenhagen welcomed parliamentarians from across Europe for the 27th Inter-Parliamentary Conference on the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Held under Denmark's EU Council Presidency, the event focused on strengthening Europe's global role amid rising geopolitical tensions.

Key discussions included unwavering support for Ukraine, deeper EU-NATO cooperation, and defending democratic values worldwide. Delegates also marked the 80th anniversary of the UN Charter, reaffirming their commitment to multilateralism and a rules-based international order.

The conference concluded with a joint statement emphasizing unity, resilience, and the importance of interparliamentary collaboration in shaping Europe's foreign and defence strategy.

Senator Craughwell's speech from Copenhagen on the 27th of August 2025 urges immediate action on 'Starving the War Machine'.

"I am deeply concerned that the rush to militarize Europe, the European Economic Union was there to benefit all of us. I spent part of this summer as one who served in uniform visiting the graveyards in Europe. And that's all war has for any of us, is thousands and thousands of headstones. I think we need to step back and use our economic tools to starve Russia and to starve Israel of the tools they use to create genocide in both Ukraine and in Gaza. The militarization of Europe runs the risk of an Archduke Ferdinand moment. And what's to be gained from that? As an elderly gentleman, I can tell you the only thing that's to be gained from it is mass graves of young men and young women. We need to step back. We need to think about where we're going. And the only way to beat Putin and Netanyahu is to beat them economically. Thank you."

History taught us that all was conquered, yet heavens remained elusive. Is it worth asking: are we honouring the people or the violence?! Perhaps it is the "war within" that shapes the wars outside. When we ignore the inner battlefield does it not spill outwards into families, communities, even nations?! From a battlefield to soul, as nations clash, the inner war still goes unanswered.





A State-led Commemoration marking the 250th Anniversary of the birth of Daniel O'Connell, Wednesday, 6th August 2025 led by the Commemorations Unit of Department of Culture, Communications and Sport.

This week marked a momentous occasion in Irish history as the nation came together to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Daniel O'Connell, one of Ireland's most revered political figures. Known as "The Liberator", O'Connell's legacy as a champion of Catholic

emancipation and non-violent political reform continues to inspire generations.

The state-led commemoration, held in **Derrynane House, Caherdaniel, Co. Kerry**, the ancestral home of Daniel O'Connell, was a dignified tribute to O'Connell's enduring impact. The event featured a wreath-laying ceremony, followed by a series of speeches reflecting on his contributions to Irish democracy and civil rights.

Among the distinguished attendees were several members of the Seanad, whose presence underscored the national significance of the occasion. **Senator Gerard P Craughwell** paid homage to O'Connell's vision of an inclusive Ireland, echoing his belief in peaceful advocacy and parliamentary progress.

As Ireland reflects on its past, this commemoration served not only as a tribute to a towering figure of history but also as a reminder of the values that continue to shape the republic today.



Joint Committee on Defence and National Security publishes report on Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of Defence (Amendment) Bill 2025; makes 27 recommendations for inclusion in draft legislation.

The Joint Committee on Defence and National Security, chaired by **Deputy Rose Conway-Walsh**, on Wednesday, 30th July 2025 published its Report on Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Defence (Amendment) Bill 2025, which makes 27 recommendations for inclusion in the draft legislation.

The Defence (Amendment) Bill 2025 proposes to revise and consolidate the current legislation relating to the despatch of members of the Irish Defence Forces for service outside the State, including removing the requirement for a United Nations mandate, Triple Lock.

The Bill further proposes to set out governing principles which will apply to any future Defence Forces deployments and revises the purposes for which members of the Defence Forces may be despatched outside the State.

Committee Cathaoirleach Deputy Rose Conway-Walsh said: *"The provisions of this draft legislation are highly significant, particularly in the legislative framework for the overseas deployment of Irish troops and internal human resource management matters within the Defence Forces. They merit careful, in-depth, and informed examination."*

Senator Craughwell contributions get passed with a significant number of recommendations under the **Joint Committee on Defence and National Security** debate - **Thursday, 24 July 2025**, over the role of the UN and the Amendment of Section 50 (Dismissal of Officers).

Senator Craughwell recommends that each proposed mission under this Bill be accompanied by the allocation of funds for peacebuilding and the publication of a peacebuilding strategy, as is currently the case with UN-mandated missions, and that funding should also cover remuneration for Defence Forces personnel commensurate with UN service.

On the issue of suspension, **Senator Craughwell** is addressing The Joint Committee with the following: *"I am aware of a person who was suspended for 25 years and retired from suspension. They were on gardening leave for 25 years. Local leave has been misused in the Defence Forces. I am conscious that the witnesses are anxious to have a proper suspension system in place, but from the reading it appears extremely vague. What is prescribed and what is not prescribed? Will the representational bodies be involved for an officer or enlisted person, who I know the witnesses cannot speak for? Will an officer be provided with an opportunity to have their representation body with him or her when he or she is about to be suspended? Will there be clear instructions as to why he or she is being suspended? As Mr. King pointed out a few minutes ago, will there be an end date or end time?"*

The Committee's Report on Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Defence (Amendment) Bill 2025 is available on the Oireachtas website.



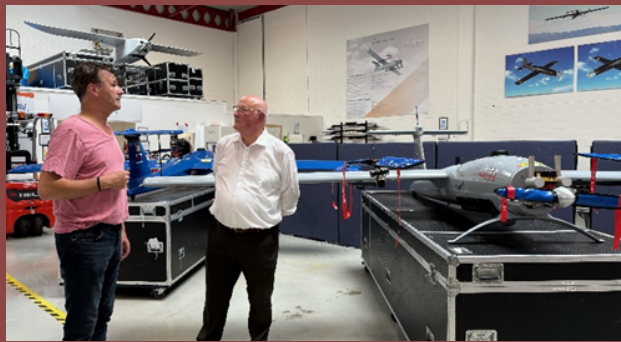
The Royal British Legion is the United Kingdom's largest Armed Forces charity, dedicated to supporting serving personnel, veterans, and their families. Founded in 1921, it provides lifelong assistance - from financial guidance and rehabilitation to emotional support and remembrance initiatives. Best known for the annual Poppy Appeal, the Legion also champions key issues affecting the Armed Forces community and ensures their sacrifices are never forgotten. **Senator Craughwell** is joined by **SJ Wilson** for a meaningful dialog on **June 28, 2025**.

Invitation to Attend the Law Society's Inaugural Summer School

Senator Gerard Craughwell attends the **Law Society's Inaugural Summer School** which took place on the 26 and 27 of June at Blackhall Place, Dublin 7.

The Summer School was an exclusive, invitation-only event organised by the **Centre for Justice and Law Reform**, a newly established think-tank of the Law Society.

The event had explored the theme of **Defending Democracy: Legal Responses to Emerging Threats** through a combination of keynote addresses, panel discussions, and interviews.



A-TechSYN

Senator Craughwell has expressed a keen interest in visiting the A-techSYN premises and engaging in discussions with key personnel regarding the development and manufacturing of drone systems. During a constructive exchange on 20 June 2025, Senator Craughwell highlighted a particular enthusiasm for gaining deeper insight into A-techSYN's operational capabilities, technological innovations, and potential avenues for collaboration.

A-techSYN brings its values to life through hands-on, field-driven innovation. One standout example is how they approach collaboration and iteration: instead of developing technology in isolation, they emphasize repetitive real-world testing with customers to refine their systems. Their CEO, **Gökhan Çelik**, put it this way: "Progress can only be made by applying ideas in live situations, obtaining feedback from the field and refining the solution".

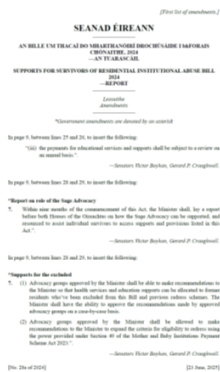
This philosophy is evident in projects like DTIF-GUARD, where A-techSYN works with the Irish Naval Service to deploy drones for maritime surveillance. Rather than just delivering a product, they co-develop and adapt it alongside their partners - living out their value of "doing things with our customers, on the field".

They also embody their "mission over money" mindset by investing in long-term, high-impact projects like U-AVES and Mistral, which aim to expand drone applications in defence and environmental monitoring.

In Ireland, drones are increasingly utilized in defence and security missions, enhancing capabilities in search and rescue, infrastructure inspection, and maritime operations. The Civil Defence has developed a significant drone capability for search and rescue operations, including the use of thermal imaging. While the Department of Defence also employs drones, notably for search and rescue, they are currently unarmed.



SEANAD ÉIREANN



AN BILLE UM THACAÍ DO MHARTHANÓIRÍ DROCHÚSAÍDE I bhFORAIS.

CHÓNAITHE, 2024 - AN TUARASCÁIL

SUPPORTS FOR SURVIVORS OF RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE BILL

2024 - REPORT

The Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill 2024 is a landmark piece of legislation aimed at providing meaningful redress to those who endured abuse in residential institutions across Ireland. The Bill offers **health and education supports** to eligible survivors, including non-means-tested education grants ranging from €500 to €2,000, and access to health services both within and outside the State.

The Bill also provides for the **dissolution of Caranua** (the Residential Institutions Statutory Fund) and transfers its functions to the Minister for Education and Youth. It amends existing legislation, including the Nursing Homes Support Scheme Act 2009 and the Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme Act 2023, to streamline support delivery.

During the *Seanad* debates, *Senators Victor Boyhan and Gerard P. Craughwell* acknowledged the deep trauma experienced by survivors and emphasized the importance of timely implementation.

[23 June 2025]



On behalf of the **Korea War Memorial Organisation**, **President BAEK Seung Joo** extends sincere thanks to a welcome and valuable time during a visit to the Oireachtas on *June 11, 2025*.

The Irish Sacrifice is Honoured in Korean War Commemoration Visit.

A solemn visit took place that day to commemorate the lives of Irish soldiers who perished during the Korean War, a conflict often referred to as the "Forgotten War" in the United States. The purpose of the gathering was to acknowledge the contributions of Irish servicemen who served under the British, Australian and American flags during one of the twentieth century's most pivotal military engagements.

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when North Korean troops crossed the 38th parallel, launching an invasion of South Korea. The escalation quickly drew the attention of the United Nations Security Council, which authorised a multinational force to intervene on behalf of South Korea. Over 20 countries ultimately contributed troops, including the United Kingdom and the United States - two forces that enlisted a number of Irish nationals.

Many Irish soldiers, though not officially representing Ireland - a neutral nation - volunteered to fight alongside allied forces. Their stories, often overshadowed by the larger geopolitical narrative, were brought to light during this commemorative visit, which highlighted the human cost of war and the quiet courage of those who risked everything far from home.

The delegation met with Irish Senators Gerard P. Craughwell and Aubrey McCarthy for a meaningful conversation.

Senator Craughwell, who served in the British and Irish armies, said, "The participation of the Irish in the June 25 War became the cornerstone of Korea-Ireland relations", and he hoped that the relationship between the two countries would be further strengthened based on this. He also said, "In a situation where the world situation is currently unstable due to the tariff issue, joint efforts are needed to promote free trade."

Although Ireland was not an official participant in the June 25th War, more than 1,000 Irish immigrants participated in the June 25th War as part of the British, American, and Australian armies. The exact scale of participation and the number of soldiers killed in the war have not been determined, but at least 160 people, including 130 from the British Army, 29 from the U.S. Army, and 2 from the Australian Army, were killed during the June 25 War.



In honour to the occasion of the *Flag Day of the Finnish Defence Forces*, *H.E. Ms Leena Gardemeister, Ambassador of Finland & Navy Captain Juha-Mikko Ravanti, Defence Attaché* requested the pleasure of *Independent Senator Gerard Craughwell's* company at a reception at the Finnish Residence on *Thursday 5th June 2025*.

In Dublin, the Ambassador's Residence hosted a diverse gathering of guests from varied backgrounds to commemorate the Finnish flag and mark the occasion. The celebration underscored the enduring friendship between Finland and Ireland, reflecting the day's meaningful importance to both nations.

Dear Councillors,

As I reflect on the progress we've made together, I am filled with deep appreciation for your unwavering commitment to our shared mission. Your dedication to public service, your tireless advocacy for your communities, and your thoughtful counsel have been instrumental in shaping policies that truly reflect the needs and aspirations of our constituents.

It is because of your efforts that we have been able to advance initiatives that strengthen our local economies, protect our environment, and uphold the dignity of every citizen.

I am proud to serve alongside such principled and passionate individuals. Thank you for your partnership, your perseverance, and your belief in the power of public service. Together, we are building a future worthy of the people we represent.

Warm regards,

Gerard Craughwell