

## The Boundary Debate

As I type this and think of the heading for it, maybe I should call it the boundary bullshit debate. The whole idea is preposterous. The reason I am writing is that I'm slightly worried, worried that this 'thing' is a done deal, that Paudie Coffey and his cronies have by passed the Kilkenny politicians and councillors and gone to the other big wigs up at the Dail. This is a multi-million euro deal ( think brown paper envelopes and political 'favours' etc. ), considering when the Belview port is brought into the equation, not to mention Glanbia and then there is the 'small' matter of 41km and 7,000 Kilkenny people suddenly being told, 'ah sorry now folks, you are now in Co. Waterford, a big Irish cead mile failte to yee all, take down that black and amber there, shor doesn't the blue and white look better anyway and yee can all now pay rates to the brilliant Waterford Corporation ( that recently made an absolute balls of the Quay in the city but shush don't mention that as they are here to take over the great work and investment that Kilkenny County Council has already put into the area in question and they will make life so much better for all the Kilkenny, sorry, soon to be Waterford people of the area ) .

Myself, personally I have little interest in politics, even though I do always use my constitutional right to vote in every election and referendum. What I truly believe in is fairness and knowing the difference between right and wrong. This proposal is not fair and it is wrong. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. I listened in, to the arse end of the boundary debate on KCLR yesterday morning and the word co-operation was bandied about i.e. leave well enough alone and both the Kilkenny and Waterford side sit down and discuss what Waterford's 'issue' is. Another interesting side 'matter' is the cost so far of this boundary debate, what with submissions, counter submissions etc. probably costing us, the tax payer loads of money that could be put to other good use eg. Flood victims, homelessness – the list goes on.

By the way, I'm a Kilmacow man. I love my village and to rob a line from John Mullane, "I love me county". I was born in Waterford, that doesn't make me Waterford. What's that saying, "Being born in a stable, does not mean one is a horse". I was reared in Kilmacow and reared to love and follow Kilkenny hurling. This is not about hurling. I luckily have travelled some of the world and am proud to say that I'm a Kilkenny man. I like Waterford and its people. Ask any friend of mine they will tell you, I always cheer Waterford on in hurling (as long as they are not playing Kilkenny of course) and might even shed a tear myself the day Waterford finally win another All- Ireland (Brian Cody reckons that there is definitely an All-Ireland in this current Waterford panel and in Cody I trust so tiocaidh an la and I for one won't begrudge a win for the Deise). I have loads of friends from Waterford. I socialise in Waterford. I have giggered in Waterford plenty of times. I shop in Waterford. I speak with a Waterford twang and I like my accent. This is not about accents.

I work in Kilkenny City (I'm sick of hearing the useless argument by small minded Waterford people that us South Kilkenny people have to come over the bridge to find work, a bridge which incidentally is named after a Kilkenny man, Edmund Rice who was born in Callan on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1762). I work with a lot of Kilkenny City folk. I have raised this issue with

some of my colleagues. Some wind me up by saying “shor aren’t yee Waterford anyway”, others have little interest and say “ah shor that won’t happen anyway”. I really don’t think All Kilkenny people understand the seriousness of this debate. We are all Kilkenny people, North And South. I am writing this as a Kilkenny person, not just a South Kilkenny person. Yes, as I live right on the border, this debate stokes a fire inside. The fire that burns inside me is similar to the brave warriors of 1916, who fought for their Irish Republic identity. I’d fight for my Kilkenny identity. To the people of Slieverue and Ferrybank that will be most affected, I stand with you and will fight with you. The painting of that rock from black and amber to blue to white, to me is a bit of harmless fun, but may the Lord God above strike me down, if Co. Waterford road signs go up around Newrath, Mullinabro, the Mile Post etc. etc. they will be torn down. I’m a reasonable individual, some would say sound, but I will not see my beloved Kilkenny County taken over by, what is, essentially, a land grab. I might even consider joining the K team, if and when they take up ‘arms’ against the Waterford oppressor!

And finally I have a counter proposal for you and your cronies Mr. Coffey. How about giving Kilkenny back Oliver Plunkett train station and ALL of Ferrybank?

Is mise,

Damien O Suilleabhan.