

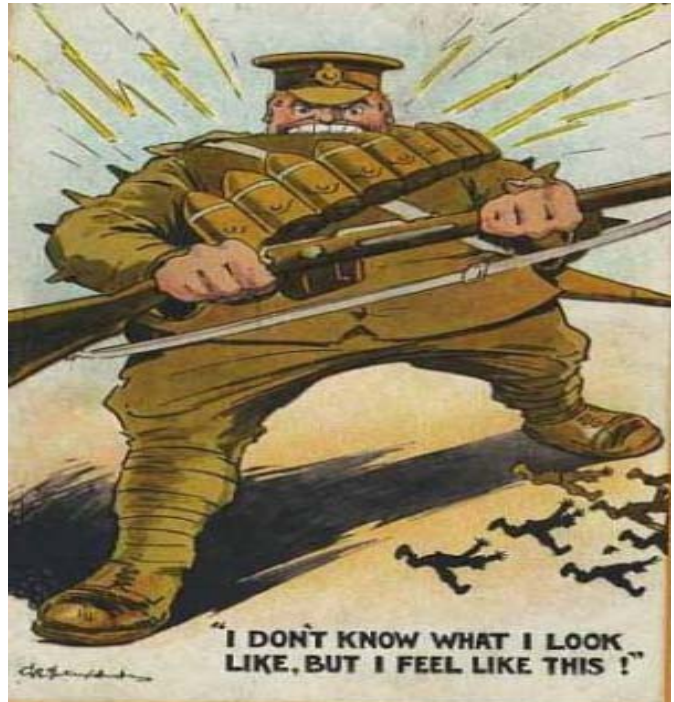
Church & State

An Irish History Magazine

And Cultural Review Of Ireland And The World

George Bernard Shaw
Commonsense About
The War
(1914)

The BBC And
The War Poets



British Great War Recruiting Poster

The End Of The European Dream

The Great Eoghan Ruadh

Betjeman In Ireland

Spanish Colonial Debate

Mandela

No. 116

Second Quarter, 2014

Editorial

The End Of The European Dream

We have seen the end of the European dream—the European delusion of being a Great Power in world affairs.

Europe, having stirred up a demonstration in Kiev, against a change in Government policy, into a virtual insurrection, then negotiated a deal intended to resolve the conflict on a constitutional basis by bringing the two sides together in a Coalition Government. But the Coalition deal was swept away almost before it was made. President Obama wasn't having any of it. He killed it at birth, before the world had a chance to see what it would be like—which is how such things should be done, if they are going to be done. "Fuck the EU", he said in the free American way, in the language which has become almost obligatory since Hollywood freed itself from the curbs of the Hays Office—and he demonstrated that Andrea Dworkin's insight that fucking is rape is valid, at least in the sphere of American foreign policy.

Obama killed off the European scheme, without bothering to comment on it, by giving the go-ahead to the fascists in the Maidan insurrection to enact a *coup d'etat*—to take over the Government by direct action.

The details of that scheme are given by David Morrison in the current issue of *Irish Foreign Affairs*—the only Irish publication which gave them any consideration. The Irish Foreign Minister—a former socialist revolutionary, like some many of the present generation of reactionaries—didn't bother his head about it. And, when Putin asked what happened to that agreement, nobody in Europe cared to answer him.

Europe knew that it had been fucked American-style, and that there were no police to go to, so it stayed silent—possessing its soul in patience, or realising that it had no soul.

The *coup* was anti-Russian in purpose. In the circumstances there was no other rational political purpose for it. Russia was to be made to understand that it was small fry in the world. It had acted too ambitiously when it offered the Ukraine a much better deal than the miserly offer from the EU, causing Kiev to change policy, and it needed to be humiliated. So the Ukraine Government, which had turned its back on Europe when offered a very much better deal by Moscow, was overthrown by a *coup* that was anti-Russian both with relation to the Russian state and to the substantial Russian population of the Ukraine.

The Russian response, however, was not meek acceptance of American will in the European manner—thus demonstrating that it was not European and civilised but Asian and barbarian?

The Russian majority in the easily detachable Crimea voted in a referendum to secede from the Ukraine and join the Russian Federation, and it is evident from the voting figures that a majority of the non-Russian minority in the Ukraine also voted in favour of transferring to the Russian state.

It was stated as a definite fact by the British Prime Minister that the Crimeans had voted at the point of Russian guns. But, even if he had presented evidence of Russian guns in the Crimean situation, that would hardly have accounted for the

vote. There were undoubtedly British guns in the Irish situation in the Elections of 1918, 1920, and 1921, yet the electorate each time voted strongly against the policy which those pointing the guns were trying to enforce.

The Ukrainian state, disrupted by *coup d'etat*, and governed by erratic fanatics with an insuppressible urge to make wild statements, was a place that it would be tempting to leave if the means of doing so painlessly were available.

The vote was clear. The transference of the Crimea from the Ukraine to Russia was accomplished without a shot being fired. Western news very briefly reported on a "*Ukrainian resistance*" in the Crimea, and there was even an ephemeral "*hero of the resistance*", but it was soon admitted that there was no resistance, and that the military bases of the Ukrainian State in the Crimea melted away peacefully.

Nevertheless President Obama came to Europe on March 26th and made a speech to it about the Russian invasion and annexation of the Crimea. And Europe swallowed it.

Europe is in trauma. It has lost the Crimea. Though it never had it, it has lost it. And it is suffering phantom pains following the amputation of a limb that it never had.

The frenzy of the European left during the weeks of the Maidan Insurrection is described in the current issue of *Irish Foreign Affairs* in a report by Manus O'Riordan of the goings-on at meetings of the *European Economic And Social Committee*.

What has happened to the Left? What has happened to Europe? How have both become mindless flotsam in the drift of things set in motion by Washington?

A quarter of a century ago the Soviet system collapsed. The Cold War ended, depriving the European development of its eastern border. The Christian Democracy which had given Europe its post-1945 coherence was destroyed by apparently anarchic anti-corruption agitations. The Left, deprived of a purposeful Centre-Right, lost its bearings. NATO lost its defensive function, when the Soviet/East European Warsaw Pact was dismantled and, by remaining in being, became an expansionist force. The Left which, on the whole, had been against NATO during the Cold War, became NATOist when NATO became expansionist. Washington fed its ideals into Europe and Europe swallowed them. Those ideals were designed to make the world a suitable place for the operations of American globalist capitalism. While subordinating itself to American purposes, Europe imagined that what it was doing was establishing itself as an independent Great Power in the world.

In March it negotiated an Agreement between Government and Opposition in the Ukraine which would probably have held the state together, and retained it as a buffer—or link—between the Russian Federation and the EU. If that agreement had been followed through, the EU might have begun to be something more than a market again. But that wasn't what the US wanted, so it ordered the *coup d'etat* against it.

Then Obama came to Europe and made a speech to it, in which he said a number of patently absurd things, daring them to disagree. They didn't. They understood the issue was not the sense of what he said but, as somebody says in *Alice in Wonderland*: "*The question is, who is to be master*".

A couple of days before making his Presidential speech to his European constituents (satraps), Obama spoke at the Nuclear

Security Summit at the Hague. He said that Russia had not regained Superpower status:

"Russia is a regional power that is threatening some of its immediate neighbours, not out of strength but out of weakness.

"We have considerable influence on our neighbours. We generally don't need to invade them in order to have a strong co-operative relationship with them."

And it's true! The US doesn't always have to invade its neighbours in order to impose good neighbourly relations on them. It only invades them when they won't take a hint.

But who are its neighbours? The old Catechism supplies the answer, "*mankind of every description*". So: neighbours watch out.

Obama has made the frankest statement ever of the US right of world domination. His statement of US *exceptionalism* some time ago was tantamount to a global expansion of the *Monroe Doctrine*.

The United States must act according to its nature. It proclaimed its "*manifest destiny*" on the American continent a century and a half ago, and then extended it across the Pacific. Its dynamic is such that it cannot rest until it finds itself alone in the world with only its echoes for company.

It has humbled Europe. It has set Islam at war with itself. China has no history of political action in the world. But suddenly Moscow is there again, not understanding that its time has passed.

Tsarist Moscow saw off the French. Communist Moscow saw off the Germans. And now Capitalist Moscow is filling itself out across the Eurasian landmass that the Western Imperialist politicians called the *heartland*.

So it does not seem that the would-be American solipsists will find themselves alone in the world contentedly listening to themselves for a while yet.

What kind of existence can the EU be said to have after being fucked by Obama?

Maybe it should say, in paraphrase of Tennyson: "*We have not made our world, so He that made us what we are must guide it*".

European political existence depended on Angela Merkel last month. Merkel is a German Christian Democrat. It was Christian Democracy that kept Germany viable after 1945, and it was on the viability of post-War Germany that the European development was founded. But in March 2014 Merkel let everything slip.

The Christian Democratic plea is that Konrad Adenauer, the effective founder of Christian Democracy and post-War Germany, acted on American instructions, just as Merkel did. Adenauer undoubtedly acted in conjunction with the USA after 1945. But he aligned himself with the USA for the purpose of preventing Britain from doing after 1945 what it had done after 1918. He had, as Mayor of Cologne, experienced British influence on German affairs after 1918, and his primary purpose after 1945 was to negate British influence—which he did very effectively, ensuring autonomous German development in the Western zones.

The similarity between that and the current conduct of German Christian Democracy is not easy to see.

The *coup d'etat* Prime Minister of the Ukraine has declared the strange principle that borders determined by the outcome

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Some web addresses for associated sites—

Athol Books:

<http://www.atholbooks.org>

The Heresiarch:

<http://heresiarch.org>

There is a great deal of interesting reading. Go surf and see!

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Church & State

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of World War II are sacred and unalterable, sanctioned by international law, and that everybody complied with this international law until the Crimea seceded from the Ukraine—while at the same time the Ukrainian forces that made the *coup* have been tearing down the sacred monuments of World War II as symbols of Russian despotism. It is an absurd principle, in conflict not only with the nature of things but with events in recent European history. But the EU did not dispute it.

Adenauer never recognised the borders of his Germany as legitimate. He refused to have any dealings with the East German State.

A later Chancellor did recognise East Germany as legitimate, but after the unification of Germany following the Soviet collapse, the Western authorities prosecuted the personnel of the Eastern State as criminals. Repudiation of the legitimacy of the outcome of World War II could not go much farther than that.

And then there was Yugoslavia—a Communist state that was not part of the Soviet system and did not fall with it. It stood when the others fell, and the EU decided to destroy it by encouraging religious-nationalist antagonisms between the Yugoslav peoples.

The Yugoslav Constitution made provision for orderly secession of regions, but the EU judged it more advantageous to encourage secession by unilateral action outside the Constitution, with the object of destroying the Yugoslav State in an inferno of religious/nationalist war. Whenever a region held a referendum (an illegal referendum?), the army of the state was immediately declared to be an Army of Occupation.

When religious conflict was stirred up, Bosnia divided into three mutually antagonistic parts: Catholic/Croat, Muslim, and Serb/Orthodox. In a referendum the Catholics and Muslims, who between them constituted a majority but not a unity in any other sense, voted for secession. The EU then recognised Bosnia as a nation-state, despite the fact that it consisted of three warring components, and was only a smaller and more venomous version of Yugoslavia.

Up to this point the secessions were of regional components of the Yugoslav state. But then the EU decided that the official Serb component of the Yugoslav state should be broken up—even though the Bosnian component was compelled to remain together. It was decided to take Kosovo, which was in many ways the heartland of Serbia, out of the Serbian

state and make it a separate state. This clearly was for the purpose of humiliating and possibly demolishing Serbia.

The Serbians were the demon populace of Europe. In the Great War of 1914-19 they had been the heroic people of Allied propaganda. After the War, the state of Yugoslavia was constructed around them by the Versailles Treaty. In 1941 the Serbians opposed the Germans while others were compliant and a Croat state was established under German protection. In 1945 Yugoslavia was reassembled, again with the Serbs (who had made a state for themselves before 1914) as its centre. The Serbs were a heroic people until it was decided to destroy Yugoslavia. They then became demons, and Kosovo was cut out of Serbia in order to humiliate and disable it.

Obama told his European constituents:

"Russian leaders have... claimed Kosovo as a precedent, an example, they say, of the West interfering in the affairs of a smaller country, just as they're doing now. But NATO only intervened after the people of Kosovo were systematically brutalized and killed for years. And Kosovo only left Serbia after a referendum was organized not outside the the boundaries of international law, but in careful cooperation with the United Nations and with Kosovo's neighbours. None of that even came close to happening in Crimea."

The EU leaders seemed happy to have false memory laid on for them as official truth—as *Pravda*.

A referendum was held in Kosovo in 1991, long before Yugoslavia was broken up. It was not held under the authority of the Yugoslav Government, therefore under Ukrainian rules it was not valid. It was not recognised as legitimate by any Government other than Albania. The Kosovo Liberation Army was declared to be a terrorist organisation by NATO.

Years later the US/EU decided to break the principle they had applied of treating the component republics of the Federal Yugoslav state as irreducible units by cutting Kosovo out of Serbia. They declared that what had hitherto been regarded as suppression of terrorism by the Belgrade authorities was a brutal suppression of freedom. They subjected Belgrade to intensive bombing, and cut Kosovo out of Serbia by brute force.

In June 1999 an agreement was reached which ended NATO bombing of Serbia in return for the granting of substantial autonomy to Kosovo, but not independence. That Agreement was endorsed by a Security Council resolution. Nevertheless, Kosovo did go on to become independent with the active support of the West. No referendum was involved.

Not a bit like the Crimea.

*

The EU displays hostility to capitalist and democratic Russia. It is unthinking—or at least unexplained.

That Russia is capitalist is undeniable. That it is democratic has not been denied at recent elections.

Democracy has no exact meaning. Lincoln's definition is a rhetoric of wartime exaggeration: "*government of the people, for the people, by the people*". That is no more descriptive of how the states that are called democratic are governed than Lenin's *State & Revolution* was descriptive of government in the State he formed. Perhaps in Switzerland it could be said that there is government of the people by the people, but in all the major states that are called democratic there is representative government by parties—which in Rousseau's opinion was not democratic at all—and the people have a choice every few years to choose which party will govern.

That is how the present Russian Government was formed. The EU had only one quibble about the last Russian election. It said the outcome of an election should be uncertain and the result of the Russian election was a foregone conclusion. All that meant was that it wished somebody else had won it. It did not suggest that the vote was rigged, or that a party with a chance of beating Putin was prevented from contesting the election.

Though it did not question the validity of the election at the time, the EU now suggests that the Russian Government is a dictatorship.

It recognises Afghanistan and Iraq as democracies—and did not demur at Obama's praise of the US role in Iraq.

But in both Afghanistan and Iraq many parties were prohibited from contesting the elections.

Russia once had a democracy rather like Iraq's. It was a chaos of capitalist anarchy, in which the life expectancy of the mass of the people plummeted. One might say that it was there to be fucked

by the US/EU—and that naturally pleased the US/EU.

In those days there were so many parties contesting Russian elections that the electorate had no effective choice. Choice depends on there being a small number of major parties which have continuous existence from one election to the next.

Russia has become more democratic since the days of the Yeltsin anarchy that the US/EU recognised as democratic. The Russian electorate can now choose a national Government, which they could not do in those days.

A senior BBC journalist, given the task of making a democratic case against Putin's Russia, concentrated on human rights violations, which now appear to consist of the prohibition of homosexualist propaganda and the refusal to legislate for homosexual marriage. Britain criminalised homosexual practice a few generations ago, punishing it with imprisonment with hard labour. It was prosecuting homosexuals in the second half of the 20th century. It was prohibiting homosexualist propaganda in education down to the end of the 20th century. It has just now instituted homosexual marriage—and declared it to be a universal human right. Such is the British way.

The institution of homosexual marriage, and the abolition of the distinction between homosexual and heterosexual marriage, is the abolition of marriage.

In the mid-19th century, when Communism was accused of being committed to abolishing marriage, Karl Marx said that it was the working out of capitalism that would abolish it.

The family, which used to be said to be the unit of society, was reduced to a kind of nostalgia in Britain by the beginning of the present century. Marriage, as a privileged institution for the producing and rearing of children, had been abolished *de facto*. Homosexual marriage only abolished it *de jure*. The individual is the unit of society and the single-person household is the ideal which is becoming the norm. And the Chair of the Institute of Directors declared twenty years ago that having children is no more than individual lifestyle choice.

It is a long time since Britain reproduced itself biologically. It has long been importing population from backward parts of the world where the family remains the social unit. So it might as

well sever the connection between marriage and reproduction and incorporate this new form of marriage into the propaganda of the finance capitalism that made it possible.

But, while that serves as propaganda against Putin, it can hardly be the source of the profound hostility against the Orthodox Christian Russia which has taken the place of Communist Russia...

Could it be that what we are seeing is a revival of the conflict between the Western and Eastern parts of the Roman Empire, and of the different lines of Christianity which they produced?

On March 28th the *Irish Times* commented editorially on the Erdogan Government in Turkey:

"On Wednesday the courts overturned his attempt to ban Twitter. And yesterday the Turkish authorities shut down Youtube.

"Internationally his authoritarian tendencies have been coming under fire, again raising questions about Turkey's long-term EU accession prospects, while his regional standing has also sunk with the muzzling of key party allies in Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood..."

The *Irish Times* doesn't mention why Erdogan shut down *Twitter*. The BBC in a brief comment on the matter said it was because *Twitter* was circulating reports of private conversations. It didn't say what those conversations were—that they were about a plan to organise a "false flag" Syrian attack on a Turkish shrine in Syria which is under Turkish sovereignty. In other words, Turkey would attack itself using a Syrian flag—as Hitler is said to have organised an attack on Germany under a Polish flag in 1939.

It is doubtful whether Turkey is much concerned these days about being admitted to the EU.

It is a founder member of NATO and is situated in a critical position.

Erdogan's achievement was to make Turkey democratic. Under the Attaturk regime, established in 1922 in the successful defiance of a British attempt to impose a subordinating Treaty, the state was officially secularist. It was liberal in the sense that women were not allowed to wear the headscarf in public institutions and Islamic parties were banned. Secularism in public life was upheld by the Courts and guaranteed by the military. Islamist parties were prevented from winning elections by

being declared illegal.

Erdogan broke through that system. He reinforced democracy by a purge of the military. The Courts reluctantly fell into line with the new civil order.

For a number of years Erdogan's foreign policy was to be a peace broker in the Middle East conflict. But, when the US/EU—apparently at the behest of the lynch-pin of the Free World in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia—backed demonstrations against the secularist Assad Government in Syria, and built them up into religious civil war, Erdogan fell into line with this.

The US/EU recognised the Fundamentalist insurgency in Syria as the democratic representative of the Syrian people, and the legitimate authority. But Assad held the line, supported by Russian influence, and the different strands of Fundamentalism in the insurgency began to make war on each other as well as on Assad. Stalemate set in, with the EU actively forgetting that it had recognised the feuding Opposition as the legitimate authority of the Syrian people.

The Turkish scheme for a false flag attack could have changed everything. It would have been represented as an attack on NATO by Damascus, and Syria would have been given the Iraqi treatment.

It is improbable in the extreme that the Turkish authorities would have contemplated this without prior reference to NATO.

The scheme went awry because the West, accustomed to eavesdropping on the world, has not yet adjusted to the fact that there are regions of the world which are now able to eavesdrop on it.

But the domestic news channels of the Western democracies are still under effective control, and they are able to report the Turkish action against *Twitter* without reporting the reason for it.

Russia Today

This is a TV channel that has some worthwhile reporting of world affairs, which is censored from mainstream media. In Ireland it is available through Satellite (see below). In Britain it is available on **Freeview**, as well as elsewhere. There is also a website:

<http://rt.com/news/morales-obama-humanity-crimes-109/>

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Séamas Ó Domhnaill

Eoghan Ruadh Ó Súilleabháin

1748—1784

Aspects of his Life and Work

Part 12

A Survey of the Endings of the Aisling Songs of Eoghan Ruadh Ó Súilleabháin

1. Im Leabaidh Aréir

Is léigeadh gach éigeas dréacht im
fharradh-sa,
Ag guidhe chum Muire
Séarlas Réics do chasnamh i gcoróin,
'S an Rí seo suidheadh le díomas
d'ionnarbadh
Ar saoirse ríoghachta Breatan na slógh,
Gan mheidhir gan greidhin gan
radhairse cumais nirt
Go singil gan chiste,
Gan caomhna laoch 'na seasamh 'na
chomhair.

{sung:} And let every poet read his verse
along with me / praying to Mary / to protect
King Charles in his reign / and to expel this
King, who sits in pride / from the tenure of
the kingdom of Britain of the hosts / without
merriment, without love, without abundance
of the power of strength / wretched, without
treasure / without the protection of warriors
{spoken:} standing in attendance on him.

2. I gCaol Doire

Gur scéalúigheadh aréir dom don réim
sin gur scíord
Coir caol-tsruth na Mínteach sealadh
chum Seoin.

{sung:} When these affairs were related to
me last night, and I made haste / to the
graceful stream of Meentogues {spoken:}
for a while, to Seán.

3. Mo chás! Mo Chaoi! Mo Cheasna!

'S a cháirde díogaidh feasta
Sláinte mo Réics.

{sung} And, my friends, drink forever
{shouted} the health of my King! {cheers}

4. Mo Léan Le Luadh

Dob aite sult na reamhar-phoc
Ag cnead `s ag críth le heagla
'Ná an racaireacht so cheapadar
Ag féar-leagadh ar phágh.

{sung} More delightful is the sport of
(seeing) the fat bucks / running and trembling
in terror / than these pastimes that they devise
{spoken} (who) mow hay for pay.

5. Cois na Siúire

Aithchim Iosa cheannuigh sinn is
fuair páis is péin
Go dtagaidh an nídh `na cheart chum
críche i dtrát gan baoghal,
Le na bhfaiceam díbirt, scaipeadh is
sceimhle is ár le faobhar
Ar aicme an fhíll tar n-air arís, sin dát
mo scéil.

{sung} I beseech Jesus who redeemed us
and who endured passion and agony / that
the matter will come aright in the end, in a
time without peril / That we may see the
expulsion, scattering, rout and slaughter with
arms / on the gang of treachery back again
{spoken} That is the end of my story.

6. Cois Abhann i nDé

Dá fhichid geal-bhé, gan faice ar a
dtaobh,
A mhascalaigh léigim uaim leat
'S ná dearmaid glaodhach coir abhann
chum Séamais,
D'eascair do phréimh-shliocht
Nuaglach;
Siollaire seasamhach soineanda
searcamhail
Bileamhail blasta bleacht-dhuantach,
Duine do ghlacfas le muirinn so
shamhail,
'S tá cliste chum bhaillet do chuardach.

{sung} "Forty bright ladies, without a stitch
on their bodies / O sturdy youth, I shall
release to you / and do not forget to call on
Séamus beside the river / who is descended
from the root-stock of Nagle / An amorous,
pleasant, staunch smiter / heroic, elegant,
poem-producing / A person who would
accept such as you into his household
{spoken with emphasis} and who is quick to
search his wallet!" {laughs}.

7. Im Aonar Seal

Béidh cléir na gceacht gan púicín
Ag úr-mhaidheamh an Éin-mhic chóir,
Is éigse ceart ag tabhairt síos
Gach fionn-laoidh go neata i gclódh;
An tréad do threascair dúbhach sinn
Gan lionntaidhe, gan féasta ar bórd,
Is Gaedhil go seascair súbhach síothach

`Na ndúthaidhe go séanmhar
soghamhail.

{sung:} The learned clergy will be unhooded
/ praising afresh the Only true Son / True
poets taking down / every fine story in neat
letters / The robber gang in sorrow / without
their ale or feasting / The Irish secure content
peaceful / in their own place {spoken}
prosperous happy.

8. I Sacsuibh na Séad

Is é do ghlacfaidh tú i gcion,
Is tabhair do féin tar aon dom charaid
Mo bhé gan taisce cumhdaigh.

{sung} It is he who will take you in affection
/ and grant to himself, above any of my
relatives / my lady {spoken} without store
of protection.

9. Ar Maidin i nDé

Is aithchim-se is glaodhaim ar
fheartaibh Mhic Dé
Go dtagaidh mo scéal chum críche.

{sung} And I beseech and entreat the grace
of the Son of God {spoken} That my story
will come to conclusion.

10. Tráth i nDé

Ar thígheacht dom Saesar dhil is
guidhidh
É shuide i gcoróin.

{sung} On the arrival of my bright Caesar,
and pray ye {spoken} that he be seated in the
throne.

11. Ceo Draoidheachta

Is ní chlaoidhfinn-se m'inntinn na
dheághaidh sin
Chum luighe ar sheasamh gárda lem rae.

{sung:} And I would not slacken my resolve
after that / to persist in standing {spoken}
guard in my time.

12. Ag Taisteal na Blárnan

...is go gárdac canaidh
Le mór-scóip céad ámén le hEoghan.

{sung} ... and let ye joyously recite / with
great spirit, {shouted} a hundred Amen's for
Eoghan! {cheers}

13. Ag Taisteal na Sléibhte

Aithchim go héagnach ar Athair na
naomh ngeal,
Go scaipidh an daor-scamall plágha dinn
Do fearadh ar Ghaedhealaibh 's go
bhfaiceam-na Éire
Ag aithearrach céile tar Sheaghán
Buidhe.

{sung} I beseech grievously the Father of
the bright saints / that he may scatter the
oppressive cloud of plague from us / that
was inflicted on the Irish, and that I may see

Ireland / with a spouse other {spoken} than Yellow John.

14. Cois Taoibhe Abhann

Mo mhíle creach, ba chneasta an stríapach í,
Do bhí sí i bhfad ag Art ag Niall 's ag Naois,
Do bhí sí seal ag fleadh na mBrianach ngroidhe,
Is ba mhín a cneas, gur chath an t-iasacht í.

Envoi. {sung} My thousand plunderings, she was a nice harlot / She was possessed for a long time by Art, by Niall and by Naoise / She was for a while at the feasting of brave Brian / and her skin was smooth, until {spoken} foreignness wore it out.

15. Tráth is Mé Cois Leasa

Is na Laoisigh i gcoróin.

{shouted} And Louis enthroned

16. Ar Maidin i nDé is Mé ag Taisteal i gCéin

Ba dhubhach chaitheas sealad ag gearghol
Cé smaoinim is beartaim gach forghoil do canadh
Lem rún-sa gan bhladar gur féidhmeadh.

{sung} Sadly I spent a while weeping bitterly / though I ponder and resolve that every exploit, that was sung / to my sweetheart without exception {spoken} be accomplished

17. Sealad dem Shaoghal

Fá Shamhain daoibh geallaim-se go dtraochfar an pór
'S dá bhfeicinn-se mar shamhluighim na samhailidhe treascartha
Do bheadh lampaidhe ar lasadh agam le h-éigean spóirt.

{sung} By Halloween I promise you the brood will be defeated / And if I saw as I suppose the churls overthrown / I would have lamps lighting {spoken} by dint of merriment".

18. Do Rinneadh Aisling Bheag Aerach

Go mbeidh aicme na nGaedheal 'san réim is aoirde
'Na bhearannaibh féin gan aon rad cíosa
Is Carolus glégeal Réics, mo Stíobhard
Ag téacht arís faoi Cháisc i gcoróinn.

{sung} That the Irish people may be in supreme power / in their own homesteads, with no issue of rent / and pure, bright Charles, my Stuart / to come again {spoken} by Easter, crowned.

19 I Sleasaibh na hAbhann

Le Brian geal na solas-bhrat cheanglas caomhnadh
Is 'na dhiaidh bheirim cumann do chine Scuit Éibhir
Ó ránga mé i ngairm ag grathain an Bhéarla
Le scige go ngladhaid orm Páinseach na nUbh

{sung} I was united in protection with Brian of the flaming banners / and also I kept company with the Gaels of Éibhear / Since I came to be at the disposal of the rabble of the English tongue / in mockery they dub me {spoken} the Basket of Eggs.

20. Trím Aisling Araoir

Gach duine do bhí aca i mbruid
Do chaitheadh bheith síos i sconnsa fhlúich
Caithdid sin díobh an donas gan moil
Is beidh aithearrach dlíghidh le cúinse aca.

{sung} Everyone of them who was smothered in trouble / who used to be in a wet drain / such will soon be without any harm / and there will be a change of law {spoken} as protection for them.

Endings

Sometimes the songs of Eoghan Ruadh have been criticized on the grounds that they are monotonous and generally cover the same ground in a slightly different way. However, a close look at the endings of the 21 *aislings* shows a great amount of variety.

A feature of Irish traditional singing is that an ostentatious finish is avoided. Normally, the final words of a song are spoken sometimes with the singer taking a sup of drink simultaneously. In the Gaeltacht you may hear a phrase like, "*chuardar ag ól*" ("they went drinking"). Sometimes a joke or a sarcastic remark is made which is out of character with the beautiful and noble song just sung. I read somewhere (unfortunately I can't remember where) that this practice is like cutting the thread at the end of a fine piece of embroidery. It seems to me that Eoghan Ruadh takes the custom into account when choosing how he ends his songs. I have marked the excerpts above {sung}, {spoken}, etc to indicate how I think Eoghan would have performed the songs. The songs are numbered according as they appear in Pat Muldowney's book of translations.

In one group of songs the endings derive from an intentional reference to an earlier well-known song on which Eoghan Ruadh based his *aisling*. "*Mo Léan le Luadh*" (no. 4) for example, is based on the "*Spealadóir*" (the Mower), which you can find on youtube sung by sung by Muireann Nic Amhlaoibh. "*Tríom Smaointe*" (21) is based on the popular song, "*Kathleen Tyrrell*" with the woman's surname changed to "*Triail*", meaning a slave.¹

"*I Sleasaibh na hAbhann*" (19), is based on a song known in English as, "*The Basket of Eggs*". The tune to this song is known by many other names, including, "*O'Sullivan's March*".² This is the same tune used by Eoghan for his satire on old men, "*A Bhile gan Chealg*".

"*Ag Taisteal na Sléibhte*" (13) is based on the song "*Seán Buí*" ("Yellow Jack", an insulting name for England.) It was common for poets to address songs to one another on a particular theme using the same tune. "*Seán Buí*" is a very good example of this. The original was written in 1742 by Fr. William English, of St. Augustine's in Cork. It is an optimistic Jacobite song

expressing high hopes for the liberation of Ireland. No fewer than thirteen other poets joined in the song series over the following decades.³ Here is the final verse of the song written by Eibhlín Uí Choillte, Ní Eachiarainn (Eileen Quilty, nee Aherne):

Beidh gairm ag Gaelaibh go fairsing
'na dhéidh sin
Is Gallaibh dá dtraochadh mar táthaoi
Beidh preabaire Gaelach 'na scafaire méara
Is an chathair faoi féin is ní cás linn.
Beidh aifrinn naofa i gceallaibh na hÉireann
Is beidh cantain ag Éigse go hardbhinn
Is ar mh'fhallaing go mbeadsa is céad ainnir mar aon liom
Ag magadh gan traochadh faoi Sheán Buí.

"After that Gaels will assemble from every side / and the English will be beaten down as you are / An Irish champion will take charge as mayor / and the city he will have for his own, and we welcome that / Holy masses will be read in the chapels of Ireland / and poets will be singing loudly / and by my cloak! I with a hundred other maidens / will be mocking Yellow Jack without ceasing".⁴

Dear Reader, you will remember that Eoghan Radh wrote a *Barántas* for his friend, Maurice Griffin. It was Maurice who wrote the lament after Eoghan's death, "*Sin agat, a lain leac*" (There you have him, O full tomb). Maurice wrote one of the *Seán Buí* songs in the form of a vision. He did not see the female figure of Ireland however but instead saw King Charles III himself arriving in Ireland. Eoghan's song is longer and more sophisticated than any of the other *Seán Buí* Songs.

The endings of several of the songs clearly refer to the drinking environment for which they were composed:

For example "...is go gárdac canaidh, le mór-scóip céad amén le hEoghan" (*Ag Taisteal na Blárnan*, no. 12) and "*S a cháirde díogaidh feasta, sláinte mo Réics*" (*Mo chás! Mo Chaoi! Mo Cheasna!*, no. 3).

Here is how Eoghan Ruadh finishes his satire on old men:

Cois Fleasca, mar thuigim, níl file ná fáidh
Do b'ursa chum práis do tháthadh le ceart,
Níl taitheach 'na bhfriotal 's níl fuinneamh 'na ndán,
Tá cuisle na dáimhe tráighthe aca, isfeas,
An tráth d'iomchraid gan cunntas gach chúil-ghéarradh tarcuiseach
Thug trú Bhaile Bhúirne dá ndúthaigh go maslughtheach,
Is mar phearsan den fhuirinn do chluichfeadh an búr
Le cumann do b'umhal mo laugh-sa 'na measc.

{sung} By the Flesk, as I understand it, there is not a poet or bard/ who is a stalwart in correctly constructing poems / There is not substance in their utterances, and there is not force in their poems / The flow of poetry has ebbed among them, it is clear / When they tolerate without reckoning every offensive slander / That the wretch (O'Hegarty of Glenflesk?) of Ballyvourney insultingly spread in their district / And as a member of the team that would harry the boor / With friendship. humbly, {shouted} my shout amongst them {cheers}..

NOTES

¹ Joseph Theodoor Leerssen, *Mere Irish & Fíor-ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality*.

² *The Fiddler's Companion*. <http://www.ibiblio.org/fiddlers/index.html>

³ Úna Nic Éinrí, *Canfar an Dán, Uilliam 2 English agus a Chairde, An Sagart, An Daingean*, 2003.

⁴ Tr. Pádraig A. Breathnach.

Brendan Clifford

Bernard Shaw On The Great War

"A Good Man Fallen Among Fabians"

George Bernard Shaw wrote a notorious article in 1914 about the World War launched by Britain. It was published in the Fabian Socialist magazine, *The New Statesman*. It sent a nervous thrill through the avant-garde middle class intellectuals of safe socialism by wholeheartedly supporting the War for entirely the wrong reasons.

If he is taken to be Irish—and he made a great display of being Irish, and is usually listed amongst the great Irish writers by the influential circles in which 'worthwhile Irish' is West British plus Joyce—it is surprising that *Commonsense About The War* has not been mentioned in the *Irish Times* centenary celebrations of the War.

The reason for that must be that supporting the War for the wrong reason seems as bad as opposing it—if not worse—to the anaemic West British variant of the British mentality.

Shaw's wrong reasons were of course the right reasons—the reasons for which it was actually fought.

Shaw liked to tease the Puritans with the truth. It was a slightly dangerous game. In the working out of the Great Reform of 1832, and the other reforms which followed as a matter of course, Puritan fundamentalism had become a major force in the Liberal Party. It had brought down Parnell because of a sexual indiscretion, and a couple of years earlier it had brought down Gladstone's lieutenant, Sir Charles Dilke, for the same reason. It was for the most part tamed by the skilful handling of the Whig aristocracy which had created the Party, but it had to be allowed the occasional bite. However Shaw escaped being bitten, and he enjoyed the little sensation he caused by supporting the War for reasons which might have been considered reasons to oppose it.

Shaw was summed up by Lenin as "*a good man fallen among Fabians*". I have never come across a better description of him.

Shaw was the most famous English playwright of the Liberal Imperialist era. (Liberal Imperialism made its appearance in the mid 1890s and ran out of steam in the course of the Great War.)

When I left Slieve Luacra for London in the late 1950s, I had read all his plays in a cheap Collection published by Odham's Press, and I was looking forward to seeing them performed. The first one I saw was *Candida*. And I saw that as a playwright he was a fraud. He produced mock-Ibsenite entertainment for a superficial culture. When he tried to inject sentiment it was invariably bogus. His talent ran to short, smart dialogue pieces. His big pieces were ponderous, heavily larded with paradoxes, and always tending toward nonsense. They irritated me into working out what an authentic paradox was and avoiding any that were avoidable.

I concluded that there was only one Ibsen and he was enough. The Germanic Norwegian was the classic playwright of the bourgeois era, and his big play, *Julian*, went to the source of the Christianity that was withering in bourgeois hands. Shaw's big play was about living forever and being born asexually out of eggs, as befitted eggheads.

Nevertheless, Shaw was the big playwright and one of the big intellectuals of the Liberal Imperialist era. He mixed with the top people, and always had a paradox to hand for them. He was taken seriously by them. And, by playing on his Irishness, he established an extra dimension for himself, beyond mere seriousness. He established for himself the position of Court Jester of Liberalism Imperialism, who could blurt out the scandalous truth because he was a Jester.

And the truth was that Britain had made careful preparations for war on Germany, and availed of the Balkan crisis caused by the Serbian assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne to launch it.

Germany was united politically in 1871 in the course of the successful war of defence waged by Prussia against the French invasion of 1870. Unified Germany underwent rapid economic development during the next generation. It became a serious trade rival to Britain in the capitalist world market which

Britain had created in the course of the 18th and 19th centuries. During the Boer War (1899-1902) the Royal Navy interfered with German trade with the Boer Republic. Germany then decided to build a Navy of its own to protect its trade. That was when Britain decided to make war on it.

The German Navy was small by comparison with the British. But, if Germany was allowed to carry on selling its goods in the world market, and to carry its goods to its customers around the world under the protection of its own warships, it would soon become an accepted World Power. But Britain was determined that it should remain the only World Power and that Britannia should continue to rule the waves. It was therefore necessary to British well-being that Germany should be destroyed before its status as a World Power was consolidated and the world had become accustomed to it.

By 1900 the German economy had become dependent on its foreign trade by sea. Germany needed large imports of food and raw materials. The Royal Navy had the power to stop German trade by sea if Britain declared that a relationship of war existed between it and Germany.

The Serbian assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince had the potential to bring about a European War. If War had been against Britain's interest, it could have prevented it. But, as it needed an occasion for war on Germany, it allowed that potential to develop.

The Liberal Party, which was in government when the opportunity for war came along, had a partial difficulty with its back benches, which were prejudiced against British engagement in European War. An emotive incident was needed to overcome that prejudice. It was well known that German war plans—every major State had war-plans for possible wars—included a possible march through Belgium to outflank the French defences.

As the situation in Europe approached the point of war, the German Government tried to get a clear statement from Britain about how it would regard a march through Belgium and failed to get it. If Britain had wished to guarantee Belgian neutrality, it could have ensured it by telling the Germans that it would enter the War against them if they crossed the Belgian Border. But what the British Government needed was German violation of Belgian neutrality as an

emotive issue for hustling its back benches into a war mentality. Therefore it effectively misled the Germans into thinking the Belgian issue was no great matter for it.

During the ten years before the War, a retired German General, von Bernhardt, had been publishing books telling the Germans they were living in a fool's paradise with regard to England, and that England would find a way of destroying them if they did not make more effective preparations for war.

After its declaration of war in August 1914, Britain seized on these books, translated them, outrageously mistranslating the title in one instance, and told the public that Bernhardt was a representative of the German military who had been planning a conquest of England.

And an intellectual Irish Home Ruler, Tom Kettle, who had come very close to the Liberal leadership during the Home Rule conflict, contributed articles to the major Liberal paper, the *Daily News*, saying that Germany had fallen under the influence of an evil German philosopher called Nietzsche, and had reverted to barbarism under his influence, and therefore had to be destroyed.

Shaw could not stay silent as the atmosphere was being poisoned with this stuff. He did not have the character to take stand against the War, as Roger Casement did. So he supported the war but satisfied his intellectual conscience by telling it like it was.

The status of Shaw in British literature as late as the 1970s is shown by the fact that the building-site for the

British Library that was to replace the Reading Room of the British Museum was decorated with two large portraits. Shakespeare was at one corner and Shaw at the other. I thought this was a hopeful sign that England was losing the sense of itself. Whatever one thinks of what is called Shakespeare—and I never thought much of it—it is a construction on which England moulded itself over a dozen generations, while Shaw was only the entertainer of the Liberal Imperialist generation of Greater Britain. And he was an outsider from Ireland, as so many entertainers of the English have been since the Puritan Revolution.

The same thought must have struck somebody in authority because I noticed after a couple of years that the Shakespeare figure stood alone before the building site. And then Margaret Thatcher reduced the intended building by half, turning the other half of the site into a coach park, acting on the English instinct that it is not good to be too thoughtful. Things go wrong if you think too much about them.

Shortly after I left Slieve Luacra I went to what was advertised as a performance of the complete text of *Hamlet*, thinking I might have missed something in the reading. It went on for four hours. It was like Wagner without the music. But I sat through it to the end, and was I think the only restive member of the audience. The others appeared intent on absorbing to the full that lesson against thinking too much.

Shaw had no long-term place in that culture. So we might as well reclaim him and try to retrieve whatever of the "good man" survived the Fabianism.

George Bernard Shaw

Some extracts from Shaw's wartime writings

1. Common Sense About the War

"The time has now come to pluck up courage and begin to talk and write soberly about the war. At first the mere horror of it stunned the more thoughtful of us... As to the thoughtless... I know too well that the British civilian does not allow his perfect courage to be questioned... But they certainly were—shall I say a little upset? They felt in that solemn hour that England was lost if only one single traitor in their midst let slip the truth about anything in the

universe. It was a perilous time for me. I do not hold my tongue easily; and my inborn dramatic faculty and professional habit as a playwright prevent me from taking a one-sided view even when the most probable result of taking a many-sided one is prompt lynching. Besides, until Home Rule emerges from its present suspended animation, I shall retain my Irish capacity for criticising England with something of the detachment of a foreigner, and perhaps

with a certain slightly malicious taste for taking the conceit out of her. Lord Kitchener made a mistake the other day in rebuking the Irish volunteers for not rallying faster to the defense of "their country". They do not regard it as their country yet...

...I see the people of England united in a fierce detestation and defiance of the views and acts of Prussian Junkerism. And I see the German people stirred to the depths by a similar antipathy to English Junkerism, and anger at the apparent treachery and duplicity of the attack made on them by us in their extremest peril from France and Russia. I see both nations duped, but alas! not quite unwillingly duped, by their Junkers and Militarists into wreaking on one another the wrath they should have spent in destroying Junkerism and Militarism in their own country. And I see the Junkers and Militarists of England and Germany jumping at the chance they have longed for in vain for many years of smashing one another and establishing their own oligarchy as the dominant military power in the world. No doubt the heroic remedy for this tragic misunderstanding is that both armies should shoot their officers and go home to gather in their harvests in the villages and make a revolution in the towns; and though this is not at present a practicable solution, it must be frankly mentioned, because it or something like it is always a possibility in a defeated conscript army...

What is a Junker? Is it a German officer of twenty-three, with offensive manners, and a habit of cutting down innocent civilians with his sabre? Sometimes; but not at all exclusively that or anything like that. Let us resort to the dictionary. I turn to the *Encyclopaedisches Woerterbuch* of Muret Sanders. Excuse its quaint German-English.

Junker = Young nobleman, younker, lording, country squire, country gentleman, squirearch. Junkerberrschaft = squirearchy, landocracy. Junkerleben = life of a country gentleman, (figuratively) a jolly life. Junkerpartei = country party. Junkerwirtschaft = doings of the country party.

Thus we see that the Junker is by no means peculiar to Prussia. We may claim to produce the article in a perfection that may well make Germany despair of ever surpassing us in that line. Sir Edward Grey is a Junker from his topmost hair to the tips of his toes; and Sir Edward is a

charming man, incapable of cutting down even an Opposition front bencher, or of telling a German he intends to have him shot. Lord Cromer is a Junker. Mr. Winston Churchill is an odd and not disagreeable compound of Junker and Yankee: his frank anti-German pugnacity is enormously more popular than the moral babble (Milton's phrase) of his sanctimonious colleagues. He is a bumptious and jolly Junker, just as Lord Curzon is an uppish Junker. I need not string out the list. In these islands the Junker is literally all over the shop.

It is very difficult for anyone who is not either a Junker or a successful barrister to get into an English Cabinet, no matter which party is in power, or to avoid resigning when we strike up the drum. The Foreign Office is a Junker Club. Our governing classes are overwhelmingly Junker: all who are not Junkers are riff-raff whose only claim to their position is the possession of ability of some sort: mostly ability to make money. And, of course, the Kaiser is a Junker, though less true-blue than the Crown Prince, and much less autocratic than Sir Edward Grey, who, without consulting us, sends us to war by a word to an ambassador and pledges all our wealth to his foreign allies by a stroke of his pen.

Now that we know what a Junker is, let us have a look at the Militarists. A Militarist is a person who believes that all real power is the power to kill, and that Providence is on the side of the big battalions. The most famous Militarist at present, thanks to the zeal with which we have bought and quoted his book, is General Friedrich von Bernhardi. But we cannot allow the General to take precedence of our own writers as a Militarist propagandist. I am old enough to remember the beginning of the anti-German phase of that very ancient propaganda in England. The Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871 left Europe very much taken aback. Up to that date nobody was afraid of Prussia, though everybody was a little afraid of France... We soon produced the first page of the Bernhardian literature: an anonymous booklet entitled *The Battle of Dorking*... At first, in *The Battle of Dorking* phase, the note was mainly defensive. But from the moment when the Kaiser began to copy our Armada policy by building a big fleet, the anti-German agitation became openly aggressive; and the cry that the German fleet or ours must sink, and that a war between England and Germany was bound to come some day, speedily ceased to be merely a cry with

our Militarists and became an axiom with them. And what our Militarists said our Junkers echoed; and our Junker diplomatists played for. The story of how they manoeuvred to hem Germany and Austria in with an Anglo-Franco-Russian combination will be found told with soldierly directness and with the proud candor of a man who can see things from his own side only in the article by Lord Roberts in the current number of *The Hibbert Journal* (October, 1914). There you shall see also, after the usual nonsense about Nietzsche, the vision of "British administrators bearing the White Man's Burden", of "young men, fresh from the public schools of Britain, coming eagerly forward to carry on the high traditions of Imperial Britain in each new dependency which comes under our care", of "our fitness as an Imperial race", of "a great task committed to us by Providence", of "the will to conquer that has never failed us", of our task of "assuming control of one-fifth of the earth's surface and the care of one in five of all the inhabitants of the world". Not a suggestion that the inhabitants of the world are perhaps able to take care of themselves...

And now back to Friedrich von Bernhardi.

Like many soldier-authors, Friedrich is very readable; and he maintains the good and formidable part of the Bismarck tradition: that is, he is not a humbug. He looks facts in the face; he deceives neither himself nor his readers; and if he were to tell lies—as he would no doubt do as stoutly as any British, French, or Russian officer if his country's safety were at stake—he would know that he was telling them. Which last we think very bad taste on his part, if not downright wickedness. It is true that he cites Frederick the Great as an exemplary master of *Weltpolitik*. But his chief praise in this department is reserved for England. It is from our foreign policy, he says, that he has learnt what our journalists denounce as "the doctrine of the bully, of the materialist, of the man with gross ideals: a doctrine of diabolical evil". He frankly accepts that doctrine from us... He shews in the clearest way that if Germany does not smash England, England will smash Germany by springing at her the moment she can catch her at a disadvantage. In a word he prophesies that we, his great masters in *Realpolitik*, will do precisely what our Junkers have just made us do. It is we who have carried out the Bernhardi program: it is Germany who has neglect-

ed it...

...The case against Germany for violating the neutrality of Belgium is of no moral value to England... because we have fully admitted that we should have gone to war in defence of France in any case, whether the Germans came through Belgium or not, and refused to give the German ambassador any assurance that we should remain neutral if the Germans sacrificed the military advantage of attacking through Belgium for the sake of avoiding war with us..."

[*Commonsense* was published on 14th November 1914. It was followed a month later (12 December) by comment on the official French account of the start of the War: the *Yellow Book*.]

2. The Last Spring Of The Old Lion

"From an authentic part of this 'Yellow Book' there emerges a picture so stirring that it is amazing to me that no Englishman has yet rescued it from its wrappings of official correspondence, for in it you see the old British lion, the lion of Waterloo, the lion of Blenheim, the lion of Trafalgar, making his last and most terrible and triumphant springs. You see him with his old craft and his old courage and strength unimpaired, with his old amazing luck, his old singleness of aim, his old deep-lying and subtle instinct that does better without great men in a pinch than his enemies do with them.

For centuries now the Lion has held to his one idea that none shall be greater than England on land, and none as great on sea. To him it has been nothing whether a rival to England was better or worse than England. When Waterloo was won, Byron said 'I'm damned sorry', and humanitarians and libertarians looked aghast at the re-establishment of the Inquisition and the restoration of an effete and mischievous dynasty by English arms on the ruins of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Little reeked the lion of that. England's rival was in the dust; England was mistress of the seas; England's General—what matter that he was an Irishman—was master of Europe, with its Kings whispering in his presence like frightened schoolboys. England right or wrong. England complete with her own native corruptions and oppressions no less than her own native greatness and glory, had risen all English from the conflict and held the balance of power in her hand...

For a hundred years after that no Englishman knew what it was to turn pale at the possibility of invasion. For more than two generations of Englishmen the Lion lay and basked and smelt no foe that the pat of his paw could not dispose of. Then a rival arose again... The Lion rose and began to watch. The old instinct stirred in him. He heard the distant song, '*Deutschland, Deutschland, über Alles*', and something in him said, 'Never that while I live'.

The rival built a warship, built another warship and yet another one, openly challenged the sovereignty of the sea. That was the end. From that moment it was only a question when to spring, for a lion with that one idea at heart, with that necessity deep in his very bowels, must be crafty; he must win at all hazards no matter how long he crouches before the right moment comes. You see it coming in the 'Yellow Book'. Germany with Austria and Russia with France face each other, finger on trigger, France avoiding the fight, Russia gradually arming herself and training herself for it. Austria speculating on it all, even Austria afraid of the Lion's rival, Germany.

France always manoeuvring for peace (being outnumbered), at last finds that Germany, defiant of her and of Russia, contemptuously sure that she can crush the one with her right hand and the other with her left, yet fears the Lion and well knows that if he comes to the aid of France and Russia, the odds will be too terrible even for the victors of Sedan.

France sounds the Lion on the subject. The Lion, grim and cautious, does not object to his naval and military Commanders talking to Commanders of France and discussing what might happen and how, in that case, things might be arranged. France suddenly bullies Germany; tells her to clear out of Morocco and clear out sharp. Germany looks at the Lion and sees him with quivering tail about to spring. The odds are too great. With mortification tearing her heart, Germany clears out, successfully bullied for the first time since the rise of her star.

The Lion is balked. Another few years of waiting and the British taxpayer may tire of keeping ahead of that growing fleet. The old instinct whispers, 'Now, now, before the rival is too strong'. Voices begin to cry that in the London streets, but there are new forces that the Lion must take account of. If the rival will not fight, it is not easy to attack him, and Germany will not fight unless

the Lion can be detached from France and Russia. Yet she is sick with the humiliation of that bullying and knows that nothing but the riding down of the bullies can restore her prestige and heal her wounded pride. But she must swallow her spleen, for at every threat France points to the Lion and saves the peace France alone really desires.

Every time Germany is humiliated the Lion is balked. Austria's Balkan speculation is postponed and Russia does not quite know whether she is balked or respited. The Lion broods and broods, and deep in his subconscious there stirs the knowledge that Germany will never fight unless—unless—unless—the Lion does not quite know what, does not want to know what, but disinterested observers complete the sentence thus: Unless Germany can be persuaded that the Lion is taking a fancy to Germany and is becoming a bit of a pacifist and will not fight...

As for me, I understand it; I vibrate to it; I perceive the might and mystery of it and all sorts of chords in me sound the demand that the lion's last fight shall be the best fight of all and Germany the last foe overcome, but I am a Socialist and know well that the lion's day is gone by and that the bravest lion gets shot in the long run. I foresee that his victory will not, like the old victories, lead to a century of security. I know that it will create a situation more dangerous than the situation of six months ago, and that only by each western nation giving up every dream of supremacy can that situation be mastered.

A lion within frontiers is after all a lion in a cage, and the future has no use for caged lions fighting to defend their own chains. In the future we must fight, not alone for England, but for the welfare of the world. But for all that the lion is a noble old beast and his past is a splendid past and his breed more valiant than ever—too valiant, nowadays, indeed, to be merely Englishmen. *Contra mundum*, I take off my hat to him as he makes his last charge and shall not cease to wave it because of the squealing of the terrified chickens."

3. [In a *New Statesman* article of 19th December 1914, he made the following remark:]

"Now I am not going to labor Bernhardt's point that the addition of 800,000 square miles of the Belgium of 1839 reduced all the treaties of that date affecting Belgium to scraps of paper" [and] "our ally Russia has not even thought of Persian neutrality in operating against the Turks..." *

V
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Fr. Horner
Criminal Conversation
Totally Unbiased!
Euthanasia
C of I
Diplomacy
No Fogey Like A Young . . .
A Porky

P
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T

country in the world to remove any age limit on the practice.

Official figures show that there were 1,432 cases of euthanasia in Belgium in 2012, representing about 2 per cent of all deaths.

CoI

"We have here an amazing collection of fine and varied buildings. But for how long can this network be maintained?"

The Church of Ireland has always been a minority Church but the census paints a grim picture of approaching dissolution.

The sparsely populated areas commission of the 1950s closed 144 Churches and many more have been closed since then. In the second half of the 20th century, no fewer than six Churches were closed in Cork city and five in Limerick city.

There is only one Church open in Emly Diocese and one in the Diocese of Kilmacduagh.

In the Republic there were 338,719 members of the Church of Ireland at dis-Establishment (1871). By 1981 this figure had fallen to 95,366 and, although it had increased to 125,585 in 2006, the Bishop of Cork has shown that this may not be of great significance.

Recently a new factor has arrived: the huge growth in non-attendance. A generation ago, almost every Church member in the Republic was a regular churchgoer.

But members of the Roman Catholic Church and Church of Ireland in the Republic are no longer churchgoers as previously. A layman said to me recently that the Catholic Church still has enough people at Mass to keep the show on the road but that the Church of Ireland has been decimated.

This past year I took services in a church in Co Tipperary where the average attendance is about 10, yet there are 55 Anglicans in the parish.

But whatever the future holds, this book is a splendidly designed and illustrated evocation of the Church of Ireland, past and present. But it is not a history." (Very Rev. Robert MacCarthy reviewing *The Church of Ireland—An Illustrated History* published by Book-link, Dublin, 2013. Very Rev. Mac Carthy is former Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, *Irish Times*, 6.1.2014)

DIPLOMACY

Germany opened the first diplomatic mission in Dublin—After the Free State was established in 1922, the Germans opened a Consulate-General at 58 Northumberland Road in Ballsbridge.

FR. HORNER!

Little Jack Horner
Sat in the corner,
Eating a Christmas pie;
He put in his thumb,
And pulled out a plum,
And said, "What a good boy am I!"

Jack Horner was the steward of the last Abbot of Glastonbury, Richard Whiting. In 1543, as part of an attempt to obtain Henry VIII's favour, Whiting sent Jack Horner to the King with title deeds of a number of valuable properties. To foil thieves, these deeds were concealed in a large pie. On the journey, Jack Horner surreptitiously opened the pie and extracted the deed of Mells Manor, Somerset.

Shortly after the Dissolution of the Monasteries between 1536 and 1541, the Horner family moved into Mells Manor, and live there to this day. The family has always insisted that the Manor was perfectly legitimately purchased.

CRIMINAL CONVERSATION

Oliver St. John Gogarty (1878-1957) remarked on a fellow surgeon who was convicted of *Criminal Conversation*: "never did a man gain so much with his knife and lose so much with his fork."

Criminal Conversation was based upon compensation for the husband's loss of property rights in his wife, the wife being regarded as his chattel. Historically a wife could not sue her husband for adultery, as he could not be her chattel if she was already his. The tort was abolished in England in 1857, and the Republic of Ireland in 1976.

The great thinker Socrates set the tone for wedlock-bashing when he advised: "By all means marry; if you get a good wife you'll become happy, if you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher." I suppose this lends a new dimension to the adage: "Behind every great man lies a woman."

TOTALLY UNBIASED!

"It is a sad but undeniable fact that the First World War—in all its murderous horror—was overwhelmingly the result of German expansionism and aggression.

"The driving force behind the carnage was the desire of the German regime to express Germany's destiny as a great European power, and to acquire the prestige and international clout that went with having an empire" (Boris Johnson, *Daily Telegraph*, 6.1.2014).

EUTHANASIA

"Belgium today voted to extend the country's euthanasia laws to terminally-ill children, becoming the first country in the world to remove an age limit on the practice" (*Irish Times*, 13.2.2014)

The vote in the Belgian Parliament followed months of public debate on the contentious issue.

Euthanasia has been legal in Belgium since 2002.

The new law will permit under-18s to request euthanasia if their illness is terminal, they are in great pain and there is no available treatment. Parental consent will be required, while the child will have to be assessed by a psychologist or medical practitioner.

The law was backed by 86 members of parliament with 44 against and 12 abstentions. The governing Socialist and Liberal parties in the Coalition Government voted in favour of the proposal, with the Christian Democrats voting against. The Bill will now pass to King Philippe to be signed into law.

The three Benelux countries—Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg—are the only countries in the European Union to permit euthanasia. The Netherlands became the first country in the world to legalise the practice in 2002, followed closely by Belgium.

While the Netherlands currently permits euthanasia for children over the age of 12, Belgium will be the first

According to German Foreign Ministry records in Berlin, that office opened on 23rd November 1923, although papers from the Department of External Affairs (now the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) show that the Germans had initiated their diplomatic link with Ireland in June 1923.

The man in charge of the German mission was Georg von Dehn-Schmidt, who lasted in the post until 1934. Dr. Adolf Mahr, the then director of the National Museum, who was the leader of the small Nazi party here, had him removed from the post because he didn't follow the Nazi party line. The diplomat was sent as envoy to Romania; he died in Munich in 1937.

Soon after the Germans arrived, the French opened a diplomatic mission here, also a Consulate-General, at 32 St. Stephen's Green, close to the Shelbourne Hotel. Estonia and Romania opened legations in Ailesbury Road at the same time. They began the tradition of the Ballsbridge 'embassy belt' centred on Ailesbury Road.

By 1930, 25 countries had diplomatic representation in Dublin, including the US, which sent its first diplomatic representative to Dublin in 1927. The German mission remained at Northumberland Road until after World War II. In 1974, the building became the Dublin office of the Spanish Cultural Institute, which is now in Lincoln Place, and the Germans eventually moved into a brand new embassy at Booterstown, Co. Dublin.

It wasn't until the Republic of Ireland was declared in 1949 that the diplomatic legations in Dublin were upgraded to Embassy status. Today, Dublin has 53 foreign Embassies. But only three Embassies are in purpose-built buildings: the German, the US, and the British. The US Embassy in Ballsbridge was opened in 1964, however, there have been suggestions in the past couple of years that it intends to relocate elsewhere in Dublin (Donal Lyons, Naas, Co. Kildare, *Daily Mail*, 17.12.2013)

NO FOGGY like a young . . .

"Most students would prefer to have the internet and die at 60 rather than live to 80 without it, a new study has found. (Irish Independent, 14.11.2013).

Research from Microsoft provides a stark insight into just how dependent young people are on technology.

The poll of 2,600 students across six European countries also found that two-fifths would choose a lifetime supply of

free apps over a lifetime supply of free food.

Students see internet access as a basic right, alongside food, sleep or air.

But the study also detected that this dependence is causing a degree of unhappiness. Many students, it revealed, are keen to get away from the screen when they can.

Nearly one in five said they spend more time reading about friends' social

lives online than actually spending time with those friends.

A PORKY!

Winston Churchill was supposed to have preferred pigs!

He said the problem with dogs is they always look up at you; Cats always look down at you; but with pigs you feel you are among equals!

Cathy Winch

The BBC and War Poets

The BBC celebrates the First World War. Therefore it does not like English War Poets who fail to celebrate the war. It asks on its website: *"Has poetry distorted our view of the war?"* indeed, *"Have we made a schoolboy error?"*

Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon wrote poems depicting in straightforward language the results of gas and bomb attacks on men. Their poems have been part of the Literature Syllabus for a long time in England (although apparently not in Northern Ireland) and generations of children have learnt the horrible effects of gas and bombs in WW1. The poems they read described the effects of war but fail to mention, *"sacrifices made for a purpose"*, *"fighting for a just cause"*, or any such notions. Pupils have been brought up to think that war is horrible, without qualification or justification. And *"many of us are still stuck with this skewed view of the war"*, says the BBC.

Other poets did describe the death of soldiers (although not as vividly), but in order to blame the enemy, or to glorify their fate. Owen and Sassoon did not. Whole generations have been spoiled by anti-war sentiment! The BBC intends to remedy this error.

The BBC commissioned Ian McMillan, the poet and broadcaster with a trademark Barnsley accent heard from time to time on BBC Radio 4, to write the web page *"Has poetry distorted our view of the war?"* in the BBC guide to WW1. McMillan does not say that Owen and Sassoon were wrong; instead he tries to diminish their importance as poets and to belittle their message. McMillan used to be a victim of the anti-war indoctrination himself, but he has seen the light: *"I have always been*

a big fan of Wilfred Owen's poetry, but going through this journey (presumably writing about WW1 for the BBC) I've realised that Owen's strong and heartfelt reaction to World War One was just one of many poetic responses to the conflict.."

Wilfred Owen's poems, he says, are not autobiographical: Owen did not himself experience a gas attack. *"Although Dulce et Decorum Est is written from the poet's point of view, it's important to remember it is a work of fiction."* Setting aside the question of whether you have to have experienced something before you can write about it, is *"work of fiction"* the correct phrase? Owen did not invent gas attacks, he saw them. Owen was at the Front in the trenches and saw all there was to see there. He described violent death and died himself violently, one week before the end of the war. There is something unpleasant about accusing him of writing poems that were not *"autobiographical"*.

Then, continues Ian McMillan, Owen wrote his poems while being ill with shell shock. *"Owen wrote his anti-jingoistic poem as part of his therapy to overcome shellshock but his was just one, very personal, reaction to war"*. McMillan does not want to shock the reader, possibly a teacher or a pupil, by saying directly that jingoism is good. Instead he implies there must be something wrong with the poem because it was written in a hospital for shell-shocked soldiers—thus by someone not in possession of all their faculties and unable to think objectively. We must feel protective in a patronizing way for this unfortunate soldier, writing poetry in order to get better.

Unfortunately for McMillan the

poem *'Dulce et Decorum Est'* is an objective description of the result of a gas attack, with the moral that, if we had seen it with our own eyes, we would not repeat the jingoistic lie that it is sweet and honorable to die for our country. Nothing could be more down to earth and pedestrian. McMillan would need to show, rather than insinuate, that there is something unbalanced about the sentiments expressed.

Belittling views as penned by the mentally ill is not new. When Siegfried Sassoon wrote his anti-war letter, published in the *Times* on 31st July 1917, he was dismissed as *"mentally unstable"* and suffering from shell shock. He was not.

There are a lot more poets than those two, continues McMillan, and especially women poets. *"While Owen wrote powerful poetry, he was just one of 2,225 men and women from Britain and Ireland who had poems published during World War One."* That is certainly so. McMillan fails to mention that one of the most prestigious Dublin publishing houses, counting Yeats among their authors, Maunsell and Co, in 1915 published poems by Constance Powell.

Let us have excerpts from her production.

The Song Of The Kaiser (With apologies to Hood)

With fingers in Belgium blood!
With garments all stained and red
The Kaiser sat in his robe of shame—
"I am the War-god", he said.
"Kill, kill, kill!
Plunder, ravage, fight"—
And loud in a voice the world to fill—
He sang the song of his might.

And *Warriors All!*
Warriors all for Ireland's sake!
Whatever our party or creed,
The men who will fight for the truth
and the right,
Are men of the Irish breed!

Or *the Slacker:*
He says his country doesn't really
want him.
...His mother is the saddest thing on
earth,
She defends him when she can,
But he's proved he's not a man,
And she wishes she had buried him
the hour she gave him birth.

The Rhyme Of "The Widow's Mite"
The widow was sad, as sad could be,
But "England is worth my best", said she.

And so, brave soul! kept nothing back,
But gave her all, her one son Jack!

Indeed, hundreds more women pen—ned similar efforts, which have been collected in *"Women's Poetry of the First World War"* by Nosheen Khan, University Press of Kentucky, 1988.

Khan notes that many of the women who wrote lines intended as poetry were not poets: *"most of the {women} writers were amateur versifiers who had probably never thought of writing verse before and in whom the fire of creativity may not have struck save for the war"*. And that *"viewed as a whole, the writing is decidedly uneven in quality. It is often marred by the scars of haste, of hysteria and of the melodramatic"*. Khan does not explain the hysteria. Like McMillan, Khan ignores war propaganda, which encouraged hysteria and a deluge of bad verse. The *Times* said at the time that *"they received as many as a 100 metrical essays in a single day"*. Metrical essays, not poems.

England's vital interests were not engaged in the European conflict. The population felt no vital interest at stake, and had to be whipped up to a frenzy of hatred of the Germans. What did Constance Powell know of the Kaiser before the papers told her he should be hanged?

The poets *Sassoon and Owen, says McMillan, were "A select group of well-educated soldier officers"*. The intention here is to marginalize them as 'upper class men'. The 'common man poet', put forward by McMillan as an alternative is 'Woodbine Willie', nearer to the working class:

"Other verses submitted to trench magazines reveal how soldiers also used humour and anti-German feeling to cope with the conflict. Much poetry written on the front line, such as by the poet Padre Woodbine Willie, was about everyday concerns like where the next rum ration was coming from."

Here is an example of a poem by Woodbine Willie:

The Sorrow of God

So I thought as that long-'aired atheist
Were nobbat a silly sod
For 'ow did e' 'count for my brussels
sprouts
If 'e didn't believe i' God.
But it ain't the same out 'ere, ye know.

{...}Just look at that little boy corporal
there,

Such a fine upstanding lad,
Wi' a will ov 'is own and a way ov 'is
own.

And a smile ov 'is own, 'e 'ad.
An hour ago he was bustin' wi' life,

Wi' 'is actin' and foolin' and fun;
'E were simply the life on us all, 'e
were.

Now look what the blighters 'a done.
Look at 'im lyin' there all ov a 'eap,

Wi' the blood soaken over 'is 'ead.
Like a beautiful picture spoiled by a
fool,

A bundle o' nothin' — dead.

McMillan was trying to say that less socially elevated poets penned efforts that chimed in better with the ordinary soldier, by touching on everyday concerns, like Brussels sprouts and the existence of God. 'Woodbine Willie' was Reverend Geoffrey Anketell Studert Kennedy, educated at Leeds Grammar School and Trinity College, Dublin (First class degree in Classics and Divinity). He did not move in upper class circles. Does this make his poetry better or worse? The answer is in the poems themselves. The social origin of a poet must be irrelevant to the beauty of the verse.

Owen wrote of the most awful moments in war; McMillan reminds us that there were other moments. This is like saying that a poet writing about the happiest moments of a love affair is not authentic because he doesn't mention what they had to eat.

But McMillan does not seem concerned with the quality of the poems. He seems to think that verse published during the war is valuable in itself, whatever its quality. This alters the point at issue: we are no longer discussing the verse, only its value as a historical document. But then poems become a subject not for the English literature lesson, but for the history lesson.

We now come to the content of the poems, the view they express.

"A select group of well-educated soldier officers, including Wilfred Owen, came to view the war as one of pity and horror. This was a minority view but expressed through powerful and well-written poetry."

There is the obvious point that you can be in a minority and be right. The other obvious point is that to view the

war "as one of pity and horror" is not at all a minority view. What partisan of WW1 celebrations does not decry "the horrors of war"? When 20 000 a day died everyday for days on end, as happened, the normal reaction was one of "pity and horror"; there is something wrong with people who regard this in any other way. This is not a 'personal' reaction but a near universal one. Who would admit to not feeling it?

McMillan here changes the subject: Owen and Sassoon were not just a minority; their view was "one of many poetic responses to the conflict". This is an evasion of the debate of whether the Poets were right or wrong. He says their view was personal and implies that all poetic responses are equally valid.

Since he does not go into the argument of right and wrong, we must supply it now.

There is certainly more to war than events that inspire pity and horror. The BBC WW1 website mentions in that context the greater opportunities for sex, which they illustrate 'diplomatically' with a photo of German soldiers with their arms around Polish women.

The Irish Home Ruler and Deputy Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, C.E. Montague, who joined up and spent time in the trenches, explained the positive character of war in more general terms. With war, he said, men's lives "had undergone an immense simplification". Life at war became "almost solely physical". Life was "all salt and tingling with vicissitudes of simple bodily discomfort and pleasure, fatigue and rest, risk and the ceasing of risk; a heaven after the flatness, the tedium, the cloying security....". The stories told by soldiers: "tasted of life, the inexhaustible game and adventure". People "felt, irresistibly,... that at the moment the war was the central thing in the whole world, and that it was unbearable not to be at the centre of things" (Quotations from *Disenchantment*, 1922).

Sassoon did not write about the exhilaration of war, although he felt it himself at times. The day before a big battle, 7th April 1917 he wrote in his diary:

"The fact remains that if I had the choice between England tomorrow and the battle, I would choose the battle without hesitation. Why on earth is one such a fool as to be pleased at the prospect? I can't understand it. Last year I thought it was because I had never been through it before. But my

feeling of quiet elation and absolute confidence now is something even stronger than last summer's passionate longing for death and glory."

He noted that the men under his command also felt positive on the eve of the battle: "For the men it is a chance of blighty and 'anything for a change.'"

In a similar vein he explained in his semi-autobiographical *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*:

"Of course there's a lot of physical discomfort to be put up with, and the unpleasant sights seem to get worse every year; but apart from being shelled and so on, I must say I've often felt extraordinarily happy even in the trenches. Out there it's just one thing after another, and one soon forgets the bad times; it's probably something to do with being in the open air so much and getting such lot of exercise... It's only when one gets away from it that one begins to realise how stupid and wasteful it all is."

Reactions to the sight of violent death are varied and not everyone feels pity and horror. McMillan does not say what other reactions are possible (Fascination? Joy? Rage?), and which reaction you would be ashamed to admit to. Sassoon mentions the most common reaction: forget as soon as possible.

Bringing up the bad times and the unpleasant sights, during the war, not after, is what you do if you want to point out how stupid and wasteful it all is.

We would be surprised if the battle of Leningrad had inspired poems like Sassoon's and Owen's. The Russians then were fighting for survival, and there was no question of counting the cost of the means employed to survive. France does not have 'war poets'. France fought for the removal of German troops from French territory. The war in 1914-1918 in England was a war of choice, an intervention, not a matter of survival, unless you mean survival of commercial supremacy. The aims of the war were vague, e.g. 'crushing Prussian militarism'. This is why Sassoon and Owen could write as they did. It is false to say just that "they came to view the war as one of pity and horror"; the truth is that their poems implicitly ask the question 'what is it for?' and ignore the propaganda answers. Indeed some of their poems were explicitly a reaction against propaganda.

The BBC is therefore uneasy about the War Poets. Establishment figures are uneasy about the war poets. Jeremy Paxman thinks they stop us from under-

standing the war, "I think that the idea that the whole thing was a conspiracy to throw away young lives is perpetuated by the poets, and actually there's much more to it than that" (Speech in Dubai, 11 March, 2014). Max Hastings in the *Times* 'Four page guide to WW1 Poetry' 17 March, 2014, writes that the poets tell us about the horror of war, but nothing of the serious reality of the times:

"it has nothing to tell us about the realities that government and generals faced in 1914-18. Sassoon's political view was that he war was so dreadful that one should simply pack up and give it to the other side."

Neither Paxman nor Hastings present the view of the poets fairly: the Poets neither thought in terms of conspiracy nor of giving up.

They wrote of the horrors of war at the time of the war, not in retrospect. Obviously their poems were not publicized at the time, they were hardly suitable war effort material. War propaganda supplied the war aims for the population in apocalyptic terms. The verbal barrage was so intense and vicious it could never be undone; a time never came when it would be acceptable to admit the monstrosity of the demonization of Germany. Publishing the war poets was the nearest thing England came to presenting a non propaganda view of the war.

This is what the Establishment does not like about the war poets: their poems lead readers to ask the question: What was it for? Why did all these men die so horribly? Why were "thousands of lives uselessly sacrificed, including some of the most precious" as C.P. Scott put it (Diary entry 23 May 1915). McMillan probably thinks that is just one question among many you could ask about the war. The BBC and the Establishment distort the views of the Poets or attack them with despicably weak and evasive arguments/innuendoes—not autobiographical, mentally ill, minority view, one view among many—that alone means that the Poets' message is not welcome among the war celebrationists: they disturb by asking the still unanswered question, why did Britain join the war? Even if the reader does not ask the question, and stays just with the vivid impression of the horrors of war, and feels a healthy disgust for war, why should the BBC be uneasy about that?

Does it want a jingoistic population again?

War poets. Annex.

1. Text of the letter Sassoon wrote in 1917, for which he risked court martial, but which was dismissed as the ravings of a shell shocked man.

"I am making this statement as an act of willful defiance of military authority, because I believe that the War is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it. I am a soldier, convinced that I am acting on behalf of soldiers. I believe that this War, upon which I entered as a war of defense and liberation, has now become a war of aggression and conquest. I believe that the purposes for which I and my fellows soldiers entered upon this War should have been so clearly stated as to have made it impossible to change them, and that, had this been done, the objects which actuated us would now be attained by negotiation. I have seen and endured the sufferings of the troops, and I can no longer be a party to prolonging those sufferings for ends which I believe to be evil and unjust. I am not protesting against the conduct of the War, but against the political errors and insincerities for which the fighting men are being sacrificed. On behalf of those who are suffering now, I make this protest against the deception which has been practised upon them; also I believe that it may help to destroy the callous complacency with which the majority of those at home regard the continuance of agonies which they do not share, and which they have not sufficient imagination to realise."

"I can no longer be a party to prolonging those sufferings for ends which I believe to be evil and unjust." This explains the poems. And before you dismiss the poems as "*one reaction among many*", you must address the issues in this letter. Were the ends "*evil and unjust*"? If they were, the sufferings endured in pursuing them were obscene and absurd. Sassoon also described atrocities committed by the British against prisoners; in his diaries he talked of cruelty during combat, and remorse afterwards.

Because his gesture was dismissed as harmless ravings of a madman, Sassoon went back to the war, after a period in a hospital for the psychologically wounded. He was "*an irresponsible person again, absolved from any obligation to intervene in world affairs*", as he says in *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*.

2. Sassoon being a minority.

The argument was made at the time to Sassoon by his superior officer trying to

dissuade him from making a stand:

"And surely it stands to reason, ..., that you must be wrong when you set your own opinion against the practically unanimous feeling of the whole British Empire" (*Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*)

3. CE Montague discussing war propaganda, in an introduction to a second collection of WW1 drawings published in 1917; the first collection had been criticised for not showing the reality of war.

"Of course we know more now {1917} than we could in 1914 of what it may cost to do a right thing. ... And if art has any power of drawing the mind of a people towards on line of thought or another, should we prefer now an art that harps on the cost or an art that expresses our sense of the rightness?"

At least Montague qualifies his statement; it is better to present a positive view 'now' ("should we prefer now"), ie during the war. After the war, the truth might be told.

3. Woodbine Willie's attitude to war after the war.

"War is only glorious when you buy it in the Daily Mail and enjoy it at the breakfast table. It goes splendidly with bacon and eggs. Real war is the final limit of damnable brutality, and that's all there is in it. It's about the silliest, filthiest, most inhumanly fatuous thing that ever happened. It makes the whole universe seem like a mad muddle. One feels that all talk of order and meaning in life is insane sentimentality" (1918).

and 1919:

"{the 19th century was a succession of wars} I carried the facts—the dry facts of history—out to France in 1915. I was always interested in military history. Yes, that's the word, interested I carried the interesting facts into my first battle, and there they came to life, they roared and thundered, they dripped with blood, they cursed, mocked, blasphemed, and cried like a child for mercy. They stood up before me like obscene spectres, beckoning with bloody hands, laughing like fiends at my little parochial religion, at my silly parochial God. I can remember running over an open space under shell fire trying madly to fit in the dates, and every shrieking shell kept yelling at me with foul oaths: Now you understand, you miserable little parson with your petty shibboleths, this is W-A-R—War."

4. Why the war was fought.

That is the question. Was the war stupid and

wasteful? What was England fighting for? England was at war "*because a little group of Liberal and Tory Imperialists has taken the idiotic resolution of destroying the German nation*". The words of F. Hirst, the Editor of the *Economist*, in a letter to the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, C.P. Scott, 21st May 1915. The *Manchester Guardian* had campaigned against British involvement in the forthcoming war until the last minute, along with a majority of MPs. They were not pacifists. After the war started, they tried in vain to shorten it. In 1915, CP Scott was writing in his diary about ways of shortening the war: "My feeling is that the sooner the Government can be forced to state the terms upon which it would discuss a settlement the better", 6th February 1915; on the same day he wrote about the absurd war aim of unconditional German surrender:

"If Churchill's 'unconditional surrender' interview represents the mind of the Government and the intentions of the Government, then we are laying up for this people and this nation of ours a heritage of woe which will curse our grand-children and, in my belief, digging England's grave."

Scott was absolutely right. The choices made in 1914 to get involved in the war, and thereafter to refuse any opportunity to shorten the war through negotiation, was the beginning of the end of England as a world power and brought disasters to others.

5. Death of White Europeans

The war poets preserve the memory of what it was like for white Europeans to die horribly: "*thousands of lives {were} uselessly sacrificed, including some of the most precious*", as CP Scott put it (Diary entry 23 May 1915).

In Irish Foreign Affairs, March 2014:

—Read Manus O'Riordan's report about the campaigning rally, with music and pictures, of the European Economic and Social Committee working itself up to overthrow the Ukrainian government.

—The Ukrainian Regime is illegitimate, by its own lights, but the EU backs it to the hilt. David Morrison gives the facts from the Ukrainian constitution.

—Jenny O'Connor shows how Evangelical Protestantism in Central American is rivalling the Catholic Church.

—Plus more detailed exposition of facts on events leading up to WW1, and the exchange of letters in the *Cork Evening Echo*.,

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Stephen Richards

Betjeman In Ireland

On 14th February the BBC Radio afternoon play was an attempt to portray a wartime lunch meeting between Elizabeth Bowen and John Betjeman, who will have been dead thirty years this May. This imaginative reconstruction was put together by John Banville. It would be easier to list the things I know about Banville than the things I don't know, but one of the things I didn't know was that he had written the screenplay for the movie of Bowen's *Last September*, a novel I once tried to read. So presumably his interest came first from the Bowen end. The two protagonists would have met undoubtedly, possibly at Bowen's flat in St. Stephen's Green, but the only lunch meeting we know of, as mentioned by Sean O'Faolain in his memoirs, was in 1946, following which Bowen dismissed Betjeman, in schoolgirl argot, as "*that silly ass*".

Banville, a Wexford man, cunningly gets in a reference to Enniscorthy and its Pugin Cathedral so admired by Betjeman. But if it would be possible for somebody to be the opposite of Betjeman, I think Banville might just fit the bill. Novels which, according to the internet, are "*stylistically elaborate... relentlessly allusive... preoccupied with the conflict between imagination and reality, and the existential isolation of the individual*" are perhaps not the kind of novels I'd be tempted to curl up with if I was down with manflu. I may be a hopeless middlebrow, but I wonder sometimes where the novel is going, or if it is going where poetry has gone. The process reminds me of what one of our law lecturers said presciently in late 70s Cambridge. The slow marginalisation of the jury, he reckoned, was going to lead to a situation where (despite the self-conscious avoidance of Latin tags) the lawyers would end up just talking to one another, over the heads of the rest of us. Having to explain yourself intelligibly to a jury keeps you honest.

So, could it be that novelists nowadays are writing for one another and for the literary reviews, and can't be seen to be facile, or sentimental or simplistic, or to get over-involved emotionally with their characters? Of course the novelists

in the Great Tradition managed to be complex and many-layered as well, but they managed the even greater feat of being enjoyable.

Lunch a la BBC

The wartime encounter takes place over lunch at the Shelbourne Hotel. The content I think is largely made up of snippets from the letters or other recorded *bons mots* of the characters. One thing that struck me about it was that Bowen comes over as a woman in the prime of life, whereas we seem to be listening to the older Betjeman, wistful and regretful, sounding a bit like the recordings of Churchill, more like Bowen's great uncle than a contemporary. In fact Bowen was seven years his senior, and a recognised novelist at a time when Betjeman was only just coming to prominence as a poet.

If the picture on the cover of the second volume of Bevis Hillier's three-volume biography is anything to go by, Betjeman was a good looking young man; and if the book's content is anything to go by he was extrovert and full of beans.

Bowen's talk, as delivered by Miranda Richardson in cut-glass English tones, with the charming slight stoppage that was characteristic of her, is full of upper class English or Anglo-Irish *cliche*. About the Irish state she says, "*We're as poor as church mice*" and wonders if that is the price of independence. About Bowen's Court she muses: "*I do rather love it, though it's impossible of course*". The Black and Tans are "*all forgotten*" but the Irish soldiers coming home on leave feel obliged to change into mufti at Holyhead, which apparently fails to prevent them being recognised for who they are anyway. The Germans are still the Huns.

She reminisces about the time she spent in Oxford pre-War, when she met some of the leading literary luminaries of the English scene, and "*fell a little in love with Maurice {Bowra}... I fell in love with all of them*", meaning people like David Cecil, Cyril Connolly, Isaiah Berlin, and Rosamund Lehmann. She assures Betjeman that "*Maurice and Isaiah are wild about you; they wouldn't*

have a word said against you", but with no indication as to who might have been tempted to say a word against him. In this distinguished company she felt "*so uneducated and provincial*". Betjeman assures her that they have met before, "*at a party at Stephen Spender's... I was nobody in particular*".

Betjeman tries to engage Dermot the waiter in conversation about what it might take for the Free State to come in on the Allied side. Dermot says that something would have to be done about the North for that to happen, and then Bowen upbraids her companion: "*You mustn't press them, you know. They take fright easily. If you're going to succeed you must stay quiet*". She comments that the Irish "*have a talent for treachery. I am Irish myself*." But she feels she is suspended between two worlds, somewhere between Holyhead and Kingstown, "*or Dun Laoghaire, as we're told we must call it*".

Bowen's Pre-Existence

She explains the circumstances in which the family had left Ireland to settle in Hythe near Folkestone, in a world of airy villas, after an early childhood spent "*in a Georgian world of granite and slate*". By this she means Dublin, as Bowen's Court was only a holiday retreat. Her father had been in a state of psychiatric disturbance for some time, and eventually he "*went off his head*" and committed himself to an asylum. She goes on to talk of her affair with Goronwy Rees. She had met him in the company of Guy Burgess. One of the characters in *The Death of the Heart* is based on Rees. It appears that Rees was closely involved with the Cambridge spy ring, but was not himself a Soviet spy, though under suspicion at one time. He helped Andrew Boyle put the jigsaw together to implicate Anthony Blunt in 1979, and died shortly afterwards.

Some of the action in the drama takes place in flashback, at a memorable house party at Bowen's Court in the Summer of 1936, "*one of the last innocent summers*". Rees and Berlin were among those present, also a young cousin of Bowen's called Noreen Colley, who appeared to have an Ulster accent, and Rosamund Lehmann, who was seduced by Rees in double quick time. Bowen's husband, Alan Cameron ("Mrs. Cameron is what I usually go by"), was present in body but took to part in these gatherings, preferring to hide in the back parts of the house. There's a lot of witty talk, which is presumably designed to show

Bowen as *châtelaine*, stimulating the brightest intellectuals and making it worth their while to traipse out to the back of beyond. "You know what this place means to me", Bowen exclaims to one of the guests, but admits to a secret longing for it to be burned down.

The Art Of The Novelist

Of course the subject of what they are both doing crops up. "You do send reports to London... so do I. Mr. Churchill himself reads them {and it seems that Betjeman also read them}... I choose to be a spy: I'm a novelist, aren't I?" This is certainly an interesting and maybe even a profound observation. I suppose it's a bit of a commonplace to say that novelists aren't safe to be around. I remember reading an article by the late Maeve Binchy in the *Irish Times* many years ago where she talked of her obsession with wanting to eavesdrop on random conversations in buses and in the street. Everything is grist to the mill. To be a credible novelist you have to have a sense of the rhythms of ordinary speech.

The American novelist and essayist, David Foster Wallace, now also sadly deceased, has a piece where explores this phenomenon further. The obsession is not only with observing, but also with not being observed. The temptation for the novelist is to stop hanging furtively around bus stops and instead get his or her reality from the all-pervasive world of television. It may be that art begins to imitate life, and many Americans seem to come into this world already acting. But it would be the ultimate capitulation if the life portrayed by the novelists was itself refracted via the television screen.

So, Bowen was using her observational gifts to convey a flavour of the mood in the Irish circles she was moving in. This was no doubt fed into the mix by the Ministry of Information and helped to provide the data on which the UK's Irish policy was based. This is all well documented in *Notes on Eire*, from Aubane Historical Society.

A Suitable Boy

But what about Betjeman? His own account given in the play was that his job was to buy people drinks and give them a positive impression of England/Britain, and British war aims. Many of those he came across were susceptible to his naive enthusiasms and air of upper class English eccentricity, behind which, as P.G. Wodehouse might have observed, lurked a keen intelligence. It was

known he was a poet too, which helped. For his part, he was fascinated by the varieties of life that were on show for him in Dublin and further afield, which appealed to his sense of the quaint. It's true, he tended to gravitate towards the gentry in their decayed, Molly Keane-like splendour, but he also took an interest in the religious scene in Vatican I Dublin; and of course in ecclesiastical architecture of all sorts. This life of eating, drinking and socialising was very pleasant, and very plausible, but not the whole story. As Nicholas Mansergh, in a sense Betjeman's boss in London, commented: "For all the pleasure I knew Irish peers gave him, he didn't rely on their judgment".

At the outbreak of war there was no British Embassy (or would it have been British High Commission?) in Dublin. Instead there was an anomalous post of "United Kingdom Representative in Eire", to which Sir John Maffey had been appointed; and Betjeman was to be his press *attache*. Maffey was a tall, good-looking and impressive figure, with a background in colonial administration. It was reported, by the Dutch journalist Kees van Hoek, that "seldom has a more determined character hidden under so much charm of speech and manner". Here we have it again: that indefinable charm.

The office was in Upper Mount Street, where Elizabeth Bowen had spent her early years. Brendan Bracken (Minister for Information and very close to Churchill) was involved in the choice of Betjeman, and also Harry Hodson Fellow of All Souls and a future Editor of the *Sunday Times*. Not only did Hodson think that Betjeman was "the sort of chap who could get on with the Irish" but he had seen an earlier report by Betjeman on the Ireland and judged that he had a "keen sense of the situation there for propaganda".

Hillier, on whose extraordinarily good biography I'm shamelessly dependent, notes a later comment by Henry Maxwell, another member of the Ministry of Information team, who considered that Betjeman had been selected in an attempt to counter the influence of Eduard Hempel the German Ambassador. It was felt that it would be "a good idea to send out somebody of charm and wit to keep de Valera sweet, and the Irish press and public opinion sweet. And it worked: once John was out there, reports came in of improved Anglo-Irish relations."

The Great Game In Ireland

Hempel was an equally good choice on the German side, his office adorned with a portrait of Hindenburg, not Hitler. "His urbanity is not of the effervescent type", wrote van Hoek. "Correct diplomat to the core, he can unbend with a winning charm". (Interestingly, Hempel's predecessor, Dr. Georg von Dehn, an equally urbane character, was recalled by Hitler in disgrace after a photo had emerged of him kissing the Papal nuncio's ring as he left the Nunciature in the Phoenix Park.) There was some discreet socialising between the two diplomatic missions. Beneath these civilised encounters there was constant scheming and pressing for public relations advantage.

Churchill didn't attempt to hide his aversion to de Valera, dating back to 1922; added to which he was seething about what he regarded as the careless cession of the Treaty Ports by Chamberlain in 1938. Interestingly, Unionists have seen Churchill as a traitor, first because of his past as a Home Ruler in the Asquith Government, and secondly because, as we were all told when we were young, he had actually offered Northern Ireland on a plate to de Valera in exchange for the ports, an offer which had been rejected.

If de Valera had agreed to a deal with any lesser *quid pro quo*, he might well have been shot. This was the opinion of the former Southern Unionist MP Herbert Shaw; while the wilder scheme of seizing the ports by force was certainly not something that commended itself to the British mission in Dublin. Maffey and his team had to work hard to prevent the public airing of any ill-advised ideas of that kind. Of course such a step would be presented as a pre-emptive strike in the context of a legitimate fear of German invasion, so the German diplomats had to be equally feline. To compromise Irish neutrality had to be seen as the last thing on everybody's mind.

The mind plays funny tricks too: it would seem that strongly anti-British comments made by public figures may often have been made out of real fear of a German invasion, especially in the 'dark days' of 1940 and 1941. The often slanted application of the censorship rules against the British is perhaps similarly explained. If the analogy isn't too insulting, it could almost be compared with the cringing attitude of a dog towards the man most likely to kick it. The greater fear may have been of a

German invasion, even if only on the pragmatic consideration that at least the British were the devil you knew.

The Right Sort Of Chaps

It seems that, with the British literary and cultural establishment, the world into which Betjeman was slowly making his way in the 1930s, wherever you start you always end up at the same place. The same names and families keep cropping up: the Nicolsons, Duff Coopers, Pakenhams, Mitfords, Cecils, under whose shade the academics, poets and general entertainers flourished. It's as if the world is a giant version of *A Dance to the Music of Time*, with the same characters jostling and feuding and loving and losing through a cycle of country house parties. Just by way of a minor example of this, I've recently finished Artemis Cooper's biography of Patrick Leigh Fermor, the scholar gypsy and *faux*-Irishman. Of course the author turns out to be the daughter of John Julius Norwich, and married to Anthony Beevor of *Stalingrad* fame.

Betjeman himself was briefly engaged to Wilhelmine ("Billa") Cresswell, who is supposed to be the model for the sensible narrator, Fanny I think, in Nancy Mitford's *Love in a Cold Climate*. (He had also proposed to two of the Mitford girls.) Billa later married Roy Harrod, the Oxford Economics don, subsequently becoming Lady Harrod, and so moved in the Pakenham and Isaiah Berlin circles. In her old age she spent her time campaigning to save the old flint Norfolk Churches.

And the beauty of this society is, or perhaps was, that you didn't have to be of it to shine in it. It has been happy to patronise working class heroes such as D.H. Lawrence, A.L. Rowse, or, in more recent times, Alan Bennett. Talent is taken up and nurtured from wherever it comes, which applies geographically as well. I've sometimes thought that there's an analogy here with ancient Rome. When I was doing Latin at school I was struck by the number of the poets, Virgil and Ovid among them, who came from the far north of what we now call Italy but was then Cisalpine Gaul. It was as if the literary wells needed constantly to be replenished with fresh . . . I was going to say blood!

Historically a lot of this blood has been Irish. There are a few English writers who have been profitably moulded by exposure to Irish life and culture, most obviously Trollope and Thackeray,

and, of course, Betjeman himself. On Trollope, I recently read his *The Kellys and the O'Kellys*, on Kindle alas, when I had spurned a lovely Everyman edition of it in a Dublin bookshop years ago. It presents a lively picture of Irish life in rural Connacht on the eve of the Famine, and I thoroughly recommend it.

But the traffic has mostly flowed the other way, as we all know from examples too numerous to mention. As Brendan Clifford has observed, to be a real Irish literary figure you have to be seen to have made it big in London, and then you'll be celebrated in Dublin. These days it's mostly novelists (Banville, Barry, Boyne) or indeed media as opposed to strictly literary figures, men who make us laugh, like O'Brin, Norton, Wogan, Nesbitt.

How To Succeed Without Really Trying

Betjeman too succeeded by making people laugh. An only child who was a disappointment to his father by being so obviously not cut out for the family cabinet-making business, he became a people-pleaser. Just about the only decent first edition I have is his 1960 blank verse autobiography, *Summoned By Bells*. I always thought it was there that he narrated his first social humbling, but I think it's elsewhere. He had been invited to a local birthday party as an eight year old, and was convinced that he was the star of the show, only to hear the young hostess's mother ask, as he went out the door, "*Who was that strange, rather common little boy?*"

If Marlborough College, a "hearty" public school, wasn't an ideal environment for him, Magdalen College Oxford was a sort of Elysium, despite the presence of the hated C.S. Lewis as his tutor, and despite his failure to achieve even a pass degree. But it was there that he developed the *persona* that would facilitate his *entree* into arty, bohemian and indeed aristocratic circles. High Anglicanism, old churches, ambivalent sexuality, ridiculous nicknames, uproarious laughter, and a teddy called Archie Ormsby-Gore all contributed to the picture. The girl he married, the horse-crazy Penelope ("Propeller") Chetwode, was of blue-blooded military stock. Much of their early married life was spent in rented accommodation in old rectories and suchlike places at peppercorn rents.

Being so sensitive to atmospheres and observant of human foibles, Betje-

man then found that he could mimic the attitudes of this upper class set and pass himself off as even more genuine than the genuine article. This studied foppishness may have fooled many, but others, including Ministry of Information types, saw beyond it. The point about these Bertie Woosterish types is that they protest their incompetence and witlessness nearly too much, extreme examples of the public school reluctance to put on 'side'; and indeed the point about Bertie Wooster himself is that he's far more sophisticated than he lets on. It's really a double bluff: the young master is a bit of an idiot, but in fact a highly intelligent and perceptive idiot. That's getting into Dostoevsky territory maybe.

Those with eyes to see could appreciate that there was a depth, complexity and often a melancholy about Betjeman's verse, and weren't fooled into dismissing it as flim-flam by the fact that it rhymed, scanned and was superficially intelligible. Leaving aside Yeats and Heaney, he may have been the greatest poet writing in English in the last century.

Dublin Manoeuvres

The task assigned to Betjeman in Dublin was simply to be himself, and at the same time keep his eyes and ears open. It was a particular challenge to hobnob with those in the Fianna Fail Government who were seen as being less sympathetic to the British position. Among these was Sean MacEntee, whom we last came across as a renegade Irishman with his soul lost to jazz. Another claim to fame is that his daughter Maire was to marry Conor Cruise O'Brien. This is Maire's account:

"Mr. de Valera was his own foreign minister, but he was not over fond of entertaining diplomats and making small-talk, so he often delegated that task to my father. Both my parents absolutely loved the Betjemans. And—I was only a teenager—I think the Betjemans loved them too. John wrote a very nice poem about my father's holiday house in Brittas Bay...

My father had been condemned to death by the British for his part in the Easter Rising of 1916 (he was released under the amnesty of 1917)—but I think he felt he had settled scores with them. He was emphatically not anti-British. He loved Shakespeare and Browning and wrote poetry in English himself."

Through the MacEntees the Betjemans were introduced to Mrs. MacEntee's brother, Monsignor Patrick Browne, whom Hillier describes as "*an*

extraordinary polymath", and who was to become the President of University College Galway. Interestingly, he may have been the main instrument in Pene-lope's post-war conversion to Rome, which was to be a major source of friction in the Betjeman marriage.

Another target of Betjeman's social advances was R.M. Smyllie the *Irish Times* Editor. The snug at the back end of the Palace Bar in Fleet Street was where Smyllie and other journalistic and literary types were to be met, among them Brian Nolan, Patrick Kavanagh and Austin Clarke. Another was M.J. MacManus, trade unionist, poet and journalist, who had been appointed the first Literary Editor of the Fianna Fail paper *The Irish Press* in 1939. As I learned from *Sunday Miscellany* on 23rd March, MacManus sadly died while playing golf at Port-na-Blagh in 1951. There is a shrewd comment about Frank O'Connor: "*I see Frank O'Connor quite a lot. He is the best writer here. Very frustrated and unhappy and pro-us.*" Half the time Mansergh didn't have a clue about what Betjeman was actually doing, which he fondly imagined included "*propaganda work*", an activity which the latter considered a waste of time.

His constant focus was on scaling the strategic heights of Irish society, so the cultivation of John Charles McQuaid was a particular challenge, like Everest, because he was there! According to Hillier, Betjeman knew that "{McQuaid} had been as responsible as anyone for drafting the Irish Constitution of 1937". Maybe somebody could comment on this.

Donal O'Driscóil in his 1996 book, *Censorship in Ireland 1939-45: Neutrality, Politics and Society*, writes:

"The assertion that Britain's war defended Christian civilisation against the anti-God Nazis formed one of the broad themes of British propaganda. The line was that while Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox might differ doctrinally they were as one as Christians under threat from the common neo-pagan foe."

This of course was a line that met with a sceptical response in some political and religious circles in Dublin.

According to Hillier:

"John distributed copies of the Roman Catholic journals *The Universe* and *The Tablet*; organised broadcasts on St. Patrick's Day; publicised the exploits of Irish Catholics fighting in

British forces; urged London to get *Picture Post* and *The Universe* to publish straightforward illustrated accounts of Nazi persecution of Polish Catholics; and made friends with Peter O'Curry, editor of the influential *Catholic Standard* {which was said to have an anti-British slant}. And to some extent he gained the interest of Archbishop McQuaid."

But McQuaid was prickly. He was offended by comments made by the Polish Count Jan Balinski, and also by an article that had appeared in the *Catholic Herald* from the pen of the future Cardinal Heenan, who had condemned the culture of begging, drinking and late night dancing that he had observed in the streets of Dublin.

Then there was the trouble about the Mercier Society, set up in late 1941 by Frank Duff with McQuaid's full approval, with the objective of effecting better relations between the Churches in Ireland. Its meetings were held in the NUI buildings, still in St. Stephen's Green. He was "*outraged*" according to Hillier when, at one of these meetings, the Church of Ireland rector at Harold's Cross, W.G. Proctor, attacked the primacy of Rome and Papal infallibility. McQuaid's suggestion that only Catholic speakers should be invited was ignored.

Betjeman played a full part in the discussions at these meetings, where in the minutes he is variously called Biet-jemiens, Bietjiemens, and Betchman. He later used to sign himself off as Sean O'Betjeman, with the appropriate accents. He also made a good attempt to learn Irish.

The Ireland section of Hillier's book has lots of amusing anecdotes, including Betjeman's insistence that Laurence Olivier (in Ireland for the filming of *Henry V* under aircraft-free skies) attend Mass at Maynooth, which was followed by near-universal acclaim in the press.

Tinker, Tailor, Poet, Spy?

A PR man, undoubtedly, an unconventional propagandist, yes, but a spy? Neither Robert Fisk in his 1983 book about Irish neutrality nor John P. Duggan (*Neutral Ireland and the Third Reich*) takes the idea seriously, but Hillier notes that the IRA took it seriously enough, because they put Betjeman on a death list. This came out in 1967 when he received a letter from a Diarmuid Brennan, living in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, who had been on the Army Council in 1940-41.

According to Brennan, Betjeman

became "*a source of much anxiety...*"—

"I got communications describing you as 'dangerous' and a person of menace to all of us. In short, you were depicted to us in the blackest of colours. It was decided to maintain daily contact with you so that we would know where you were precisely at any given moment. I used my office {in Westmoreland Street} for this. I had registered as a publisher. I was, therefore, in a position to establish myself as a correspondent with the various embassies... As soon as credentials were established it became a simple matter to make telephone calls and initiate references to you that more or less kept us informed of your whereabouts. You yourself telephoned a few times with news items; but I only remember one such item now. You came through with the news that the great film actor Leslie Howard was currently on holiday in County Kerry. I could not figure this as an item of dramatic interest but I went along with it. We discussed it at an IRA meeting that evening and, having eliminated all other reasons, decided that Leslie Howard was working for British Intelligence. Word was sent, accordingly, to an IRA commandant in Kerry named Dan O'Toole with the suggestion that the movements of Leslie Howard might be worth following!"

In 1940-41 there was huge disarray in IRA ranks. Paddy McGrath and Tom Harte were arrested, tried by a military-type tribunal, and executed despite having Sean MacBride as their counsel. Stephen Hayes the Chief of Staff was suspected of being the informer and ended up being abducted by the Northern IRA. He later threw himself on the mercy of the Gardai, and was interned for five years, but somehow rehabilitated himself and died in his bed in Enniscorthy in 1974.

It was in the febrile atmosphere at this time that it was felt that a blow should be struck to boost morale, and Brennan had a phone call from the Second Battalion of the Dublin Brigade (aka the Edward-Gees, after Edward G. Robinson!) who told him that they had picked out "*a fellow named Betjeman*" for assassination. According to Brennan he confused the tracks by giving them an unrelated photo, of his own cousin, a Special Branch man, as their target; and he warned them that if they tried anything they would be hoovered up.

Brennan thought the idea of assassination was "*crazy*", but he had also

read some of Betjeman's poems and decided that "he couldn't be much of a secret agent". Hillier wittily remarks that Betjeman was luckier than the poet Cinna in *Julius Caesar*, who was wrongly mixed up with the conspirators, but killed anyway for his bad verses.

Nevertheless, shortly before he died, Betjeman conceded in interview with the late Frank Delaney: "*I think I was a spy*". Hillier agrees, but thinks that any Intelligence-gathering was at a low level, and was probably not done very competently. Betjeman had been involved in attempts to find out if Kees van Hoek, the Dutch journalist, was himself a German agent; and there was a somewhat incriminating letter to him from "an Irish acquaintance on the west coast begging him to come down *"because something very important has turned up about the fishing"*".

Somewhat more convincing is the episode related by David O'Donoghue in his 1998 book, *Hitler's Irish Voices: The Story of German Radio's Irish Service*. This tells the story of Susan Hilton, who was involved in broadcasts from Berlin from 1942 on. A letter from her to her brother, an Edward Sweney of Oldcastle, County Meath, was intercepted, and Betjeman was the man chosen to go out there and make further investigations. He made the mistake of driving right up in his official car. He "*called at my place in the 1940s in a car when no one had cars and asked whether the local church had pews in it or not. I told him I didn't know but suggested he could get a chair to stand on and look through the church windows to see for himself.*"

The announcement that the Betjemans were leaving was front page news in the *Irish Times* on 14th June 1943, and gave rise to a tidal wave of appreciation and regret. The decision was his own, disguised by his clotted cream outpourings to his Irish acquaintance. The MacEntees gave him a leaving party at which he sang, "*in fluent Irish, Dark Rosaleen—sixteen verses—with the tears pouring down his face*".

The formal leaving party in Dublin Castle, organised by Frank Gallagher, was packed out with admirers. The formal leave-taking of de Valera took place on 23rd August, at which Penelope told him: "*My husband knows nothing of politics, nor of journalism. He knows nothing at all*".



John Minahane

The Spanish Polemic on Colonisation

Part 4

The Controversy at Valladolid, 1550-1551

The dispute that took place in Valladolid in 1550 was about what was right and lawful conduct for the Spanish in America. The question was whether the sovereignty of the King of Spain should be established throughout America by armed conquest (as it had been up to then), and whether the local inhabitants should be compelled to change their way of life and forced to work for the Spaniards; or alternatively, whether exclusively peaceful means should be used, with the primary means being the peaceful preaching of Christianity.

The question was not whether the Spanish King had any sovereign rights at all in America, i.e. whether Spain should simply give the Indies back to the Indians. In a pamphlet published a year after the Valladolid debate, Bartolomé de las Casas said:

"The kings of Castile and Leon have most just title to sovereign and universal empire in the entire sphere of what we call the Oceanic Indies, and are justly sovereign and supreme princes and universal lords and emperors over the kings and natural lords of those lands, by virtue of the authority, concession and donation—not pure and simple, but modal, i.e. *for a purpose*—which the Holy Apostolic See made to them formally. And this, and no other, is the substantial juridical foundation on which all of their title rests."

Admittedly, he had also said the following, in a handbook written a few years previously for the use of confessors in America:

"The entry of the Spaniards into each of the provinces of the Indies, and the subjection and servitude which they have imposed on those peoples, ... has been contrary to all natural law and the law of nations, as well as to all divine law... And since all they have done has been null and juridically invalid, they have not been justly entitled to a single penny in tribute and consequently they are obliged to make full restitution."

But Las Casas saw no contradiction in these two statements. As he explained again and again, the problem was that Spanish authority had been established by armed adventurers who were motivated by the hope of riches. What those

people did undermined the King's title, which in itself was valid. Las Casas was in agreement with his opponent at Valladolid, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, on this much: the Kings of Spain had a real and meaningful Imperial title to America. The question was what this title practically amounted to and implied.

There were some Spaniards who did say that the Indies should be given back to the Indians, either immediately or in the very near future. Those people were all or nearly all members of the Dominican Order, to which Las Casas himself belonged. The Dominicans had a long tradition, going back three centuries to Thomas Aquinas, of thinking about political rights. They took seriously the implications of the Natural Law, which was the unwritten law that held good for all human beings. Under Natural Law, pagans living in countries that had never been Christian had the right to their own forms of political authority. The Dominicans therefore found it hard to see what right the Spaniards could have had to overthrow local princes in America and impose their own power.

"In the Gospel we are given the right to preach throughout the whole world, and consequently to defend ourselves against those who try to stop us doing so",

Domingo de Soto said. "*So if we do not have security for that, we can defend ourselves at their expense. But I do not see where we get the right to take their possessions as well, or to subject those peoples to our empire.*"

As I explained in the previous article in this series, the outstanding legal brain in contemporary Spain did come up with a kind of solution. Francisco de Vitoria, a Dominican and senior Professor at the University of Salamanca, produced what he called "*possible*" justifications of the conquest, although only by using blatant sophistry. Vitoria's justifications included the main argument championed by Sepúlveda (barbarians must be civilised) and others which not only became classic justifications of Imperialism but are used to this day to justify armed intervention by states in distant territories

(inhumane practices must be stopped).

But Vitoria was unable to swallow the idea that the Pope could donate America to Spain. By destroying this argument, he threw away what Charles V thought was the best trump in his hand. Alarmed, the King demanded that all Dominicans wanting to lecture about the Indies should submit their materials for royal censorship. However, it was not easy for any outsider, even a King, to discipline the Dominicans. They continued to discuss the Indies when they chose, and most of them kept in harmony with Vitoria, while a few went so far as to raise the prospect of Spanish withdrawal from the Indies in the future. But this was theological speculation, at a distance from affairs of State.

Bartolomé de las Casas, on the other hand, had a great deal of influence on state policy. His influence would not be easy to explain without taking into account his earnest sense of the King's rights, the King's duties, the King's interests and the King's opportunities. Las Casas was not above saying: by taking this course of action the King will increase his income! The change in Spanish conduct which he demanded required a consistently active policy by the Spanish King and its enforcement by highly motivated officials in America, watched over by visionary monks. (To that extent Daniel Castro, whose book on Las Casas is entitled *Another Face of Empire*, can make a case.) Las Casas went to Valladolid as someone whose belief in the Spanish King's sovereign right and Christian mission had been expressed countless times and was not doubted by Charles V.

There are writers who say that at an earlier time Charles V himself had seriously considered giving the Indies back to the Indians. This was because Vitoria's dismissal of the Papal donation disturbed his conscience. The matter is disputed and I'm not in a position to take sides, but some contemporaries believed this to be true. Writing from Cuzco in 1572, introducing his *History of the Incas*, dedicated to King Philip II, Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa said:

"(The Pope donated the Indies to the kings of Spain), but (the preachers) began to make a difficulty about the right and title which the kings of Castile had over these lands. As your invincible father was very jealous in matters touching his conscience, he ordered this point to be examined, as closely as possible, by very learned doctors... They gave it as their opinion that the Incas, who ruled in these kingdoms of

Peru, were and are the natural lords of that land... Owing to this, the Emperor Don Carlos of glorious memory was on the point of abandoning them."

Whether or not there is any truth in what Sarmiento said, certainly Charles V's conscience was bothering him in 1550. Las Casas, back in Spain for the past three years, had given him disturbing information about what was going on abroad. But the options now being considered did not include abandoning the Indies. The purpose of the event at Valladolid was officially formulated as follows:

"to enquire into and establish the manner and the laws in which our Holy Catholic Faith can be preached and promulgated in the New World, (and to examine) in what form these peoples may remain subject to His Majesty the Emperor without injury to his royal conscience, according to the bull of Pope Alexander".

In the meantime, an order was given that all conquests were to cease.

What happened in Valladolid was not a debate in our present-day sense. Las Casas and Sepúlveda did not meet face to face: they separately addressed a so-called *junta* or council of experts. However, each was afterwards given a summary of his opponent's Address and was allowed to make a further statement replying to it. The *junta* was a fifteen-man body. There were seven members of the Council of the Indies, two members of the Royal Council, one ex-Inquisitor who was also a former special envoy to Mexico, three Dominican theologians, one Franciscan theologian, and one Bishop. After all statements by the opposing parties had been heard, the *junta* itself was supposed to issue a statement for the guidance of the King.

The event took place where it did because Valladolid was the grandest city in Spain and the administrative capital. (Seville had a somewhat larger population, with 45,000 inhabitants as against 38,000, but it was far less central. Madrid, with about 4,000 people, was not much more than a big village.)

Las Casas on the Background to the Controversy

The only surviving record of the controversy is contained in a pamphlet which Las Casas published in 1552. This begins with an Introduction written by Las Casas himself. He explains how Sepúlveda, persuaded by "some of the most criminal" *conquistadors*, had written a dialogue in elegant Latin with two

principal conclusions. Firstly, the wars which the Spanish had waged against the Indians were just; secondly, the Indians were obliged to subject themselves to the Spaniards, as people of lesser understanding to those who were more prudent, and war might be waged on them if they did not. Sepúlveda submitted this book to be cleared for publication by the Council of the Indies, but the Council understood how much damage it would do and refused. Next Sepúlveda appealed to the Royal Council; Las Casas happened to be there, and he campaigned against publication. The Royal Council submitted the work to the Universities of Salamanca and Alcalá, both of which decided that "*its doctrine was not sound*" and it should not be printed.

Sepúlveda then cunningly managed to have a variant version published in Rome, under the guise of a letter he had sent to a certain Spanish Bishop justifying his arguments. The Emperor, however, issued a decree that this publication was to be confiscated in Spain. But Sepúlveda went on to produce a summary of his book in Spanish, designed to circulate all through the kingdom in manuscript and to be read by people who did not know Latin, the sort of people who were interested in becoming rich by the sweat of others. And so Las Casas had decided to write a book of his own in Spanish, demolishing Sepúlveda's arguments and pointing out the danger of his ideas.

Responding to this dispute, the Emperor decided to call a *junta* of theologians, jurists, and members of the Council of the Indies, to hear the two protagonists. The first session opened in August 1550.

The opening statements by the two parties are given in summaries by theologian Domingo de Soto, which he produced for the use of his fellow members of the *junta*. Sepúlveda first made a three-hour statement. Las Casas then spoke for five days, reading an entire book to the *junta*. It is impossible for me to keep strict balance between them, Soto says: anyone who needs more detail may read Sepúlveda's book!

Las Casas and Sepúlveda presented their arguments in the language of Christianity, giving justifications from theology and the Bible. But much of what they were saying reappeared in later, more secular forms of political language. And arguably the key issue between them is still a key issue in the 21st century and may be no nearer to being resolved.

Opening Statements by the Protagonists

Sepúlveda gave four reasons why the Indians could be subjected by armed force.

"1. The gravity of the crimes committed by that people, especially their idolatry and other sins which they commit against nature. 2. Because of the crudeness of their minds they are naturally servile and barbarous people, and accordingly they are obliged to serve those whose intelligence is more cultivated, such as the Spaniards. 3. The cause of the Faith, because the easiest and most expedient way of ensuring that it can be preached persuasively is to subject them by force. 4. The injury that some of them do to others, killing people as sacrifices and in certain cases eating them."

Sepúlveda supported his arguments with various examples from the Bible, especially *Deuteronomy*, where the Jews are told to destroy the heathens' idols. Using a gloss, from a particular statement in *Deuteronomy* "he inferred that simply because some people have a religion different to ours, we may make war on them". In connection with crimes against nature, he mentioned the punishment God inflicted on Sodom and Gomorrah "as an example of what it is legitimate to do in the Indies". (Soto, who is summarising, cannot resist putting in touches of irony.)

Las Casas knew Sepúlveda's four basic arguments and he had counter-arguments ready on all these points. He maintained that the biblical examples were not relevant. The principal reason why the Jews had waged crushing wars against certain gentile peoples was to gain the land promised to Abraham, not to punish idolatry. If God had wanted to punish the gentiles purely for idolatry, then it would not have been enough to crush the few peoples mentioned in the Bible: almost the whole world would have had to be punished, because it was full of idolatry everywhere!

At any rate, Christianity was not about punishing pagans. Apostates or heretics could be punished, but pagans who were doing no harm to Christians should be left alone. It was standard practice that conversion should be done peacefully. Take the case of the island of Britain. Even in the time of Pope Gregory there were powerful Roman Emperors whose military force the Pope might have called upon. So then, when he wanted to convert Britain, why he did not send an armed expedition, rather than Augustine and his forty monks?

Regarding idols, the other Saint Augustine had said:

"A great many pagans have these abominable things on their premises; are we to go in and smash them? No, let us try to smash the idols in their hearts. Once they become Christian, they will themselves encourage us to do this good work, or they will anticipate us."

Las Casas denied that the Christians had any jurisdiction to interfere with idol-worship prior to the Indians' conversion. "Men cannot live without some God. We cannot prohibit them from honouring their false gods without teaching them the falsehood of those gods and the truth of our true God."

But Las Casas was not an absolute pacifist. To clarify the issue he presented six cases where Christians could legitimately make war upon pagans. 1. If they have violently occupied lands that previously belonged to Christians. 2. "If they contaminate our Faith, sacraments, temples or images with the grave sins of idolatry." (He instanced Emperor Constantine's Decree that pagans could not have idols where Christians might be scandalised.) 3. If they blaspheme the name of Christ, the Church, or Christian saints or scholars. 4. If they knowingly impede preaching "but not because they kill preachers when they think those preachers are coming to do them evil and deceive them, as they presume when they see them coming in the company of armed men". 5. If they make war upon Christians, like the Turks. 6. If there are innocent victims to be rescued. Probably because of the power of Vitoria's influence, Las Casas accepted this as valid grounds for war, but only in principle. In practice, he said, it must be governed by the principle of the lesser evil. If the evils caused by war would be greater than the evils prevented, then war should not be waged.

Turning to the question of whether war created the best conditions for preaching, Las Casas said that for the acceptance of Christianity, which involved the understanding, it was necessary to have an open, trusting spirit. But the spirit which war engendered was quite the opposite. It was more proper to Mahomedans to think of promoting their religion by force.

Even non-Christians living in the Christian lands were not subjected to compulsion to conform. Still more so, the people in non-Christian lands to whom Christianity was offered had the right to refuse. This might even override

the right of preaching. "If the entire republic by common consent of all individuals did not wish to hear us, but preferred its own rites in lands where there had never been Christians, in such a case we could not make war on them." (And at this point Soto, who had promised to remain neutral, broke in on Las Casas to accuse him on muddying issues. "It's one thing whether we can force them to let us preach, which is the opinion of many doctors; it's another thing whether we can compel them to come to our sermons, which does not have the same plausibility.")

Saving the innocent victims of human sacrifice and cannibalism was just in principle. However, in practice it could not be done by war without causing much greater evils. To see it in true perspective, one had to remember that this custom was extremely widespread in antiquity, and according to Plutarch, when the Romans came across it they did not punish those involved but merely forbade them to do this in future.

But there is a deeper reason why Christians must proceed gently in this matter.

"Whatever somebody may regard as God, by the light of nature he knows it is something most excellent which all must worship, and to which they must sacrifice the best things men possess, to give thanks for the benefits they receive and to atone for the wrongs they have done. And since the most excellent thing is human life itself, in their ignorance they have a certain excuse for offering the lives of men... The pagans think that innocent children are the most pleasing to God and the most useful in the life beyond. There is even a confirmation of this in Sacred Scripture, where God ordered Abraham to sacrifice the son whom he loved so much, to put his faith and his love to the test. In this he did not do Abraham any wrong, because he is *Lord of the universe and even of man's life and death*, even though he did not allow the sacrifice because of his goodness... {In pagan lands} the most beloved wives used to be buried with their husbands. And it seems that some members of our own religion would do the same if the Faith did not correct the blindness of love..."

The wish to do these things must be removed from pagan hearts by persuasion, not by war.

Finally, Las Casas replied to Sepúlveda's claim that the Indians were barbarians, by nature slaves or serfs, and thus obliged to be subjects of the

Spaniards. What did the term "*barbarians*" actually mean? Las Casas distinguished three different senses of the word. 1. People who are in some way strange in their opinions or customs, though they do not lack civilisation or self-governing abilities. 2. People who are without literate culture, like the British before their conversion. But Aristotle did not consider such people servile by nature: he specifically said that some barbarians had true kingdoms, kings, lords and government. 3. Barbarians of the third kind are people who live wild, without any kind of law or ritual. It was these Aristotle thought were naturally servile. But the Indians were "*social and civil, with great towns and houses and laws and arts and lords and government*". They were too refined for this notion of barbarism to apply to them.

Las Casas therefore denied that war could legitimately be made on the Indians for any of the reasons his opponent had given. War was tyrannical and prejudicial to the preaching of the faith. The spirit of Pope Alexander's *Bull* was not to establish local dominion or to make slaves of Indians or confiscate their properties. What it implied was "*supreme jurisdiction with some reasonable tribute for the protection of the Faith and the teaching of good customs and good government*."

Sepúlveda's Objections

Six months later there was a second session, and this time we have the participants' actual words. Once again Sepúlveda was the first speaker. He had been given Soto's summary of the five-day address by Las Casas. Now he read twelve objections, striking hard at the weaknesses he saw in his opponent's position.

The first seven of Sepúlveda's objections are concerned with interpretation of the Bible and the writings of Church Fathers. In his eighth objection he takes up the argument "*that these Indians are not barbarians such as may be forced to obey those who are prudent and humane*", on the grounds that they have cities and public order. He replies, citing Aquinas, that "*by barbarians are meant those who do not live in conformity with natural reason and have evil customs publicly approved among them*". Almost everyone who has been in America says that the natives there are men of small capacity and depraved customs; he cites particularly the *Historia General* of the "*grave and diligent*" Imperial chronicler Oviedo.

Ninthly,

"as for war being an impediment rather than an aid to the conversion of the Indians, because the injury they receive will make them hate the Christians... I say that the patient with frenzy also hates the doctor who cures him and the badly brought-up boy hates the master who chastises him, but that does not stop the treatment being beneficial for both... And the war and the soldiers are not there to convert or to preach, but to subjugate the barbarians and make smooth and safe the path for preaching. And that must be done by friars and clerics of good life, doctrine and example. The preaching must be done with all gentleness, as the apostles did it."

Tenthly,

"as regards his statement that the infidels cannot be forced to hear preaching: it is new and false doctrine... Because the Pope has the power and indeed the mandate to preach the Gospel personally and through others in the whole world, and this cannot be done if the preachers are not heard: therefore by Christ's commission he has the power to force them to hear."

Eleventhly,

"he said that in order to rescue from death the innocents they sacrificed there could be a just war, but it should not be waged because of two evils the lesser must be chosen, and the evils resulting from this war are greater than the deaths of the innocents. His lordship has done his calculation very badly, because all who have come from Mexico and took the trouble to learn the facts say that every year more than 20,000 persons were sacrificed there. Multiplying that number by the thirty years during which this sacrifice has been prohibited, makes 600,000; and in the conquest of the land I do not believe that more people died than they used to sacrifice in a year..."

Trying to find reasons to excuse the sacrifice of human victims is so far contrary to Christianity that even some of the pagans themselves who were not barbarous and inhumane regarded it as abominable {citing Pliny} ... Ignorance of the natural law is no excuse, as theologians and canonists agree. When he says that holding human sacrifice to be a good thing is a probable opinion for the Indians, because the wisest men among them hold it, and for this he cites Aristotle, I reply that when speaking of "wise and prudent" the philosopher does not have in mind the less barbarous barbarians: rather, he means persons living among civilised and humane peoples, as he says in the first chapter of the *Politics* when speaking of barbarians..."

Twelfthly,

"I say that the intention of Pope Alexander, as is clearly seen from his bull, was that the barbarians should first be subjected to the kings of Castile, and afterwards the Gospel should be preached to them. Because that is how it was done from the beginning, by instruction of the Catholic monarchs, in conformity with the intention of the Pope, who lived nine or ten years after granting the bull. And he knew very well the mode of proceeding in the conquest, as did all his successor Popes who have approved it, not merely not condemning it but granting bulls and faculties and indulgences..."

"The bull of Pope Paul III {1537, condemning the degrading treatment of Indians. J.M.} was granted only against soldiers who without the king's authority made slaves of these barbarians and committed many abuses, treating them like beasts; and therefore he said that they had to be treated as men and neighbours, since they are rational animals. But to say that they do not have to be subjected to the king except after they become Christians goes beyond all reason..."

"And I say further that when he concedes that after becoming Christians they and their first princes must be subject to the kings of Castile, he contradicts all he has previously said to avoid the acceptance of war. Because if the kings of Castile have the right, as he said, to subject them in that manner after they become Christians, then certainly if they do not wish to give obedience the kings can justly force them, and war is necessary for that. Therefore they can justly wage war for a lesser reason than I have proposed. And with this concession he undoes everything he has previously said.

"Accordingly, if one considers this and everything else that the lord bishop has written, it is designed to prove that all of the conquests carried out up to now, even if they have kept to the instructions, have been unjust and tyrannical... And to persuade the Emperor not to make any further conquest henceforward, which would mean that his Majesty would not do his duty and would not fulfil the mandate of Christ, committed to him by the Church, for the propagation of the Faith, and these miserable peoples who remain unconquered would not be converted. Because if they are not to be subjected, no men of war would go there, giving security to the preachers, at their own expense, as they have done up to now; nor would they go at the expense of the king, because he has to finance other things more necessary for his realm and his income is not sufficient even for that. And even if he wanted to incur

been maliciously put in the way of preaching, and another very different thing to force the infidels to hear preaching against their will. The first may be done legitimately, the second may not."

On the eleventh objection,

"it is not true to say that in Mexico 20,000 persons were sacrificed every year, nor 100, nor 50. Had there been so many sacrifices, we would not have found there such countless numbers of people. This is only the voice of tyrants, to excuse and justify their tyrannical violence and to oppress and despoil the Indians... And that is the objective of those who want to support them, such as the doctor and his followers... It would be truer to say that every year since they have been in the Indies and after their invasion of every province, the Spaniards have made more sacrifices to their dearly loved and adored goddess, Greed, than the Indians in all the Indies have made to their gods in a hundred years. The skies, the land, the elements and the stones bear witness to this and cry it out, and the tyrants themselves who have perpetrated it do not deny it. See how all of these kingdoms had abundant populations when we entered them; and see the state we have them in now—they are ruined and ravaged! Even if we do not fear God, we should feel great shame and our guilt should confound us, trying to mask or excuse such odious and abominable doings, when we have before our eyes a land longer and more extensive than all of Europe with part of Asia included, which we have depopulated, laid waste and devastated in the space of forty five or forty eight years so as to acquire goods and riches, robbing and usurping with extreme cruelty, injustice and tyranny, though we found it heavily populated by people of great humanity.

"If the very reverend doctor Sepúlveda takes this into account with love and charity, he will know that I am counting better than him. And it will be well if he can explain how, if he mourns those who died without baptism through being sacrificed by those Indians, whether they were ten or a hundred, or whether they were a thousand or ten thousand (which is false), how it is that his soul is not in pain and his entrails wrenching and his heart breaking for the twenty million souls who have perished during this time, without faith and without the sacraments, who would otherwise have been saved, since God had created them so well disposed to receive the Faith, and who have been condemned because the Spaniards deprived them of time and space for their conversion, dis-

membering them against all reason and justice?"

"The doctor says I want to find reasons to excuse human sacrifices... What I say is not to excuse them before God, because I do not know how God will judge them, since his judgment is impenetrable; but I want to prove with evident reasons that the Indians are victims of a plausible ignorance and error which prevents them from believing, when this is first declared by Christians or even many times afterwards, that human sacrifice is contrary to natural law or a sin, and consequently they cannot justly be punished for this by men or by human judgment. And I say further that they will never be obliged to believe any preacher of our Holy Faith who goes accompanied by tyrant men of war, robbers and killers, as the doctor desires they should be... And I say that it is not easy to prove to them that to sacrifice human victims to the true God (or the false god if he is esteemed as true) is against the natural law."

A long discussion of this point follows, culminating in the tricky case of Jephtha, judge of Israel. Jephtha promised to sacrifice to God the first living being he met on his path. The first living being he met was his daughter, and he kept his word. Unlike in the case of Abraham, God did not stop him. There is no hint in the Bible that God was displeased by the sacrifice. So then, Las Casas says, the pagan notion that God is pleased by human sacrifice is not so outlandish.

In the twelfth and final objection,

"Doctor Sepúlveda accumulates enormous errors and scandalous propositions against all Gospel truth and against all Christianity, wrapped up in and painted with false zeal for the king's service, so much so that no Christian should be surprised if we choose not just to confront him with lengthy writings but to attack him as a capital enemy of the Christian Republic, a fautor of cruel tyrants, an extirpator of the human lineage, and a sower of most deadly blindness in these kingdoms of Spain."

Las Casas began by citing sections from Pope Alexander's Bull, where the Pope mentions that many peoples have been discovered living peacefully (*pacifice*) on certain islands and mainlands; that the King of Spain is asked to induct (*inducere*) these peoples into Christianity; and that God-fearing, learned men should be sent to instruct the inhabitants in the Catholic faith and imbue them with good customs. Where

does the Pope say, Las Casas asked, that the King should make war on them? And to claim that later Popes, by granting Bulls and Indulgences to establish cathedrals, bishoprics, monasteries, and other spiritual things, had justified war and conquest—that was outrageous. That was to confound Christ with Belial!

Not content with falsifying the intention of the Pope, Sepúlveda went on to falsify the practice of the Spanish monarchs. Did not Ferdinand and Isabella literally say, in their first instructions to Columbus, that "*the said Indians are to be treated very well and lovingly, without doing them any wrong*", and that anyone who wronged them was to be punished? And did Isabella not repeat in her Testament that the Indians were to receive no injury in their persons or goods, but should be well and justly treated? Many other decrees and instructions, royal letters, provisions and laws had been issued by the currently-reigning King and his predecessors to prevent and avoid wars, and ordering that the Indians should not be mistreated: they should rather be drawn to the Christian religion by peaceful and loving means.

"Doctor Sepúlveda is deceived and blind, because he ought to know that all the injuries and robberies, slaughters and depopulations in more than three hundred leagues of land that was full of people and delightful, have at all times been perpetrated by the tyrants in those Indies, without the authority of the kings of Castile. Rather, everything has been done against their express mandates and prohibitions, as I have demonstrated in my thirty propositions which I formulated in defence of my Handbook for Confessors, and in other tractates of mine."

Las Casas then dealt with the difficult matter of Papal temporal power and the implications of the Papal grant.

"The Holy See was entitled... to concede and grant the supreme and universal principality and lordship of this geographical sphere, without depriving the natural lords or the peoples of what is theirs, to a Catholic king who would defend and maintain them."

But until such time as the pagans accept the Faith, the only right the Christians have in their territory is the right to preach. When they do accept Christianity, however, the right of the Christian Church and Christian secular power becomes more extensive. "*Principally the difference... is that the Church cannot force them to receive the*

Faith, but it can force them to keep it."

Prior to their baptism, the pagans are not subjects of the Church. Hence the Church "*can neither provide them with a lord nor remove their lord*", except in special and individual circumstances, such as when a lord, acting without his community's consent, impedes preaching. But, even after they have become Christian, in the unlikely event that they refuse to accept the King of Spain as their supreme lord, it does not follow that war can legitimately be made on them, provided they still maintain the Faith and observe justice. The objective is the spiritual and temporal good of those peoples, which will not be achieved by war. They must therefore be won over by peaceful persuasion and constructive work, and that will be easy: "*they will come with open arms, and singing and dancing, to give their allegiance*".

Las Casas repeated that "*all of the conquests and wars that have been waged against the Indians, from the time when the Indies were discovered to the present day, have been most unjust, tyrannical, infernal*". The cruel thieves and tyrants who had profited from them were bound as far as possible to make restitution. "*And I add that the doctor and any other person who tries to excuse or justify them are in mortal sin and bound to restitution likewise*".

Taking up Sepúlveda's point that the conquistadors had gone at their own expense, he said that this was precisely the problem:

"One of the principal and most effective reasons why so many great kingdoms in the Indies have been destroyed, and which has given rise to disobedience and rebellion against the king of Spain, is that the tyrants who offered to raise armies and make conquests have been allowed to go there at their own expense. Although they met their expenses not with money from the properties they had here in Spain, but with what they plundered over there."

Other points referred to include Sepúlveda's book published in Rome (if the Pope had known how much falsehood and "*scandalous, death-dealing doctrine*" it contained, it would never have been published) and the preacher killed by Indians in Florida. (It was his misfortune that, disembarking at a place not intended, he was seen in the company of sailors who had committed cruelties against the Indians of the land. These Indians had "*a most just cause for war against the Spaniards, and even against*

all Christians", and they were unable to distinguish the friars from the others. It was God's providence that some of his servants should die for the Gospel; Sepúlveda, who was trying to exploit this martyrdom, should not pretend to be wiser than God.)

"The aim of all this business, and what God regards as most important, is the preaching of the Faith and the expansion of his Church, not in the desert places and campos of those lands but amongst their inhabitants, converting them and saving their souls. The accessory, the less important thing, is the material benefits and profits that the Spaniards who go there derive, even though the reverend doctor in his writings has often referred to this as the principal goal. Whoever is ignorant of that does not know very much, and whoever denies it is no more a Christian than Mahomet, even if he is Christian nominally.

"He says that the hope of gold and silver mines and having Indian helpers brings people over there. And truly I believe it is so, because they have always shown by their deeds that they are not motivated by the honour of God, or by zeal for the Faith, or by helping their fellow men to salvation, or by service to their king, though always they falsely boast of that. What drives them is only their cupidity and their ambition to tyrannise over the Indians whom they want to have shared out among them, as if they were beasts, by a perpetual *repartimiento*. And what that will lead to, putting it in plain language, is that the kings of Castile will be stripped of all those territories and expelled from them, and they themselves, usurping and tyrannising, will become sole masters.

"And that is what the very reverend doctor Sepúlveda promotes with all his powers, although truly I do not believe he is aware of the evil he is doing. It is to oppose this blindness and this plague, to prevent these and innumerable other evils, so that the kings of Castile will not lose the Indies, so that the total loss of so many people, the depopulation of such extensive territories, which is looming now, will not happen, and so that God will not visit his cruellest scourges upon all of Spain for this, and because I have fifty years' experience: that is why I have been so diligent at this court for the past thirty five years. That has been the aim in all my works; not, as the doctor alleges, to close the doors of justification or undo the titles which the kings of Castile have, and that supreme royal primacy of theirs. I close the doors to false titles which are based on nothing and vain, and I open the doors to those which are juridical,

solid, powerful, true, Catholic, and worthy of true Christians. And to seek them, establish them, corroborate and proclaim them, I believe I have worked somewhat more and for rather a longer time than the doctor."

That was the end of the controversy proper, though Las Casas afterwards wrote more elaborate versions of the book that he read to the *junta*, and he also developed particular ideas at greater length.

Aftermath of the Controversy

Who won?

Just about every possible answer to this question has been argued. Las Casas (Juan Friede, Miguel Giménez-Fernández); inconclusive, a draw (Lewis Hanke, Angel Losada); Sepúlveda (Edmundo O'Gorman, Jean Dumont). But these writers do not all have the same idea of what winning or losing would mean.

If we reduce it to the question of who had the greater impact on his hearers and the most influence on the statement subsequently made to the King by the *junta*, the answer would seem to be: Las Casas. The *junta's* statement has not survived, but there is another document which indicates that the *junta* advised the King to put a stop to all conquests because of their destructiveness.

"The best proof of Las Casas' victory over Sepúlveda was the increased favour with which the crown regarded him. He secured *cédula* after *cédula* ordering the superiors of all the mendicant orders of Castile to provide him with missionaries for the Indies", Giménez-Fernández says.

In the longer term too, there were features of policy that could be seen as in tune with Las Casas' opinions. Sepúlveda had argued that the King's American Empire was entirely dependent on the private initiative of colonists. Las Casas, rejecting this, staked everything on dividing the colonists from the King. Near the end of his second Address he played his strongest card, warning against the danger of independent colonial states breaking away from Spain. It seems that the Spanish state really was aware of this prospect and never forgot it.

"A great hereditary feudal aristocracy did not develop in the New World. Its inhabitants were not allowed to develop Cortes or representative institutions which might one day challenge the royal power. Instead, the officials of the Spanish Crown slowly

asserted their authority over every aspect of American life."

This is a remarkable development, and Las Casas surely had something to do with giving it momentum.

Remarkable too is that moratorium on conquests issued in 1550. "*Probably never before, or since, has a mighty emperor ordered his conquests to cease until it was decided whether they were just*", Lewis Hanke said. No doubt he is right. However, the order was not obeyed. Pedro de Valdivia went merrily on with the conquest of Chile during the first half of the 1550s. And soon the order itself was lifted, and for a reason that the Emperor more or less publicly admitted he had to be ashamed of. In May 1556 permission was given for new conquests. It so happened there were numerous "*idle and licentious men*" in Peru, and one way to "*rid and cleanse*" the country of them was to give them leave to go and conquer somewhere else. "*Although one cannot justify such permission as well as reason requires, we hope in the end it will be of much service to God.*" What Las Casas thought when he read that part of the Decree is not difficult to imagine.

Las Casas continued writing and campaigning for another fifteen years, to his death. However, Juan Friede saw the decree permitting new conquests as the moment of his conclusive defeat. In his last period "*he evokes the noble figure of Don Quijote. Refusing to admit that the legislation now in force had irrevocably settled the Indian question, he continued the attack with ever greater virulence, as if his pen could alter the direction of history.*"

Not only did the conquests continue but their scope widened. A year before Las Casas' death, came the first great conquest in Asia, of the Philippines. Spanish social engineering of the Indian communities continued also. Granted, the *encomiendas*, where Indian forced labour was assigned to colonists on a private basis, more or less disappeared, at least in Mexico and Peru. They were replaced by state-organised systems of Indian labour. While these were less destructive, they involved further large-scale interference with the population. "*Between 1565 and 1575 around one million natives were forced to resettle in the so-called 'reducciones'*" in Peru.

By then some other European powers were getting ready to seek empires. The competitors soon began making

opportunist use of Las Casas' writings. Dutch and French translations of *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, his most ferocious attack on Spanish conduct, were published in 1578-9. Some years later an English version appeared, at about the time when the English were committing comparable atrocities in parts of Ireland (but there was never any English Las Casas). King Philip II responded by ordering that Las Casas' writings be impounded and handed over to the Council of the Indies for safekeeping. Interestingly, the same policy was applied to Sepúlveda's writings, although some of his counsellors told Philip they would make excellent counter-propaganda and advised publication.

But to return to the Valladolid controversy: the weight of history, or historical hindsight, hangs heavy upon comments made by the Mexican Edmundo O'Gorman in 1971.

"The debate between Las Casas and Sepúlveda reveals the shock between what was already the impossible realisation of the ideal of Christian universalism which sought to overcome the differences of races and individualised groups, and what was then the modern nationalist tendency which sought to justify, in the name of the superior interests of civilisation, the right of dominion over peoples regarded as barbarous, and at the extreme, over all the nations of the earth. Independently of the sympathy which the first of these stances has inspired and inspires today above all, it is undeniable that its spokesmen made themselves advocates of an ideal without an immediate historical future. And since it was Father Las Casas who took up this defence in the given instance, I considered myself justified in qualifying his stance as "archaic", not to denigrate him but to justify that stance and to explain, without recourse to mysterious essences of absolute good and evil, the paradoxical contrast between the theoretical triumphs of Father Las Casas and the historical ruin of his most cherished aspirations."

These ideas must no doubt be given their due. It is not surprising that someone should see Sepúlveda, in contrast to Las Casas, as more modern. Sepúlveda had something of the cold, supercilious realism of the English culture of Empire. (J. H. Parry, writing in the *English Historical Review* in 1952, commended him on his "*sane and prudent imperialism*".) By contrast, Las Casas kept calling the Spanish State to a huge adventure in Christian idealism, a

contact of dramatically differing civilisations where there would be a large measure of mutual respect.

But there's something in Las Casas' thinking which keeps it young and might make him seem less archaic than, say, Edmundo O'Gorman. In doggedly pursuing his vision (quixotically, as Friede says), he explored the possibility of a single standard of thinking which does not do injury to the weaker side: a problem, to the best of my knowledge, not yet solved. The results are astonishing in works like the *Apologetic History*, where he compares a vast mass of information taken from the history of the then known world with what he can discover about the Indies. For the New World he uses all available sources, including his own experience and that of the many other missionaries he had met, and available published books, such as that by Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca.

Daniel Castro, Associate Professor of History at Southwestern University in the United States of America, delivers this grandly-phrased judgment on Las Casas:

"More than missionary, he was a theoretician and a tactician of a benevolent ecclesiastical imperialism, insofar as one of his overriding preoccupations was the conversion of American infidels to Christianity even at a distance. Nowhere is this more apparent than in his unwillingness to learn native languages in order to more fully understand the natives' individual and collective problems, aspirations and expectations."

Nowhere in his own book, unless I've unaccountably missed it, does Professor Castro mention Cabeza de Vaca. That is to say, he shows no sign of having heard of a man who learned at least six native languages and gained considerable insight into the natives' problems, aspirations and expectations—not because he wanted to improve their lives, but because he got lost and spent eight years wandering in the vast expanses of the present-day southern United States. One may conclude that Castro doesn't have much intellectual curiosity. But what he doesn't have, Las Casas did have. In the *Apologetic History* (Castro shows signs of having heard of it, but no real signs of having read it), one of the sources that he avidly draws upon is Cabeza de Vaca's account, which appeared in print in Spain in 1542.

However, this matter and others must be left over to the final article in this series.

NOTES

The source for what was said at Valladolid is a pamphlet published by Bartolomé de Las Casas in 1552, with title beginning: *Aqui se contiene una disputa, o controversia...* The text can be found online e.g. at <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/IbrAmerTxt/IbrAmerTxt-idx?id=Spa0035> There is a French translation by Nestor Capdevila in Bartolomé de Las Casas, *La controverse entre Las Casas et Sepúlveda* (Paris 2007). A good deal of information about the dispute and its context is given in Jean Dumont, *El amanecer de los derechos del hombre: La controversia de Valladolid* (Madrid 2009).

"The kings of Castile...": *Tratados de Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas II* (Mexico 1965) p. 925. (Tratado comprobatorio)

"The entry of the Spaniards...": Cited by Capdevila, *La controverse entre Las Casas et Sepúlveda*, p. 144.

"In the Gospel we are given...": *ibid.* pp. 60-61. Dominicans raising issue of Spanish withdrawal: Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man* (Cambridge 1982) p. 107.

"The Pope donated the Indies...": Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, *History of the Incas*, tr. Clements Markham (Ontario 2000) p. 5.

"...to enquire into and establish...": Miguel Giménez-Fernández in: J. Friede and B. Keen, *Bartolomé de Las Casas in History* (De Kalb, Illinois 1971) p. 109.

Members of the junta: Dumont, *El amanecer* pp. 7-8 and Ch. 4.

Document referring to junta's statement: Capdevila in *La controverse*, pp. 137-8.

"The best proof...": Giménez-Fernández op. cit. p. 110.

"A great hereditary feudal aristocracy...": J. H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1489-1716* (London 1990) p. 75.

"Probably never before or since...": Lewis Hanke, *All Mankind Is One* (De Kalb, Illinois 1974) p. 67.

"...idle and licentious...": Juan Friede in Friede and Keen, *Bartolomé de Las Casas in History* p. 197.

"...he evokes the noble figure...": *ibid.* p. 198.

"Between 1565 and 1575...": Manfred Merluzza, "Native Americans under the Castilian Crown: Resettlement Policy in 16th Century Peru". In: G. Hálfðanarson (ed.), *Discrimination and Tolerance in Historical Perspective* (Pisa 2008) p. 235.

Las Casas's writings impounded: Richard L. Kagan, *Clio and the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore 2009) p. 164.

"The debate between Las Casas and Sepúlveda...": Edmundo O'Gorman, "Comentarios a un Nuevo libro sobre el padre Las Casas" in: *Estudios de historia novohispana VI* (Mexico 1971) p. 167.

"...sane and prudent imperialism...": J. H. Parry, *English Historical Review* 1952 p. 408.

"More than missionary, he was...": Daniel Castro, *Another Face of Empire. Bartolomé de Las Casas, Indigenous Rights, and Ecclesiastical Imperialism* (Durham NC, 2007) p. 185.

Pat Maloney

State Archives

Mandela

Daily Mail (Eire) Fri, 27/12/2013

Dublin councillors snubbed Mandela

Documents released under the 30-year rule show that proposals to make him a Freeman in 1983 were shot down... when at least one political group used its veto. But who was it?

A bid to give Nelson Mandela the Freedom of Dublin shot down by councillors and an agreement by Ireland to ban Soviet airlines from landing at Shannon just ten days before the day the Cold War threatened the end of the world are among some of the insights gained from archive files from 1983, which will be available to the public from January 2 at the National Archives of Ireland office in Dublin.

Politicians shot down plans to honour Nelson Mandela with the freedom of Dublin just five years before he was eventually awarded the accolade, classified files have revealed.

Although the late South African leader was conferred a Freeman of Dublin in 1988—the first capital city in the world to do so—councillors dismissed the idea during behind-the-scenes meetings in 1983.

Documents released into the National Archives under the 30-year rule showed then taoiseach Garret FitzGerald ordered advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs after he became aware of the proposal.

But while government advisers suggested any diplomatic risk in conferring the honour would be outweighed by a positive international reaction, political parties on Dublin City Council could not agree.

Asked for advice, Foreign Affairs officials told the Taoiseach that successive Irish governments had appealed for Mandela's release and while it maintained contact with the ANC, it did not support its armed struggle.

"From the above it will be clear that the granting of the freedom of the city of Dublin to Nelson Mandela would not be in conflict with the government's attitude to Mandela or with the Government's general approach to the question of apartheid", a memo stated. "The granting of the freedom of the city would be well received by other African countries.

"It might be criticised by South Africa and those who would view as inappropriate the public honouring of an individual who had advocated physical force and whose name is linked to a movement now engaged in a low-level guerilla war.

"Nonetheless, this risk is in our view outweighed by Mandela's stature as a leader of black South Africa, as a focus in the struggle against apartheid, and as an international figure." In the event, Dublin's then Lord Mayor Daniel Browne wrote to Kadar Asmal, chairman of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, on

January 21, 1983, to say there was no consensus on the plan.

Mr Browne said that the idea was considered separately by each of the political groupings on the capital's local authority.

"As I think I explained to you, the tradition is that the Freedom is only conferred where there is unanimous agreement", the Labour mayor wrote.

"It has not been possible to secure this." Mr Browne said the accolade was not considered the 'most appropriate' way to recognise Mr Mandela, adding that the honour had only been conferred on six occasions in the previous 30 years.

These included Pope John Paul II and John F. Kennedy.

In fact, a number of actors and theatrical figures had also been conferred with the freedom of the city over the same period.

Mr Browne wrote that the political parties instead suggested that a sculpture by Elizabeth Frink, called *Prisoner of Conscience*, be erected in a park as a recognition of 'the struggles of all prisoners of conscience'.

This was later unveiled in Merrion Square.

The newly-released documents do not reveal why agreement could be not be made on conferring the freedom of the city, or which councillors were for or against the idea.

But a letter from the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement to Mr FitzGerald on his election as taoiseach suggests that both the Labour Party and the Workers Party supported the plan.

The letter asked Mr FitzGerald to lend his support through the Fine Gael group on the council, and to 'convey your wishes' to party colleague Joe Doyle, a TD and representative on Dublin City Council.

Other notable members of the council at the time included Bertie Ahern, Tony Gregory, Gay Mitchell, Ben Briscoe, Mary Robinson, Michael Keating, Alice Glenn, Michael Barrett and Fergus O'Brien. Mr Asmal, who headed up the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement at the time and who was spearheading the plan, went on to become an ANC cabinet minister in the South African government.

In his memoirs, the former Trinity College Dublin law professor, who died in 2011, wrote that the IRA helped carry out a major bomb attack against the South African apartheid government.

He also claimed Gerry Adams was approached to provide IRA men to train ANC members in Ireland.

See *Irish Political Review*, January 2014, for *Mandela Owed Gerry Adams* by Manus O'Riordan

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Senate Referendum English Fascism

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SENATE REFERENDUM: A CON JOB

"More than half of those who voted in the referendum last October found the ballot paper confusing, a damning report for the Government has found." (*Daily Mail*, 19.12.2013)

Were the ballot papers deliberately arranged in a manner that would cause the ultimate confusion? There was a White ballot paper for the Seanad Referendum and a Green one for the Court of Appeal Referendum. Both papers were set in a small 12pt. type face throughout, when two simple lines in 24pt. type would have made a clear distinction in the two ballot papers, Seanad and Court of Appeal—and this is coming from a former print tradesman.

Wording

This is what appeared on the Ballot Paper:

Do you approve of the proposal to amend the Constitution contained in the undermentioned Bill.

Thirty-second Amendment of the Constitution (Abolition of Seanad Éireann) Bill 2013

This didn't appear on the Ballot Paper:

Thirty-second Amendment of the Constitution (Abolition of Seanad Éireann) Bill 2013

Bill Number 63 of 2013

Sponsored by An Taoiseach

Source: Government

Method: Presented

Status: New Bill

Bill entitled an Act to to amend the Constitution.

WHEREAS by virtue of Article 46 of the Constitution any provision of the Constitution may be amended in the manner provided by that Article:

AND WHEREAS it is proposed—

(A) to amend the Constitution for the purpose of abolishing Seanad Éireann and providing that the Oireach-

tas shall, from the date of such abolition, consist of the President and Dáil Éireann; and

(B) in consequence of the foregoing, to amend otherwise the Constitution and, in particular, to amend those provisions of it that confer functions on Seanad Éireann or that are premised on the existence of that House.

Report

The report was sent to the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government Phil Hogan TD in November and was published on 18th December 2013 by the Commission.

The report said that the wording of the question, in which a Yes vote meant that the voter wanted to abolish the Seanad, led to some people voting the wrong way.

13% of people surveyed for the report said that they voted Yes because they wanted to retain the Seanad, when in fact their vote did the opposite.

More than half of the people surveyed for the report (55%) said that it was quite difficult or very difficult to tell what they were being asked to vote for in the Seanad ballot paper. Just under half (47%) said the same thing about the Court of Appeal ballot paper.

The role of Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, was despicable! In a brainstorming moment around 2010, he decided to abolish the Upper House and got cornered politically, no doubt he voted to remove the institution but made damn sure his party did nothing to ensure a successful passage. The party that describes itself as 'Labour' was even less principled—they frowned on any member who attempted to canvass for the abolition of the Seanad. Those who did canvass found a positive response.

Though only anecdotal, this writer was surprised at the number of local left-wingers who voted to retain the Seanad, just to spite the Coalition. As Phil Hogan said during the Property Tax debate, the Left in this country must be

the only socialist activists in Europe who are opposed to Property Tax. It says it all!

Then, to top it all, the legal fraternity which many regard as even more archaic and incompetent than the banking system, gained another lucrative layer to their already overpaid profession, when all the Dail had to do was compel the courts to work an eight-hour day like the rest of humanity.

The three state daily papers, as distinct from the British provincial editions for the Republic, totally ignored the Report, despite all their claims to investigative journalism and the 'national interest'.

The Government acknowledged that the ballot papers were confusing: with Fine Gael Chairman Charlie Flanagan saying: "We don't really simplify things that are straightforward".

Have we reached the stage where the "*Silicon valley of Europe*" can't even draw up a simple ballot paper?

The final result of the Seanad referendum was 51.7% in favour of retaining it against 48.35 in favour of abolishing it. And so was saved the greatest parliamentary 'Doss House' in Europe, forced on us by the Treaty of Surrender in 1921

ENGLISH FASCISM

"Why did the English State not become Fascist in the period between the two World Wars, when so many European States did?"

"Because it was Fascist enough already."

"The best description of the English State, I have ever read." So remarked a Kerryman, overheard after purchasing a copy of the booklet below at the recent "Kerry's 'Revolutionary Decade' Roadshow, sponsored by University College, Cork, 29.3.2014, at Muckcross House, Killarney.

"In order to consider the question I had to form a definite idea of what Fascism was. In current usage on the Left it was a mere term of abuse which could be applied to any strong assertion of authority. And there was associated with it the notion of a Fascist psychology in a populace in the form of a predisposition towards deference to authority. Insofar as there was a notion of it as a distinct economic form, it was the Corporation (that is a public body in which both sides of the class antagonism of Capital and Labour were represented)" (*Union Jackery, the pre-history of Fascism in Britain*, Brendan Clifford, *Belfast Magazine* No. 25, 2005, 84pp.)
